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Developing speaking skills in the EFL classroom: the use of oral presentations as final tasks in secondary education

Trabajo de fin de máster realizado por

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ABSTRACT

Enhancing speaking skills in the English as a Foreign Language classroom is one of the most important goals to achieve. Today, EFL teachers promote the learning of speaking skills and strategies from a communicative approach, allowing the student to be the centre of the learning process and to be able to communicate efficiently in real-life situations. The purpose of this research project is to explore the effectiveness of oral presentations as a tool to improve the speaking skill. This paper follows a case-study design, with in-depth analysis of the implementation of a learning situation in secondary education in the Canary Islands. A group of students were guided through a scaffolded process in which they constructed the necessary sub-skills to prepare an oral presentation as final task. Overall, the results indicate that oral presentations helped the students to work on the development of their speaking skills but there are certain limitations such as the students' fear of speaking in public or their lack of interest in the learning process that may interfere with the results. These findings prompt a re-thinking of the methodologies employed in the EFL classroom and the relevance we should be giving to the development of the speaking skill.

Keywords: speaking skills, English as a foreign language, oral presentations, learning situation, secondary education.

RESUMEN

Mejorar la destreza oral en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera es uno de los objetivos a alcanzar más importantes. A día de hoy, los profesores tratan de promover el aprendizaje de la destreza oral y sus estrategias a partir de un enfoque comunicativo, permitiendo que el alumno sea el centro del proceso de aprendizaje y sea capaz de comunicarse de forma eficiente en situaciones reales. El propósito de este trabajo de investigación es explorar la efectividad de las presentaciones orales como una herramienta que podemos emplear para el desarrollo de la destreza oral. Este documento ha sido diseñado como un estudio de caso, con un análisis profundo de la implementación de una situación de aprendizaje en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en las Islas Canarias. Un grupo de estudiantes fue guiado a través de un proceso de andamiaje en el que construyeron las destrezas secundarias necesarias para preparar una presentación oral como tarea final. En general, los resultados indican que las presentaciones orales ayudaron a los alumnos a trabajar en el desarrollo de la destreza oral, pero hay ciertas limitaciones como el miedo de los alumnos a hablar en público o su falta de interés en el proceso de aprendizaje que pueden interferir en los resultados. Los resultados dan pie a una reflexión sobre las metodologías empleadas en la clase de inglés y la relevancia que le deberíamos dar al desarrollo de la destreza oral.

Palabras clave: destreza oral, inglés como lengua extranjera, presentaciones orales, situación de aprendizaje, Educación Secundaria Obligatoria.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Developing speaking skills is today a challenge in the teaching of English as a foreign language[1]. The rise of the communicative approach in the field of teaching languages has shed light on and given prominence to the development of speaking skills and learning strategies. Nowadays, a primary focus on grammatical competence and a classroom dynamic where all interaction is teacher-led and teacher-controlled has given way to a learner-centred, competency-based approach. It is no longer a primary aim to teach students about the language and restrict its application to specific exercises where the focus is on form rather than meaning. Instead, the aim is to provide the student with the abilities to communicate efficiently in real-life situations.

This research project seeks to explain the development of speaking skills in the EFL classroom. In particular, a qualitative case study approach is used to investigate the effectiveness of oral presentations as a tool to work with and develop speaking skills. In addition, this study seeks to gain access to the student's perspectives about their experience of participating in a learning situation implementation which has as a final task an oral presentation, prepared using collaborative work and with an active implication of the students in the classroom. The teachers' current level of use of and perspectives on oral presentations, as well as the methodology selected to teach the speaking skill, will be a subject of study as well.

Another reason for choosing this topic is personal interest. I have been learning English since I was a child. After finishing secondary school, I enrolled in a degree in English Studies, increasing four more years of my experience learning English. An expert would probably say I have a C1+ in writing, writing interaction, reading, listening, and audiovisual skills. But when it comes to speaking skills, it is my feeling my resources, vocabulary and confidence when speaking are more limited. Then, how might this paradox be explained? From my perspective, not having someone with whom to talk in English and the lack of activities to develop speaking skills in class during my childhood and adolescence may be possible answers. It is this tentative conclusion that leads me to explore the possibility of implementing new approaches, activities, or tools, such as oral presentations, with which students are continuously encouraged to speak and interact.

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[1] Abbr. EFL

This research study has been also conducted based on the guidelines provided by the Canary Islands' Curriculum of English as a Foreign Language (*DECRETO 83/2016*). The Curriculum has been designed according to the *Common European Framework of Reference*, created by the Council of Europe (2001) to provide a common framework of levels unifying the teaching of languages in Europe. Following a communicative approach and action-oriented dynamics, the CEFR intends to promote the learning of languages, resulting in a plurilingual society.

The Curriculum in the Canary Islands (*DECRETO 83/2016*) establishes its expected outcomes and aims. The first and foremost objective to achieve in this educational stage, in the subject of English as a Foreign Language, is to understand and know how to use a foreign language to properly express a message according to the situation. Fundamentally, this subject should promote the development of the communicative and discursive competences to help students access equal opportunities. Working with real-life situations, and contextualizing activities and interventions, it is expected that the students develop the necessary communicative skills.

The overall structure of this study takes the form of four chapters, including in the first place, a theoretical framework, addressing previous research on the communicative method of teaching languages, the development of speaking skills, as well as the body of research on oral presentations as a learning tool. In the second place, the methodology of the study is presented, commenting the conditions, subjects of the learning situation and tools to collect data. Thirdly, after the proposal of a learning situation plan and its implementation in a real context in 3º ESO B at IES Profesor Martín Miranda (a high school in Tenerife, Spain), this paper provides the results and discussion, suggesting some improvements. Finally, this paper concludes by taking into consideration the initial assumptions and expectations associated with the use of oral presentations as a way to develop speaking skills at the secondary level.

It is hoped that this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the importance of speaking skills to assure successful communication between speakers. More importantly, this study aims to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring how oral presentations can help learners to improve their skills in a holistic plan of action.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Speaking skills according to the CEFR

The Council of Europe (2001) defines the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages[2] as a guide that "provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (p. 1). The CEFR defines a scale of levels of proficiency, known as the common reference levels, and offers a clear description of what language learners should know and learn according to their proficiency level. This classification allows learners to measure their progress at each stage of the learning process "and on a life-long basis" (p. 1). The guidelines cover knowledge, skills and the language and cultural context every user needs to be acquainted with in order to use a language for effective communication.

2.1.1. Background

One of the main aims of the CEFR is to unify the different educational systems in Europe and provide organised language learning, not only for the users and teachers but also "for educational administrators, course designers, (...) teacher trainers, examining bodies, etc. to reflect on their current practice, with a view to situating and co-ordinating their efforts and to ensuring that they meet the real needs of the learners" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 1). By breaking language competence down into six different levels of competence and unifying Europe's language teaching, the Council of Europe intends to promote plurilingualism and improve the mobility and cooperation between citizens (p. xiv).

Language use requires a series of strategies and competences in either the production or reception of texts. The CEFR focuses on each step of the process of communication taking into consideration an action-oriented approach. In this context, it is essential to study communicative language competence, which is regarded in this project as a key concept for the development of the aforementioned research proposal. According to the Council of Europe (2001), a language user as a social agent must develop the communicative language competence which "can be considered as comprising several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic" (p. 13).

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[2] Abbr. CEFR

Firstly, linguistic competences are referred to as the dimensions of language as a system; thus, including lexical, phonological, and syntactic knowledge and skills of a particular language. Secondly, sociolinguistic competences are considered "the sociocultural conditions of language use" (p. 13). Language conventions such as rules of politeness or norms defining interpersonal relations affect all language communication that takes place between members of different cultures. Finally, pragmatic competences are related to "the functional use of linguistic resources" (p. 13) such as language functions or speech acts in a communicative context. Pragmatic competences also embrace the mastery of discourse, text types and forms, cohesion and coherence within a text, irony and parody, interactions and cultural environments need to be given a substantial amount of attention.

Concerning language activities, the CEFR states that these involve the following aspects: reception and production (oral or written), interaction or mediation. Reception and production are considered processes of primary importance since these are required for interaction. The difference between productive and receptive activities lies in the degree of the user's active intervention. During productive activities, the students are directly involved in a task, such as preparing and presenting an oral presentation, writing a study or a report, whereas, during receptive activities, the students are receptors of information. This last concept includes silent reading, following the media and other forms of learning similar to understanding course content, consulting books or works of reference (Council of Europe, 2001).

Regarding interaction and mediation, these two elements imply the participation of two or more individuals in a certain activity. In the case of interaction, the concept refers to the fact that two or more individuals participate in oral/written communication, while the production and reception of information alternate. As regards mediation, this is what makes communication possible "between persons who are unable, for whatever reason, to communicate with each other directly" (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 14).

The scale of reference levels introduced by The Council of Europe (2001) in the CEFR has been shaped following four criteria. On the one hand, it was first created according to two description issues. The first of these is that this scale is context-free, hence it can be adapted to different contexts. The second issue corresponds to the fact that the description is based on theories of language competence and despite the

technical nature, it is certainly user-friendly. On the other hand, the scale is based on two additional factors of measurement: it has been objectively determined to avoid unfunded conventions and the numbers of levels show a clear and reasonable progression. This well-grounded reference establishes three stages subdivided into two broad levels.

Table 1

Common Reference Levels: global scale

PROFICIENT USER	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
INDEPENDENT USER	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and

		explanations for opinions and plans.
BASIC USER	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Note. CEFR levels in a holistic summarized table (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

Along with the general grid describing the main important points of each level, the Council of Europe (2001) also proposes a more detailed overview showing "major categories of language use at each of the six levels" (p. 25). However, in this research project, we will be only looking at the productive skills grid, in particular, the speaking profile of A2 and B1 levels, considering that the learning situation plan is addressed to students in the third year of secondary education (referred to as *ESO* in Spanish). Despite the fact that the level of the coursebook used in the target group is B1, the general class level is A2 and some cases of students with a B1 level.

2.1.2. Speaking skills in the CEFR

There is a great range of communicative language activities and strategies that allows language users to perform communicative tasks. Speaking is a skill included within the set of productive activities and strategies. It encompasses oral productions where the user, for instance, addresses an audience by giving information, instructions, a speech or a lecture. According to the definition provided by the Council of Europe (2001), oral production activities are defined as those where "the language user produces an oral text which is received by an audience of one or more listeners" (p. 58).

These activities may involve speaking from notes or visual aids or reading a written text aloud.

The CEFR categorises this skill in four modes: sustained monologue, including describing experience and putting a case (e.g. in a debate); public announcements and addressing audiences.

Table 2

Common Reference Levels: sustained monologue (describing experience)

INDEPENDENT USER	B1	Can give straightforward descriptions on a variety of familiar subjects within his field of interest. Can reasonably fluently relate a straightforward narrative or description as a linear sequence of points. Can give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions. Can relate details of unpredictable occurrences, e.g., an accident. Can relate the plot of a book or film and describe his/her reactions. Can describe dreams, hopes and ambitions. Can describe events, real or imagined. Can narrate a story.
BASIC USER	A2	Can tell a story or describe something in a simple list of points. Can describe everyday aspects of his environment e.g. people, places, a job or study experience. Can give short, basic descriptions of events and activities. Can describe plans and arrangements, habits and routines, past activities and personal experiences. Can use simple descriptive language to make brief statements about and compare objects and possessions. Can explain what he/she likes or dislikes about something.
		Can describe his/her family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job. Can describe people, places and possessions in simple terms.

Note. CEFR A2 and B1 levels of sustained monologue, specifically describing experience (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

Table 3

Common Reference Levels: sustained monologue (putting a case, e.g. in a debate)

INDEPENDENT USER	B1	Can develop an argument well enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time.
		Can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions.
BASIC USER	A2	No descriptor available

Note. CEFR A2 and B1 levels in sustained monologue, specifically putting a case (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

Table 4

Common Reference Levels: public announcements

| INDEPENDENT USER | B1 | Can deliver short, rehearsed announcements on a topic pertinent to everyday occurrences in his/her field which, despite possibly very foreign stress and intonation, are nevertheless clearly intelligible. |
| BASIC USER | A2 | Can deliver very short, rehearsed announcements of predictable, learnt content which are intelligible to listeners who are prepared to concentrate. |

Note. CEFR A2 and B1 levels in public announcements (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

Table 5

Common Reference Levels: addressing audiences

| INDEPENDENT USER | B1 | Can give a prepared straightforward presentation on a familiar topic within his/her field which is clear enough to be followed without difficulty most of the time, and in which the main points are explained with reasonable precision. Can take follow up questions, but may have to ask for repetition if the speech was |

		rapid.
BASIC USER	A2	Can give a short, rehearsed presentation on a topic pertinent to his everyday life, briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions, plans and actions. Can cope with a limited number of straightforward follow up questions.
		Can give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject. Can answer straightforward follow up questions if he/she can as for repetition and if some help with the formulation of his reply is possible.

Note. CEFR A2 and B1 levels in addressing audiences (e.g. presentations) (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

As for production strategies, these work together with the main skill because they complement the communicative task and are necessary to fulfill it. The Council of Europe (2001) states that strategies are useful to match the available potential of the task by activating internal resources such as discourse structures or formulations (considering the audience), conscious preparation (rehearsing) or dealing with a deficit (locating resources). The CEFR provides illustrative scales describing the planning, compensating and monitoring, and repair strategies employed in each level of proficiency. It is important to note that to speak, the learner needs to fulfill a series of communicative language processes (Council of Europe, 2001). Firstly, "plan and organise a message (cognitive skills)", secondly, "formulate a linguistic utterance (linguistic skills); and lastly, "articulate the utterance (phonetic skills)" (p. 90). Planning focuses on the ability of the language user to study before the speaking moment and remember words or points (s)he wants to comment on, the compensating scale illustrates the different techniques depending on the language level to support the message the user is trying to convey. Finally, monitoring and repair are production strategies consisting of being aware of the selection of words and a combination of these, correcting mistakes or asking for confirmation of the use of a certain word. For this last strategy, there is no description of the A2 level strategies.

2.2. EFL according to the LOMCE and the Curriculum

The European Union has set future expectations for the formation of a plurilingual society in Europe. It has provided a model currently followed by every European nation promoting the learning of foreign languages. This, according to the *LOMCE (Ley orgánica para la mejora de la calidad educativa*) is one of the major and irreplaceable objectives in the construction of the European project. Globalization has obliged us to adapt to a new reality in which having a good command of one or more foreign languages is necessary to succeed and secure our future. The *LOMCE* defends this goal and looks for the development of an educational system in which pupils master or, at least, achieve fluency in a foreign language. This would include oral and written expression and comprehension. The Curriculum has defended the introduction of not only one foreign language, but two in order to promote plurilingualism. It is expected that this new perspective will benefit the students' professional development and future, as well as their employment opportunities.

The Curriculum, on a national level, defends the view that a language is a mechanism we use in order to learn and communicate. Learning a foreign language gives an individual the capacity to join in different situations and integrate into diverse contexts (personal, public or academic level) because (s)he has acquired the necessary skills, knowledge and competences that allow them to do so.

The Curriculum establishing basic regulations in secondary education (*Real Decreto 1105/2014*) also fosters the development of individuals fluent in languages considering that these allow them to achieve different goals through communication. This legislation has been elaborated on the basis of the *Common European Framework of Reference*, thus supporting the employment of the action-oriented approach. According to these regulations (*Real Decreto 1105/2014*):

> los estudiantes deberán ser capaces de hacer en el idioma extranjero en diversos contextos comunicativos reales en los que, dada su edad y sus características dependiendo de las distintas etapas educativas, tendrán oportunidad de actuar. Las actividades de recepción, producción e interacción orales y escritas que conforman los estándares de aprendizaje en el currículo básico integran tanto las diversas competencias comunicativas específicas, cuya activación conjunta permite la realización de esas actividades, como las competencias básicas generales correspondientes a cada etapa. (p. 422)

Fundamentally, the learning of a foreign language should contribute to the development of the competences established by the Curriculum. In order to do this, the action-oriented approach, defended by the CEFR and the Curriculum's selected approach, considers the student as the centre of the learning experience. The student is an active component of the learning process, constructing his/her own knowledge and competences that will allow him/her to participate in real-life communicative contexts, either in the tasks carried out in the classroom or outside of it.

As for the implementation of the EFL Curriculum in the Canary Islands, regulations have been specifically designed according to the context of the islands (*DECRETO 315/2015*). This Curriculum also supports the proposal of implementing an action-oriented approach. In addition, it encourages the use of the communicative approach. The main priority is the development of the expression and comprehension competences. The Curriculum also suggests that the students' mother tongue, Spanish, is used as support only when necessary. As the *LOMCE* indicates, the national and autonomous curricula make clear that the necessary methodological and assessment adaptations will be made for the disabled community of students.

2.2.1. Key competences in the EFL Curriculum

Key competences are a crucial part of the educational framework reflected in the Curriculum. They were introduced and promoted by the European Union as a measure to secure the European citizenship's personal, social and professional development. They are defined by the European Commission (2019) as a "combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes" (p. 5). This implies that competences embrace a conceptual component, a skill component that refers to the ability to know how to do something, and it also includes attitudes and values. These competences are acquired and developed through life by means of a variety of contexts.

The Curriculum for secondary education in Spain establishes seven competences inspired by the list of competences proposed by the European Union.

- Linguistic communication
- Digital competence
- Learning to learn competence
- Social and civic competence

- Initiative and entrepreneurship
- Cultural awareness and expression competence
- Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology

The EFL Curriculum contributes to the development of a series of competences, as specified in the regulations (*DECRETO 83/2016*). In the first place, EFL is a subject that directly influences the development of the students' linguistic competence. Language is an instrument that allows one person to carry out social tasks, using the language to express and comprehend a message as a social agent, just as the CEFR establishes. EFL is also a subject that promotes the development of digital competence since the students have to use online tools to contact other students and work on projects or tasks. They learn how to safely and strategically use the internet and how to filter the excess of information. Learning to learn is another competence that is definitely present in the EFL sessions. Students learn strategies to be able to carry out tasks and they become conscious of their own learning process.

The EFL subject promotes the development of the social and civic competence. The instructors set out activities in which the students have to work on cooperatively, respecting their classmates' opinions and supporting each other. Moreover, they learn social conventions, netiquette and politeness within the English-speaking countries. Therefore, the tasks and content of the subject should inspire the students to be critical and practical. At the same time, they find opportunities to develop their sense of initiative and entrepreneurship considering that the EFL teachers give them opportunities to work on their creativity and innovative capacities. For this, motivation is crucial in the elaboration of a variety of tasks (solving problems, participating in presentations and interviews, etc.) in which they have to demonstrate their autonomy and ability to make decisions.

To conclude, the teaching of EFL strengthens the growth of the student's cultural awareness and expression competence. Every person that learns a new language learns its culture as well: art, music, dance, literature, cuisine… The nature of this subject also allows the students to express themselves in terms of emotions, feelings and ideas.

2.3. The communicative approach

The Curriculum in secondary education regulating the teaching of a first foreign language in the Canary Islands (*DECRETO 83/2016*) has been designed according to

the philosophy and guidelines provided by the Common European Framework of Reference (2001). This Curriculum encourages teachers to create materials for the EFL classroom following the communicative approach, promoting collaborative, interdisciplinary and meaningful learning. Durán (2011) highlights that this approach has been promoted in the area of foreign languages in the Spanish legal framework taking into consideration the current needs of society:

> (...) the economic and cultural globalisation process, the European Union project, increasing citizen mobility between countries, the new information and communication technologies, and the forming of a spirit that is tolerant towards other forms of culture and at the same time aware of its own identity. (p. 77)

In addition to these aspects, the regulations (*DECRETO 83/2016*) add other needs determined by the context of the Canary Islands:

> En el caso de la Comunidad Autónoma de Canarias, factores como el turismo —principal motor económico—, las relaciones entre empresas, la situación geoestratégica y el carácter multicultural de su población otorgan una mayor relevancia al dominio de una o varias lenguas extranjeras. (p. 18234)

2.3.1. Definition of the communicative approach

Having justified the reason why the communicative approach has gained relevance in the EFL classroom in the Canary Islands, a definition is necessary to understand its benefits for EFL learners. First and foremost, before delving into this specific theory, it is necessary to consider what a language teaching methodology and approach is. Sánchez-Reyes (2011) explains that it was in the 19th century when the concept of method in the field of teaching languages came to the scene. Commenting on the definition of methodology, Sánchez-Reyes (2011) argues:

> [It] links theory and classroom practice. At the core of theory, statements are concepts of what language is, how it is learnt and, specifically, theories of second language acquisition (SLA), linked to features of language instruction like objectives, syllabus, activities, roles of teachers and learners, materials, assessment, etc. (p. 30)

This author reminds us that there is a clear difference between the concepts of *method* and *approach*, which are often confused. While the method is considered a "teaching system", an approach is a "language teaching philosophy" (p. 30).

Richards and Rodgers (2014) point out that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) opened the way for "a major paradigm shift within language teaching in the twentieth century" (p. 81). The path towards change that the English language has followed and the significance it has gained can be attributed to two main sources: globalization and reinvention. The first idea is directly connected to the fact that society has discovered the opportunities English could provide especially in the workforce field and many others such as education and technology. It seems the economy has adopted the English language as a communication channel between different sides. On the grounds of this, there has been an increase in the demand for English language teaching, so that more people could access these opportunities. Secondly, the authors propose that the second source of influence has been the job on its own. To rephrase it, this means that there has been a reflection on the profession of teaching English and the practice in itself, developing new ideas revolving around the nature of learning and teaching languages, new methods and approaches.

Knowledge about the field has been renewed, leaving behind practices that no longer work or are not adapted to the new 21st-century context. CLT resulted from the linguists' criticism of other methods, especially Situational Language Teaching (SLT), which focused on specific structures rather than on one "functional and communicative potential of language" (p. 84). Jansem (2019), similarly, explains that these methods did not foster real communication. It was at that time that the Council of Europe started promoting the teaching and learning of languages since Europe and the autonomy of each of its countries were hastily growing. Thus, there was a need to unite the nations to facilitate cooperation and organisation.

According to Sánchez-Reyes (2011), CLT is "a learner-centred expansive and overall approach, rather than a specific method. It makes use of contextualized real-life situations that necessitate communication" (p. 37). It is then an approach that focuses more on language functions instead of grammar. Grammar, although many people may think it is denied, is seen as the tool which allows communication to happen. Therefore, the development of communicative competence is crucial in the conception of this approach. Richards and Rodgers (2014) support this idea by explaining that language is "a means of communication" (p. 87).

Communicative competence, the target of this approach, was a term coined by Hymes (1972). In contrast to Chomsky's cognitive view of language as an abstract phenomenon, Hymes developed a theory which connected language to culture and reality. A person who acquires communicative competence can use and adapt language to the following criteria:

> 1. whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible
>
> 2. whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available
>
> 3. whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated
>
> 4. whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed. and what its doing entails. (p. 281)

Canale and Swain (1980) added to Hymes' concept four new components of which communication is composed: "grammatical competence (vocabulary and syntax), sociolinguistic competence (appropriateness), discourse competence (cohesion and coherence)" and "strategic competence (communicative strategies that compensate for inadequacies in the target language" (Sánchez-Reyes, 2011, p. 38). According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), grammatical competence corresponds to Chomsky's linguistic competence, the "grammatical and lexical capacity" (p. 89). In the case of the sociolinguistic competence, this is directly connected to the social context and its influence on communication. Discourse competence is the concept that refers to the phenomena by which we interpret utterances and, finally, strategic competence is the term attributed to the capacity language users have to look for strategies to "initiate, terminate, maintain, repair, and redirect communication" (p. 89).

Halliday's (1975) functional theory of language, as Richards and Rodgers (2014) point out, also influenced CLT. This theory is based on the functions of language, that is, the speech acts that characterize all the utterances we produce. From now on, in order to acquire a second language, it was necessary to acquire the seven functions Halliday (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) proposes:

> 1. The instrumental function: using language to get things
>
> 2. The regulatory function: using language to control the behaviour of others
>
> 3. The interactional function: using language to create interaction with others
>
> 4. The personal function: using language to express personal feelings and meanings
>
> 5. The heuristic function: using language to learn and to discover

6 The imaginative function: using language to create a world of the imagination

7. The representational function: using language to communicate information. (p. 89)

These are some of the main influences that now define the CLT approach. Jansem (2019) explains that so far the approach has evolved into different lines. One of these variations is concerned with linguistic functions and meaning instead of grammar patterns and structures. Those who are opposed to this idea are still giving importance to form. In spite of these discrepancies, there are a series of features that define CLT at the present time. Sánchez-Reyes (2011) argues that when using this approach in the EFL sessions, the role of the instructor is acting as a guide who gives importance to what the students have to say. Pronunciation is not as relevant as in other methods on the condition that the message is understood. The dynamics that are carried out in the classroom usually include teamworking, transforming the classroom into a space of conversation, active engagement and participation.

Harmer (2007) offers a clear list of the aspects characterizing communicative activities in contrast to non-communicative activities that help us to define what CLT actually is. Communicative activities require active communication and they are included in the syllabus with a communicative purpose in mind. There is a focus on content rather than form, as well as on the variety of language. The teacher intervenes only when necessary and textbooks or materials do not shape or control the whole session. As this author states: "Activities in CLT typically involve students in real or realistic communication, where the successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing is at least as important as the accuracy of their language use" (p. 69). In order to achieve this, students need to be driven by the "desire to communicate something" (p. 69).

Farabi, Hassanvand and Gorjian (2017) emphasize the importance that speaking has for EFL learners. It is one of the main skills that can allow us to achieve a large range of goals through the use of language. Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2017), in the same line, defend that "speaking is one of the least practiced and most neglected skills in almost any EFL classroom, despite its importance in people's daily social activities and interactions" (p. 229). As many studies outline, communicative language teaching is an approach capable of substituting the artificial and conference-like language teaching sessions, with dynamics in which the protagonist is the learner, the importance is given

to the practicality of the language and we are given tools to manage communication in real-life situations.

2.4. Oral presentations: the key to developing speaking skills

Oral presentations are a valuable and recurrent resource that allows a person to address an audience and inform them about a certain topic of interest. They have been employed at universities for a long time as a means to teach content and assess students. However, in the secondary school context, Brooks and Wilson (2015), who conducted a study in Japanese universities, claim that students are not being taught how to give oral presentations and there is a lack of familiarity with oral presentations. This eventually causes students to feel shy and uncomfortable when they must speak in front of other people.

Nadolski, Hummel, Rusman and Ackermans (2021), in the same vein as Brooks and Wilson (2015), pointed out that "secondary education seems to be in lack of instructional design guidelines for supporting oral presentation skills acquisition" (p. 2664). According to these authors, the main difficulty confronting teachers when thinking about implementing the use of oral presentations in the ELT classrooms is how to teach and assess our students' oral presentation skills. Nadolski *et al.* (2021) argue that in order to deliver effective oral presentations, there is much work to do beforehand, such as preparation, rehearsal and practice. Moreover, this should be accompanied by the teacher, or preferably, an expert's feedback. Teacher-student interaction can be easily managed in small class sizes, in contrast to large classes, where there are limited opportunities for this kind of relationship.

Oral presentations are meaningful learning and teaching resources since they can help teachers to create a valuable learning environment. When giving our students the opportunity to present a topic, we are not just helping them to improve their speaking skills. Brooks and Wilson (2015) suggest that through appropriate scaffolding, oral presentations present an excellent opportunity to interact with classmates by using only the target language. In fact, this is one of the most important concepts that define the communicative approach. Furthermore, if these oral presentations are created in groups, we will also benefit from the multiple advantages that cooperative learning tasks present. It is crucial for language acquisition by means of oral presentations that these activities leading to the final task of presenting are set up correctly by the instructor.

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2.4.1. Advantages of presentations for EFL learners

A variety of benefits have been identified in relation to the performance of oral presentations at the secondary school level. Brooks and Wilson (2015) list five main positive features characterising this tool: firstly, presentations are student-centred; secondly, they combine the four language skills; thirdly, creating presentations and addressing an audience are realistic language tasks; they are valuable in the real-life context and, finally, presentations can stimulate the students' motivation.

In the first place, it is a student-centred approach since it allows students to decide on how they want their presentation to look and how they will convey the information. The usual state of affairs is that students are not given the option to choose the topic they want to talk about, but if they have the opportunity, it increases their significance and implication in the process. Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010) note that "when students are given the freedom to choose a topic to present, for instance, in an intermediate-level EFL classroom, they are indirectly asked to make a decision and take initiative" (p. 229). Presentations clearly promote learning by discovery and research, thus, students are placed in the centre of the learning process and they have control and responsibility for their own learning (Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan, 2010). Teachers have also the possibility to expand their role delegating autonomy and leadership shared by the students in a cooperative learning environment. Therefore, they become guides who support and organise, in coherence with the communicative language teaching methodology (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

In the second place, when we think about using oral presentations in the classroom we often presume it will be one of the ideal options for our students to improve their speaking skills. Yet, even though students are required to speak during the presentation, there is a whole structured procedure lying below the surface. Oral presentations help integrate the four main language skills giving them equal weight during the creation process (Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan, 2010). Brooks and Wilson (2015) state that "properly structured academic presentations also require students to research and plan out their presentation" (p. 204). The art of creating presentations brings along an intensive period of work on the L2 reading, writing and listening skills, or in other words, it is a holistic practice. It also represents a way of acquiring new knowledge while using the language purposely and meaningfully (Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan, 2010). The Council of Europe

(2001), in this respect, mentions that "many if not most situations involve a mixture of activity types" (p. 57). Before presenting in front of the class, students put into action their writing skills because they need to create visuals where there may be written content, they may also have to create a written summary or take notes of their ideas. Concerning their reading skills, it is essential to investigate and gather the information that they have to read in order to classify and filter the data they will need. Finally, if the students present their work to the class, the students will need to activate their listening skills as audience members; even more, if they are given a task to complete while they listen. What's more, given that there is a time for discussion, questions and answers, the presenters will have to listen and comprehend their classmates' questions or contributions in order to respond properly.

Presentations provide our students with realistic language tasks simply because these are connected to real life. If this were not the case, Thornbury (2005, as cited in Brooks & Wilson, 2015) explains that the activities would become "poor preparation for autonomy" (p. 91). Realistic tasks require students to understand the topics in order to communicate them effectively to their students, managing to also make them understand the topic. According to Thornbury (2005), this disposition to make others understand a piece of information we know is closer to real language use. In addition, creating presentations in the classroom is the perfect strategy "to develop research and critical thinking skills, as well as linguistic and communicative skills" (Brooks &Wilson, 2005, p. 204).

Experience with oral presentations can be beneficial in the student's future academic or professional careers, once within the job market. Nowadays, it seems one of the most relevant and marketable skills companies and potential employers seek is communication skills (Brooks & Wilson, 2015; Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010). Moreover, they improve students' motivation since the instructor is giving them the opportunity to teach something to their classmates and collaborate with a group in the creation of a product together. If the students are able to see the results of their hard work, there will eventually be more chances of higher motivation. It is, in the vast majority of cases, an enriching experience for both students and teachers. As Brooks and Wilson (2015) remind us: "One of the joys of teaching a presentation class is seeing students gain confidence, self-esteem, and autonomy while they are working independently, or as a small group" (p. 205).

Finally, oral presentations can contribute to the development of the student's digital competence, considering that in order to research and present their work, they have to be trained in their abilities to manage internet sources and programs, such as *PowerPoint* or more innovative tools such as *Genially*. Technology in the classroom, according to Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010), has two purposes. In the first place, it breaks the monotony of typical foreign language teaching sessions and, in the second place, it provides the students with the knowledge and digital literacy skills necessary for this era in which the digital native competes favourably with those lacking these skills.

2.4.2. Disadvantages of presentations for EFL learners

In spite of all the positive aspects oral presentations can bear, there is a range of possible disadvantages that instructors may face when implementing oral presentations as a task for the students. Oral presentations, as Meloni and Thompson (1980) reveal, can be challenging and frequently include unfamiliar tasks. To date, a number of studies (Kim, 2020; Brooks & Wilson, 2015) have suggested that oral presentations represent a complex communicative task. Kim (2020) points out that presenting a topic in an L2 requires several techniques to convey a message and make it possible for the audience to comprehend this message. As Kim (2020) notes:

> [S]peaking in front of an audience demands verbal and nonverbal skills, including having a good command of English, organizing ideas in a meaningful manner, and using techniques to make effective communication. It also involves audience awareness to gain their attention, which decides the tone and content of the presentation. Accordingly, a lot of preparation and practice is needed for oral presentations to be made successfully. (p. 112)

Brooks and Wilson (2015) state that oral presentations are, in fact, time-consuming: "they require a lot of time and effort to implement correctly in the classroom" (2015, p. 514). There are numerous issues that should be taken care of and taught to the students: techniques, grammar, and coherence, among many others. Moreover, only one student can present at a time. Meanwhile, usually, the rest of the students are passive individuals. In addition, if the activities prepared for the students are beyond their current level of English proficiency and the teacher does not dedicate some time to developing the necessary skills they lack, they will not be competent enough to present effectively (Brooks & Wilson, 2015).

It can be argued that the solution to the potential problems that can interfere in the EFL classroom when working with presentations can be a properly scaffolded process (Brooks & Wilson, 2014). In this way, we could avoid problems such as the choice of inappropriate or bland topics, lack of attention in the classroom or disrespectful attitudes between students. By presenting the students with manageable steps and clearly defining what they have to do and the goals to achieve, we can facilitate the process of creating a presentation and obtain positive and successful results. King (2002) explains that this careful planning of the learning process prevents the students from feeling uncomfortable during their presentation and, most importantly, eludes undermining their confidence while they are put on the spot.

2.4.3. Steps in the implementation of oral presentations

The main idea to bear in mind regarding the implementation of oral presentations as a learning tool in the EFL classroom is the necessity to be a controlled and step-by-step process (Shimo, 2011), that is, divided into meaningful parts. This view is supported by Brooks and Wilson (2015), who explain that "teaching each section separately will help to reduce the cognitive load" (p. 207). It is most likely that our students are not used to speaking English in meaningful and authentic contexts. Meloni and Thompson (1980) divide the process of preparing oral presentations in the classroom into a series of steps. Firstly, it is the teacher who presents reports on how to create appropriate presentations which can be helpful to train students on the tasks they ought to do.

> The titles of these mini-lectures are: 1) Choosing and Limiting a Topic, 2) Deciding the Purpose and Objectives of Your Oral Report, 3) Gathering Information About Your Topic, 4) Organizing Your Information, 5) Preparing to Give Your Oral Report, and 6) Delivering Your Oral Report. Information pertaining to these topics can be found in any basic text on public speaking. (p. 504)

With regard to the topic, Meloni and Thompson (1980) suggest in their research project that the students choose the topic they would like to talk about. This topic can either be researched to obtain information about it or the students can provide their own knowledge on the topic. The ideal situation is that they become experts in the topic they select.

After the selection of a topic, each student or group of students have to complete a worksheet with fundamental data about their presentations such as title, the main idea of the report, outline, visual aids/audio and a list of five questions to check their

classmates' comprehension once they have finished. The next step would correspond to the instructor's revision and approval of the presentation, in which he/she can make certain suggestions or changes. During the third step, students record their presentations as a self-assessment assignment. This part of the process helps the student to analyse the positive and negative points of their presentation. Subsequently, the students can improve their presentation before presenting it to their classmates. After this preparatory stage, the students will be ready for the actual presentation. During the presentation, the teacher will have a teacher evaluation form and the students will have a student evaluation form they have to complete. The latter form is, in particular, necessary because it leads the students to actively focus on the presentations and develop a critical attitude towards what an effective presentation is.

Similarly, Brooks and Wilson (2015) also include different tasks in the process of preparing an oral presentation. For the reason that "oral presentations involve multiple communication and language skills" (p. 206), these tasks should train the students in the necessary skills and sub-skills that they need to present in front of a specific audience. To give an example of these sub-skills, we could consider voice projection, body language, gestures or eye contact.

Previous to the planning of the lessons and content, it is essential to establish which style of presentation and guidance we want to give to our students. Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010) divide presentations into three types: controlled, guided and free. This classification is based on "factors such as choice of topic, time allocated to the presentation, grammar, vocabulary, method of presentation, and, most importantly, learners' proficiency levels" (p. 232). Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010) use the term "controlled" to refer to the type of presentations we expect from students whose level of proficiency in English is from beginner to elementary. The tasks the instructor proposes are adapted to their level and the topic is usually confined to the book or it is something the student can manage without too much effort. On the other hand, guided presentations are recommended for lower-intermediate to intermediate levels. These students can be guided by the instructor in terms of the topic most appropriate for their English proficiency level and also, the instructor can provide a detailed guide and help on how to create presentations using tools such as *PowerPoint*. In general, students when preparing a presentation have more independence and autonomy, but always need to be guided in the process. Finally, in a free presentation modality, students' level of

proficiency is from upper-intermediate to advanced. They have freedom in the selection of the topic, they are able to plan and structure their presentation and demonstrate a good command of English for a long time (i.e. the presentations are longer). In short, the complexity of the tasks leading to the presentation increases gradually.

To conclude, it is essential to mention that presentations can be arranged in class individually, in pairs or in groups. Choosing which type of grouping is better depends on the size of the class, the elaborateness of the topic and the aims the instructor would like to achieve (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010).

2.4.4. Assessment of oral presentations

The implementation of oral presentations in secondary education brings about the design of a specific scaffolded process contributing to the development of the necessary sub-skills and, also, the choice of an appropriate assessment procedure. Strictly speaking, this refers to the selection of a mode of assessment that allows instructors to analyse the level of final achievement and, furthermore, allows students to be aware of the results of their hard work.

Nejad and Mahfoodh (2019) studied the efficacy of self-, peer- and teacher assessments of EFL students' oral presentations. According to Jafarpur (1991) and McNamara (2001), the popularity usually attributed to traditional assessment of oral presentations in the EFL classroom has decreased as a consequence of the rise of student-centred methodologies (as cited in Nejad & Mahfoodh, 2019, p. 616).

The role of learners in assessing oral presentations can be from two points of view: peer-assessment and self-assessment (Nejad & Mahfoodh, 2019). Patri (2002) is one of the authors who argues that these assessment types are beneficial for the student's development of autonomy and independence as a language learner. Similarly, Cheng and Warren (2005) assert that "peer assessment is believed to enable learners to develop abilities and skills denied to them in a learning environment in which the teacher alone assesses their work" (p. 94).

Teachers have a range of tools they can use to evaluate, although the most recurrent instrument is the rubric (e.g. analytic, holistic). Some writers (Brooks & Wilson, 2015; Nadolski *et al*., 2021; Allen & Tanner, 2006; Reddy, 2011) suggest using analytic

rubrics, considering they provide us with a thorough and explicit analysis of the presentation, objectively focusing on different types of outcomes. Instructors are advised by Brooks and Wilson (2015) to grade "using a carefully planned and constructed rubric with the grading criteria of each presentation clearly laid out in the materials to allow students to be successful in meeting the assessment goals set out for that presentation" (p. 207).

Some authors have mainly been interested in questions concerning the difference in effectiveness between the aforementioned three types of presentation assessments (Cheng & Warren, 2005; Saito & Fujita, 2009; Butler & Lee, 2010). Nejad and Mahfoodh (2019), after having reviewed some of these authors' studies, offer an account of the main conclusions they have reached. Broadly speaking, in some cases students are not interested in peer assessment and it can be said that there are no great differences in marks given by teachers and those given by classmates (Cheng & Warren, 2005). Others have found similarities in the assessment results from the student's and teacher's points of view (Saito & Fujita, 2009). In some studies, there has even been evidence of a clear discrepancy between the teachers' and students' points of view with regard to the usefulness of self-assessment (Butler & Lee, 2010).

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that rubrics are an effective assessment method. The EFL Curriculum in the Canary Islands (*DECRETO 83/2016*) proposes its own holistic rubrics embracing not only descriptors according to the expected outcomes for each criterion adapted to every level in secondary education, but also the required competences and evaluation standards.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

From an action-research methodological perspective, in this study, I have established one primary aim and two secondary objectives. In the first place, I attempt to examine the relationship between the development of the speaking skill and oral presentations as a tool to achieve this. The main research question is: are oral presentations an efficient tool to improve the students' speaking skills by presenting a report about a crime? This main question also attends to finding out if the rubric designed to assess the student's final intervention in the presentation is adequate. The second aim is to ascertain if EFL instructors are or are not setting up opportunities to practice oral presentations in English, the first foreign language in the education system in the Canary Islands. The supposition is that teachers may not be taking advantage of a powerful instrument to work on their speaking skills. Furthermore, it must be mentioned that this research project has been carried out to assess the effectiveness of the communicative approach as the base of the activities that guide the students up to a final task, the presentation itself.

To answer these questions, a case-study approach with 3º ESO was adopted to assess the effectiveness of the use of presentations as final tasks in a learning situation plan that encompasses the spirit of the communicative approach. It was hoped that this study could give us information about the improvements of the students in their speaking skill, the adequacy of a rubric created by both the teacher and the pupils' suggestions and the positive aspects of designing this plan following a communicative approach.

The subjects of this study have been students and teachers from IES Profesor Martín Miranda. This high school covers secondary education from *ESO* (*Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*) to *Bachillerato*. It is located in La Cuesta, part of the municipality of San Cristóbal de La Laguna, Tenerife (Canary Islands, Spain). This is the placement where I have been teaching English as part of my teacher training internship experience for the past two months. It should be noted that the institute is highly immersed in the promotion of multilingual education, giving the students opportunities to access Erasmus projects or language exchanges.

The participants who have contributed to gathering data for this study have had two different roles. On the one hand, the students have been part of a practical case

examining the effectiveness of a learning situation plan for three weeks in which the final task is an oral presentation in groups, along with a survey determining their satisfaction concerning the activities and facilitating a self-assessment of their progress. On the other hand, the teachers from the English Department have been part of another survey analyzing their current use of presentations and the teachers' perspectives on their functionality. This survey will help us to analyse if teachers are setting up enough opportunities for the students to practise speaking skills using oral presentations.

The pupils, whose age range is from 14-15 years old, belong to 3º ESO B. It is a group formed by twelve female and twelve male students. Their nationality is Spanish, although four of them are from Latin America. Moreover, these pupils reside in La Cuesta, which could be considered a lower-middle class neighbourhood. This is a multilevel class in which the level varies from A1 to A2. The class is composed of twenty-four students, although having all the students attending the same class each day is unusual since every day there are at least three to four absences. For the learning situation, 3º ESO B will work mainly in groups of two, three and four students. For their presentations, they created four groups of four, one group of three and another group of two.

The learning situation has resulted from the adaptation of the seventh unit, "Fighting Crime", in the student's coursebook designed by Linda Marks and Emily Devlin, *Way to English 3* (Burlington editorial). This unit, as the title indicates, revolves around crimes, criminals and law. The linguistic function to talk about crimes in this unit is reporting facts by using the passive voice either in the present or in the past.

The English Department is formed of eight English teachers around the same age. They are all specialized in the field of English Philology and the teaching of foreign languages. With the exception of two teachers, who has been actively involved in the teaching of English in secondary education for less than five years, the rest of the instructors from the English Department have had more than a ten-year period of teaching experience.

The conducted process in order to collect qualitative data has followed the notion of triangulation. That is, there has been a collection of inputs, sources and methods to extract relevant information and analyse results. To investigate the research questions

and extract results, the main materials are the learning situation plan[3] and the assessment materials, that is, the rubric[4] to assess the final task, a class tasks checklist[5] and the products created by the students or the evidence of their work in the classroom. A competences checklist[6] was also used as a support document in the monitoring of the students' participation. Secondly, two questionnaires, one for the students and another for the teachers in the English Department. Using all these methods, it can be argued that subjectivity when analysing and presenting the results of the project is at least partially avoided.

Not only can this qualitative data gathered for the study provide us with information about the effectiveness of the research project and answers to the initial questions, but also the examination of my own execution of the learning situation developed in twelve lessons can provide a third dimension. Whether the outcome is positive or negative, the findings will be valid and necessary to take further qualitative decision making. New questions, such as *what would I do differently if I had the opportunity to put the learning situation into practice again? What aspects of presentations are difficult to assess? Should I replace or modify the assessment tool? If so, how?* will arise.

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[3] See Appendix 1
[4] See Appendix 2
[5] See Appendix 3
[6] See Appendix 4

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Analysis of the implementation of the learning situation

As has been previously mentioned, one group of students in secondary education, 3º ESO B, has been subject to the implementation of a learning situation plan in which the final task is an oral presentation in groups about a crime. This learning situation proposes a scaffolded learning process in which the activities focus on the development of the necessary skills they have to mobilize when presenting their topic. The learning situation named "CSI Canary Islands" was implemented between the 5th of May and the 24th of May. The main intention in implementing this learning situation was to teach students how to give effective presentations while simultaneously working with the grammar and vocabulary planned in the book unit as well as to test if presentations could be an efficient tool to work on the development of speaking skills.

The learning situation focuses on the function of reporting an event by using the present simple and past simple passive voice. The vocabulary was taught and practised by means of the exercises and activities the manual proposes in Unit 7. Other kinds of dynamics were introduced to practise this vocabulary and grammar in a different way, such as by playing games in groups or debating topics related to the learning situation.

Motivated by the communicative approach, the activities carried out in the classroom focused on meaning and the functional use of the language. More importance and time were given to activities where students had to interact and cooperate. Thus, they were the centre of the learning process and active participants in the classroom at all times. Theoretical explanations were replaced by interactive presentations in which the teacher explained a topic in collaboration with the class group, using online tools such as *Mentimeter*. This has been the case, for instance, when students had to learn how to give an effective presentation or the role of body language in a presentation. Similarly, in order to teach students the language function of this learning situation, instead of giving them an explanation beforehand, I allowed them to learn inductively.

During the execution of the learning situation plan, I have to highlight the fact that there was a clear progression of the interest and implication of the group. These students were used to a methodology consisting of theoretical explanations and exercises from of

the book, adding extra activities on a few occasions. During my observation period, I did not witness any situation in which these students had to work in groups, stand up or just talk among themselves. This may justify the fuss they made during the first and second lessons, where they had to walk around the class, use the language and cooperate. Even though especially, the first lesson was not successful, in the second, third and fourth lessons they started to participate more, behave civically and get used to the new dynamics in which they did not have to be sitting down, writing in silence.

I did not observe 3º ESO B practising their speaking or speaking interaction during the observation period. I noticed during the implementation of the activities that only a couple of students had a good command of spoken English, while the majority of them had difficulties speaking in front of their classmates. They usually switched to Spanish quickly instead of trying to look for different words or expressions in English when they did not know how to say something. The learning situation, given that the criterion to be assessed was the speaking skill, had numerous activities where they had to speak in English, especially interacting in groups. In spite of their initial difficulties, I noticed that after every session they were gaining confidence when speaking in English and even, in some cases, they achieved a slight progression in fluency.

Lessons 7 to 10 were focused on how to give effective presentations. During the activities, I realised students knew some of the tips one has to follow when presenting in front of others, but their background knowledge related mainly to the use of visuals. I consider these sessions were useful for them, although not all of them demonstrated during their presentations that they had followed the instructions. I believe these lessons needed to be in the learning situation because if that had not been the case, the class would not have known what to present and how to do it in terms of the structure of their presentation, the kind of visuals we use in a formal presentation, the attitude that we need to show during the presentation, and so on.

Ten of the activities before the presentation days were taken as products of the participants' implication. The activities were crucial in the path to learning the skills the students were going to need in their presentations. These were the exercises from the coursebook that they did in the first four lessons, the hot potato game, asking for a report, elaborating a written police form with the information from the interviews, a group presentation explaining the name of their group, logo, motto and topic; a mini-presentation, and finally, the visuals they created for their presentation. Two points

of the final mark would be given if they completed these tasks. Only seven of twenty-four students handed in all these activities. Another point was given per group for appropriate behaviour demonstrated during the lessons.

The final task, the oral presentation, represented the remaining seven points. Although it was presented in groups, the marks were given individually according to the progress each member of the group had exhibited. To assess the oral presentation, a rubric was created analysing the use of grammar and vocabulary, fluency and coherence, pronunciation, use of technology and visuals, and confidence and body language. There were four levels of performance: poor (1-4, 0 points), average (5-6, 1 point), good (7-8, 1,5 points), and excellent (9-10, 2 points). The descriptors were selected reflecting a progress in the performance of the student. The points obtained in each criterion were added and transformed into a final mark out of ten. Then, this mark was calculated according to the 7 points the presentation was given from the total mark.

There was a variety of results in the final presentation. Only one group really grasped and understood the idea I was trying to convey during ten sessions. This group demonstrated an excellent command of English, reporting a crime they had researched during the lessons dedicated to such a matter. They incorporated the tasks that helped them to prepare the final presentation, that is, the mini-presentation and the visuals, as well as the vocabulary, grammar and structures learnt in the other seven tasks. This group was proof that the activities of the learning situation were useful to prepare half of the presentation in advance in class.

Although it was made clear that the final task was a presentation in which they could not read, most of the groups held pieces of paper and read. Only two of the seven groups did not read. It must be mentioned that there were two groups that did not present because they did not work cooperatively and complained of having stage fright. It was unfair to give this group the opportunity to present on another occasion since all the groups had prepared their work for the marked days and all of them were nervous about speaking in public, but they had presented.

Fifteen out of twenty-four students passed the learning situation plan[7]. Nine students failed as a consequence of their lack of interest in the sessions. Their failing grade is a consequence of not having presented many of the products requested, and not

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[7] See Appendix 5

having presented their final task[8]. Moreover, during the teacher's observation, they did not demonstrate an adequate level of acquisition of many of the competences.

The results obtained are reasonable according to their level. Concerning the planned activities, naturally, there was not enough time to do all of them. As one might expect, during the sessions there is a whole range of variables that interfere with the class rhythm: students' behaviour and class management, truancy, students' concentration or the energy dedicated to the activities.

During the twelve sessions that the learning situation lasted, the students were given a lot of opportunities to practise their speaking skill by implementing a communicative language teaching system in the EFL classroom. Role-play, task-completion or opinion-sharing activities are some of the common activities done with 3º ESO B in which communication has been the primary aim. What is more, the final task turned out to be an efficient tool to improve, or at least, encourage them to work on, the students' speaking skills and to analyse how they have progressed from the first to the last session. The rubric designed to assess the selected criterion was effective. Perhaps adding one more level to the scoring scale would have added more correspondence and specificity.

4.1.2. Analysis of questionnaire 1: students

Fourteen[9] of twenty-four students answered a questionnaire in *Google Forms* designed to assess the students' experience and level of satisfaction with the learning situation plan. They submitted their answers after having finished the twelve sessions and presented their work. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: firstly, personal information, and secondly, ten questions related to the learning situation plan.

Above all, it could be argued that the students liked the activities and dynamics they experienced in the sessions. It is true, though, that many of the students felt anxious and uncomfortable with the fact that they had to speak in front of their classmates, and this could indicate that they are not used to speaking. It can be suggested that many of the students were not sure if the activities had helped them to improve their speaking skills and prepare their presentations. This may indicate the need for more activities based on

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[8] Two of the students who failed did present, but their performance in the presentation was well below the required standard.
[9] See Appendix 6

the final task. However, with a small sample size, caution must be applied when reflecting on the students' answers, as the findings may not be too exact. It is important to remember that there were only fourteen participants in the questionnaire.

Figure 1

Number of students from 3º ESO B who have failed EFL in the first two terms

Have you failed the English subject in the first two terms?
14 respuestas
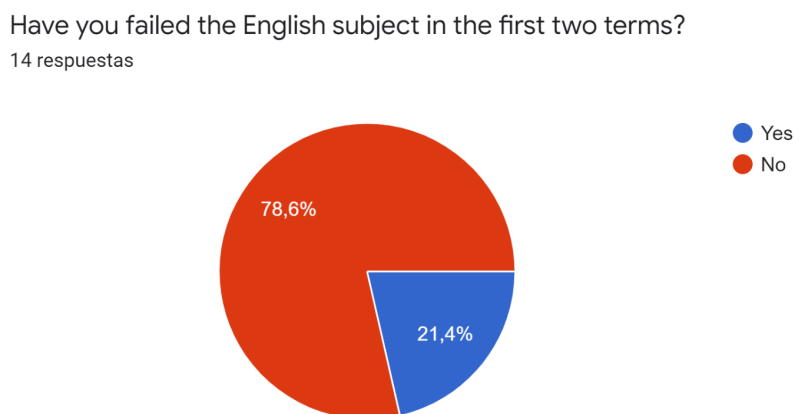
Note. The chart shows how many participants from 3º ESO B have failed the EFL subject in the first two terms of the 2021-2022 academic year.

The pie chart above shows that there are not many students that have fallen behind in the subject's contents and required level. Usually, there are some cases in which a class is composed of many students who have failed the subject, indicating that extra work on their skills will be needed for those. Probably, some of the activities would have been difficult for them, but working in groups could have made the tasks easier.

Figure 2

Interest of the students in the activities of the LS

I liked the activities we did in class.

14 respuestas
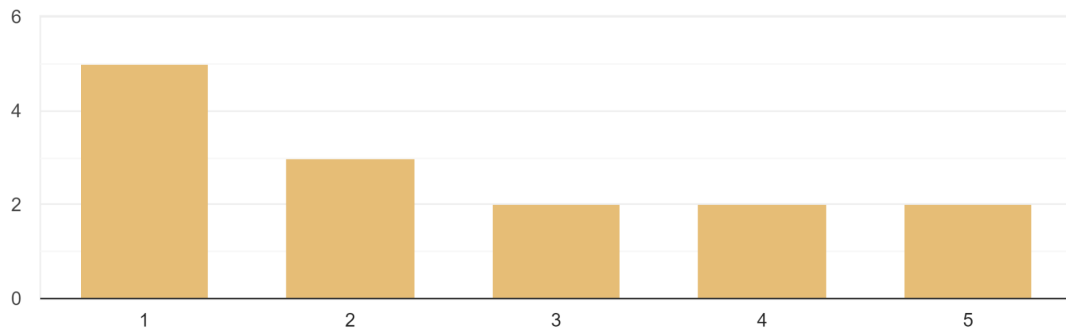
Note. Number 1 represents "strongly agree" and number 5 "strongly disagree". The graph shows the interest of the students in the activities they did in the classroom at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

From Figure 2 it can be inferred that there was a variety of opinions with respect to the activities they did in the classroom. It can be seen that a majority of the students liked the activities, five of them being strongly convinced of this. Then, in the middle of the graph, it is clearly represented that a minority of students remained neutral about their interest in the activities. Surprisingly, it is almost the same number of students who did not like the activities done in the sessions. Four of the students declare that they do not agree with the original statement. A comparison of the two sides of the graph reveals that there is a slight equilibrium between the positive and negative parts of the graph.

Figure 3

Success of the activities in the LS

Which of the following activities did you enjoy the most?

14 respuestas
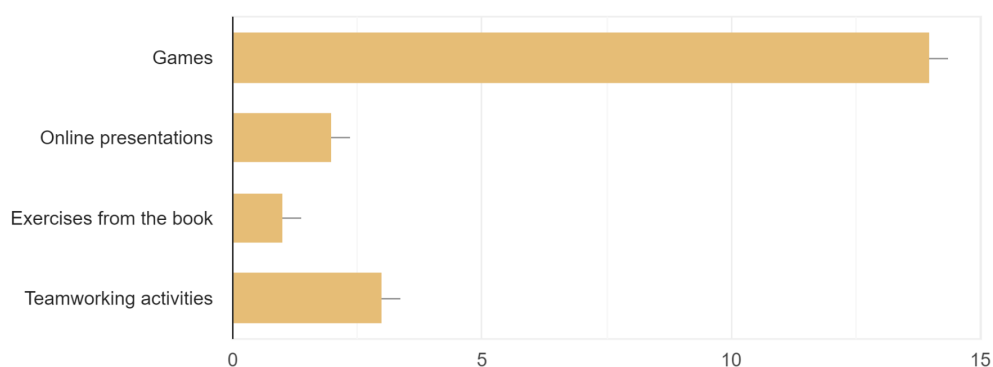
Note. The graph shows what kind of activities the students liked the most during the implementation of the learning situation plan.

   Figure 3 reveals a strong evidence that games were the students' favourite type of activity. All the participants selected this option, which is the one with more votes followed by teamworking activities, which had three votes, online presentations with two votes, and finally, exercises from the book, the most rejected option by the participants.

Figure 4

Difficulty of the activities in the LS

The activities were difficult to carry out.
14 respuestas
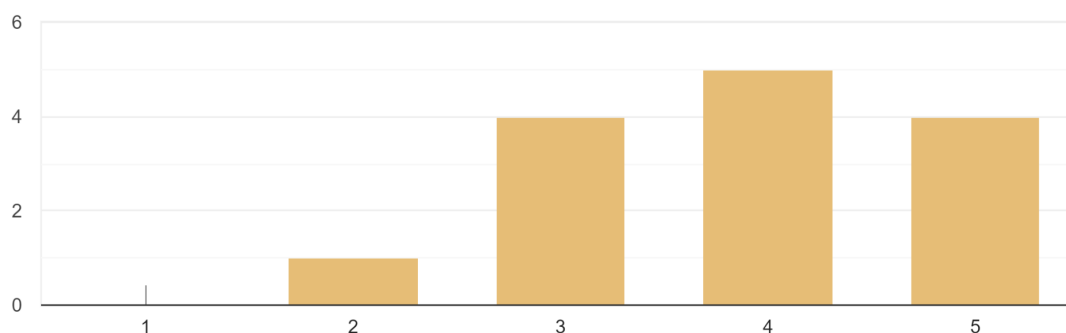
Note. Number 1 represents "strongly agree" and number 5 "strongly disagree". The graph shows the level of difficulty of the activities in the learning situation plan according to the students' perceptions.

   It is apparent from Figure 4 that very few students thought the activities were difficult and beyond their level of English. Four of the students remained neutral whereas just one of them believed the activities were difficult. These answers are perfectly normal since this group of students could be described as a multi-level class where there are a minority of students who have achieved the B1 level, while the rest remains in the A2 level.

Figure 5

Interest of the students in the topic of the final task

Did you like the topic of the final task?
14 respuestas

Yes
No

21,4%

78,6%
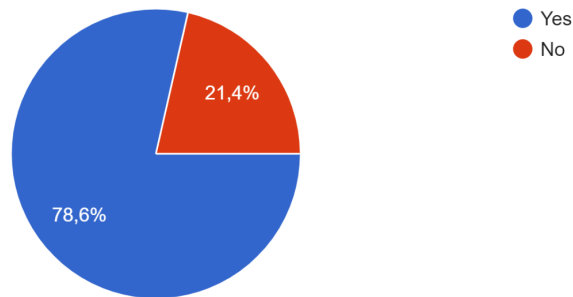
Note. The chart shows the proportion of students who liked the topic of the final task and those who did not like it.

Three of the fourteen participants reported that they did not like the topic of the final task. However, more than half of the students did like it and this was reflected in their presentations. Most of the students talked about interesting crimes and they researched these to get the information they wanted. Therefore, the chart shows a rather positive result. It is always expected that not all the students are going to like the topics teachers choose for their lessons, although in this case a general topic was proposed so that the students could have freedom in choosing a more specific topic in which they were interested.

Figure 6

Students' autonomous work at home

How much time every week did you spend at home doing your homework?

3-4 hours
14,3%

<4 hours
7,1%

>2 hours
50,0%

2-3 hours
28,6%
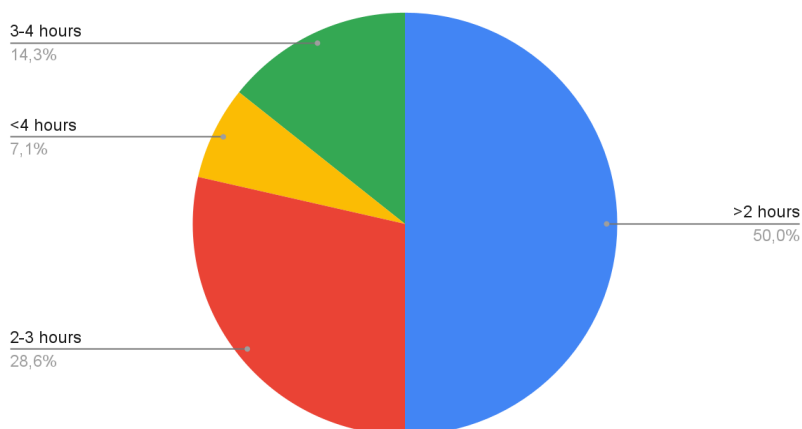
Note. The chart shows the different time ranges students dedicated to their homework outside high school.

On the question of homework, the learning situation plan was not too demanding in terms of activities and exercises the students had to bring to class. The maximum number of activities to do at home was two, and if they took advantage of the time dedicated in the sessions to work on the content and visuals of their presentation, the academic load was little. As can be seen in Figure 8, the average time spent per week on their homework was less than two hours. Only three students spent more than three hours every week working on their homework. A possible explanation for this may be that they did not come to some of the sessions or they did not use the sessions to prepare their presentation.

Figure 7

Usefulness of the activities in the LS

The activities done in class helped me to improve my speaking skill.
14 respuestas
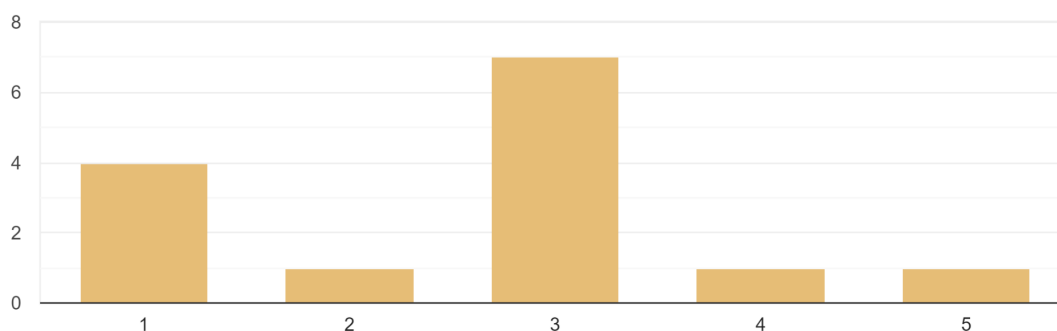
Note. Number 1 represents "strongly agree" and number 5 "strongly disagree". The graph shows if the students think they have improved their speaking skills after having carried out the activities of the LS.

We can see in Figure 7 a diversity of opinions: five students believe that the activities allowed them to work and improve their speaking skills, two of them do not agree with the statement and seven students preferred to select a middle point. This is an interesting result because it shows that students are not really sure about the development of their speaking skills. Perhaps, this uncertainty is due to a lack of time and what they probably need to answer this question is more sessions to keep working. I would say it is reasonable that they are not sure if they have significantly improved their

speaking skill after just twelve sessions. Sometimes it takes months or even years to improve our level of English.

Figure 8

Emotions felt by the students before the presentation

How did you feel before presenting your work?
14 respuestas
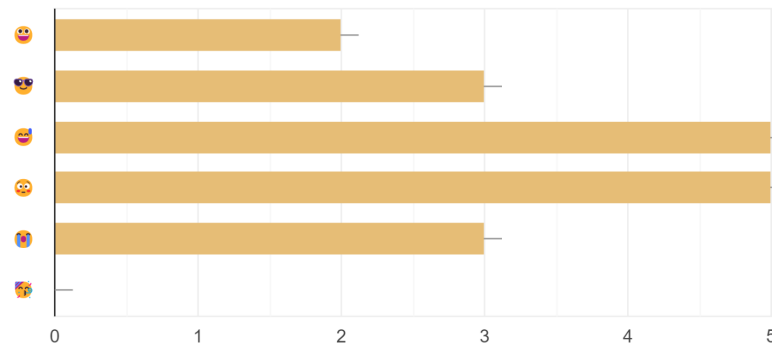
Note. The graph shows the different emotions symbolised by emojis students felt right before presenting their work.

By far, the most selected emotion was a feeling of embarrassment. The second emoji with more votes is the grinning and sweating face, which expresses a feeling of awkwardness. It can be connected to the inexperience of presenting in English and the lack of confidence derived from this. Surprisingly, the emoji with sunglasses had three votes, which means that three students felt proud and confident. Probably, these students belonged to one of the two groups which prepared their presentations and did a good job.

Figure 9

Emotions felt by the students during the presentation

How did you feel during the presentation?
14 respuestas
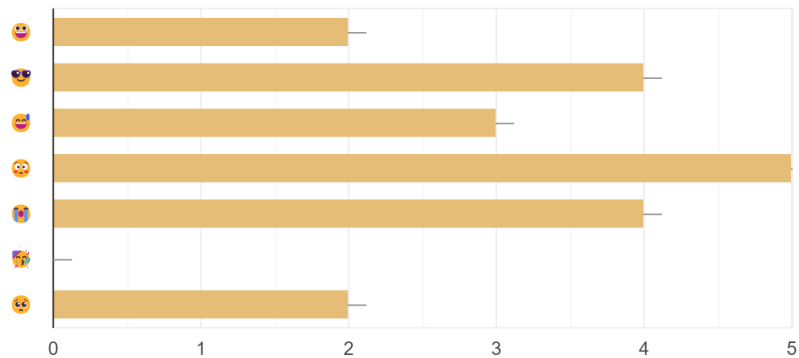
Note. The graph shows the different emotions symbolised by emojis students felt during the presentation.

The results obtained in Figure 9 indicate that the moment in which the students were presenting was the peak of their negative emotions, feeling mostly embarrassment and anxiety. Once more, only three students answered they felt confident while presenting. The same hypothesis for Figure 8 could be applied here: those students who prepared their work were free of anxiety.

Figure 10

Emotions felt by the students after the presentation

How did you feel after doing the presentation in front of your classmates?
14 respuestas
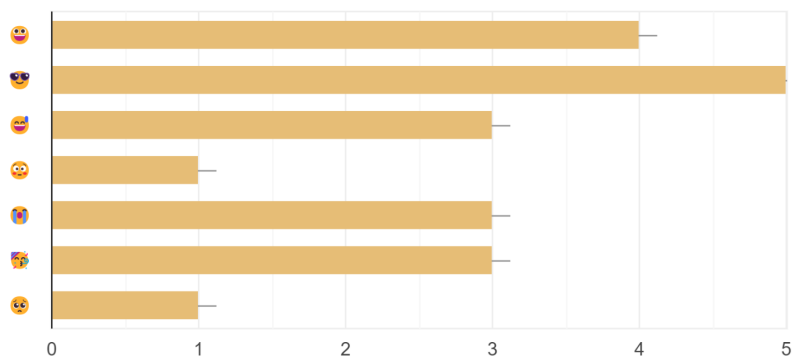
Note. The graph shows the different emotions symbolised by emojis students felt after the presentation.

As can be seen in Figure 10, after the presentation, the emotions felt by the students were mainly positive. Speaking in public is usually a reason to be tense and worried, but

once this comes to an end, it is normal to feel relief. It can be clearly seen in the last three graphs the progression of the students' emotions, from negative to positive, during the sessions devoted to presentations.

Figure 11

Usefulness of the activities in the LS as regards the preparation of the presentation

The activities we did in class helped me to prepare for my presentation.
14 respuestas
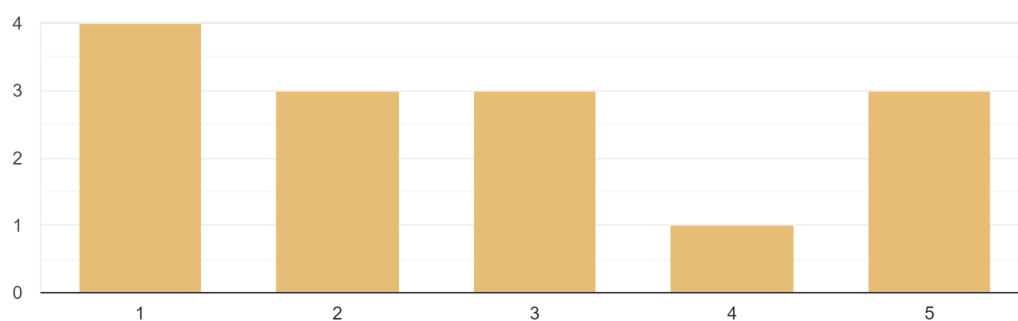
Note. Number 1 represents "strongly agree" and number 5 "strongly disagree". The graph shows the different opinions in relation to the usefulness of the activities in the learning situation as regards the preparation of the final task.

Contrary to expectations, there were only seven students who believe that the activities helped them to prepare for the presentation. Four students do not agree with the statement and three of them remained in a neutral position. It would have been interesting to ask them exactly what they think they needed in order to prepare their presentations. The learning situation included many activities presented over four sessions focussing on how to give effective presentations, but it is true that we did not have time to carry out all of the activities I had planned. Maybe, if there had been the opportunity to do them in class, the students would have felt more confident and prepared for the final task.

4.1.3. Analysis of questionnaire 2: teachers

A questionnaire for teachers was used to analyse the English Department's perspective on oral presentations. The results are necessary to reveal the teaching practices associated with the development of the students' speaking skills in secondary education in terms of methodology, activities and assessment. Although the results are associated with IES Profesor Martín Miranda, they may be a significant starting point to

reflect on the position given to oral presentations in the educational system of the Canary Islands. The findings indicate that presentations are currently one of the most recurrent tasks for students to demonstrate their speaking skills. EFL teachers are sure that before telling their students to prepare a presentation, they all guide them through a scaffolded process in order to encourage the development of the required sub-skills and competences for the presentation. Nonetheless, it seems today the communicative approach has not gained enough ground in the EFL lessons preparing these students for the presentation. Even so, it is seen by half of the English Department as a practical and useful approach inspiring the activities in which students can work on their speaking skills and strategies.

The eight members of the English Department answered the questionnaire. The survey has been limited to IES Profesor Martín Miranda because it has been my internship placement for the past two months. This analysis has given us a small-scale picture of the use of oral presentations as a tool to develop speaking skills in a secondary education school in the Canary Islands. It has also provided a a glimpse of the current practices of instructors in the teaching of English as a foreign language.

The questionnaire, presented in *Google Forms*, is divided into two sections: personal information and teaching practice. The purpose of the first part is to delimit the characteristics of our survey respondents and classify the answers according to their age, gender, years of experience and training.

Table 6

Answers in the first section of the teacher's questionnaire

Gender	Age	Years of experience	Class groups	Recent training
Female	<50 years old	<10 years	2º ESO, 2º BACH.	Yes
Male	25-30 years old	>3 years	1º BACH, 2º BACH.	No
Male	<50 years old	<10 years	3º ESO, 4º ESO, 1º	No

			BACH.	
Female	40-50 years old	3-5 years	1º ESO, 4º ESO	Yes
Female	<50 years old	<10 years	1º ESO, 2º ESO, 3º ESO	Yes
Female	<50 years old	<10 years	1º ESO, 2º ESO	No
Female	40-50 years old	<10 years	2º ESO, 3º ESO, 4º ESO	Yes
Female	40-50 years old	<10 years	1º ESO, 3º ESO, 2º BACH.	Yes

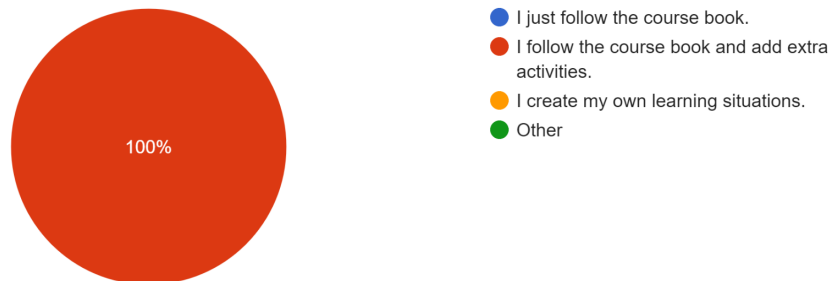*Note*. This table shows the general characteristics of the English Department at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

As can be seen in Table 6, the English Department at IES Profesor Martín Miranda is a department composed mainly of women and just two male EFL teachers. With the exception of one instructor, the English teachers at this high school are middle-aged experienced members who, as a rule, have been teaching EFL for more than ten years. There are only two teachers who do not have so much experience. There are no great differences between those who teach higher levels, i.e. *Bachillerato*, and those who teach students in *ESO*. One of the initial assumptions was that more experienced teachers prefer higher levels of instruction such as *Bachillerato*. However, in this small department composed of just eight teachers, we cannot perceive major differences. What we do know is that female teachers have groups of younger students (1º ESO, 2º ESO…) and the two male instructors teach older students (4º ESO, Bachillerato). It is essential to mention that the number of class groups is evenly distributed. None of the teachers has too many or very few groups/levels.

The second section contains questions addressing the teaching methodology they use in their sessions, the materials used, the kind of activities they bring to the classroom, their assessment tools and their opinion on the use of oral presentations.

Figure 12

Type of materials used by EFL teachers at IES Profesor Martín Miranda

A person observing my sessions would say that in my EFL sessions...
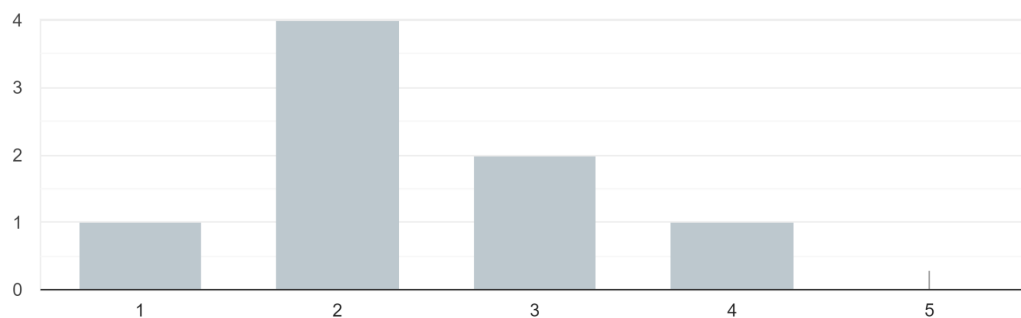8 respuestas

● I just follow the course book.
● I follow the course book and add extra activities.
● I create my own learning situations.
● Other

Note. The chart reflects the materials teachers at IES Martín Miranda use in their sessions during the academic year.

The pie chart above illustrates the unanimity in the use of a course book as the main material for them and their students. The academic year's syllabus is organised based on the thematic units the book contains. Using the book as the foundation of their planning and lessons, all the teachers in the English Department bring extra activities that cannot be found in the book to complement the contents of the book. It would be interesting to know how often they bring extra materials.

Figure 13

Methodology of the EFL lessons

A person observing my sessions would say I use a Communicative Approach.
8 respuestas

Figure 13 shows that just one person is completely convinced that in the EFL lessons, a communicative approach is used. By contrast, another person considers that (s)he does not use this approach. Four teachers agree with the statement, while the remaining two teachers remain neutral regarding their teaching method or approach. Clearly, the findings indicate that in their lessons, they value contextualised communication and interaction, but this does not imply they firmly apply the communicative approach.

Figure 14

Aspects of the communicative approach followed in the EFL lessons

Each group of bars corresponds to the answers of every teacher.
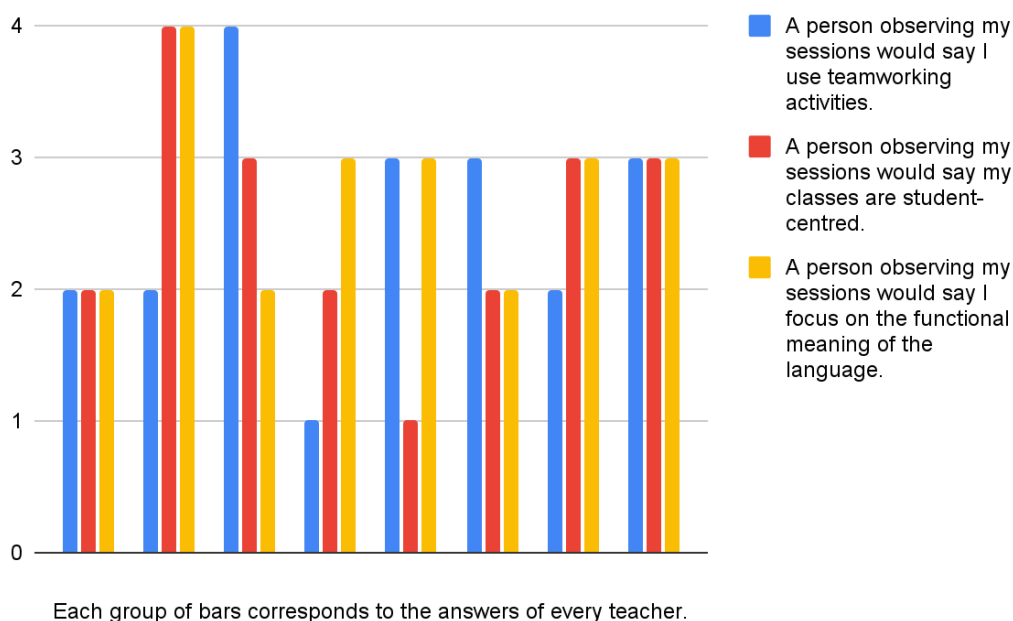
Note. Number 1 represents "strongly agree" and number 4 "disagree". The results show the answers of the eight teachers to questions 4, 5 and 6, related to the characteristics of the communicative approach that are followed in the EFL lessons at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

What stands out in Figure 14 is that the EFL teachers at the high school carry out teamwork activities in the classroom up to a certain level. While one of these teachers

avoids setting up activities to work in groups, the rest of the English Department brings collaborative activities, but their use is limited. This chart is quite revealing because it shows that only one teacher completely supports the advantages and beneficial aspects of letting the students work in groups and interact, and six of these teachers prefer combining these activities with autonomous work in the classroom.

It can be seen that the EFL lessons at this high school do not focus completely on the role of the learner. There has been a coincidence in the number of members who propose a halfway point, giving the same importance to the role of the teacher and the student, and those who still reinforce the teacher's role, but try to focus on the learner as the centre of the process. Only one of them completely agrees with the idea that his or her classes are student-centred and another one completely disagrees. This is a strong evidence that there are still teachers who prioritise teacher-centred lessons (most probably, theoretical lessons) and do not see their role as a mere guide or facilitator for the students.

Regarding the third item, there is once again impartiality in terms of the focus on the functional meaning of the language, one of the main features of the communicative approach. Three teachers agree, four of them remain neutral, and one disagrees. There is no evidence that there is a strong conviction that instead of presenting grammar decontextualised and as a set of rules, they should present grammar contextualised and as a means to convey a specific message, that is, as a language function.

Figure 15

Weekly opportunities to practise speaking skills in the EFL lessons

How many days a week do you practise speaking skills in the classroom?
8 respuestas

● One day
● Two days
● Three days
● Four days
● Five days
● Other
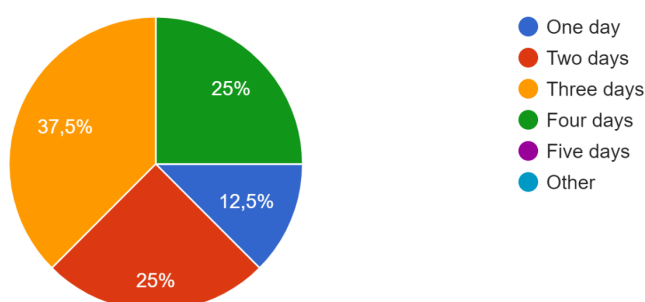
Note. The pie chart shows the percentages of occasions in which students can practise their speaking skills in the EFL classroom at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

Turning now to the consideration of the speaking skill by the English Department in their lessons, from Figure 15 it may be concluded that the standard situation is that the speaking skill is practised at least between two and three days. A minority of the participants go beyond and practise their speaking skill four days a week, which would be ideal for the students to develop their linguistic competence and speaking skills. Undoubtedly, it is discouraging that the speaking skill is still practised in isolation just one or two days a week. This may be proof that EFL lessons are not seen from a holistic point of view, giving students opportunities to practise speaking skills every day.

Figure 16

Speaking activities carried out in the EFL lessons

Which ones of the following activities do you usually do in the classroom?
8 respuestas
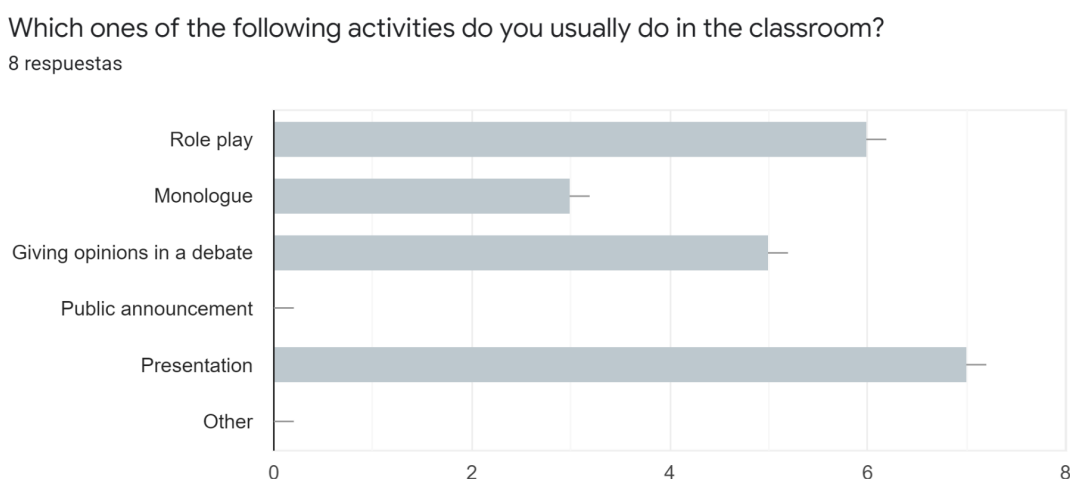
Note. The graph shows the favourite speaking activities by the EFL teachers at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

The results obtained from Figure 16 are that presentations are one of the most recurrent tools, followed by role plays and debates, used by the teachers from the English Department to develop their students' speaking skills. This is a rather remarkable outcome for this research project since it implies that oral presentations are considered beneficial and one of the best ways to see the level of our students when speaking in front of an audience.

Figure 17

EFL teachers' opinion about presentations as a tool to improve speaking skills

Presentations are a useful way of improving the students' speaking skills.
8 respuestas
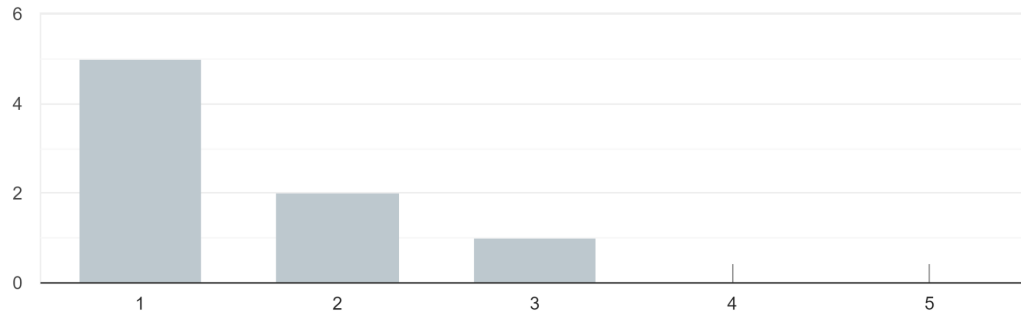
Note. Number 1 represents "strongly agree" and number 5 "strongly disagree". The graph shows the level of importance EFL teachers associate with oral presentations at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

Figure 17 endorses the results of Figure 16. It is evidence that oral presentations stand out as one of the best tools to develop and improve the speaking skill of EFL student. The majority of instructors support its use and just one of them remained neutral about its effectiveness.

Figure 18

Method of assessment of the speaking skill in the EFL lessons

I use rubrics to assess the students' speaking skill.
8 respuestas
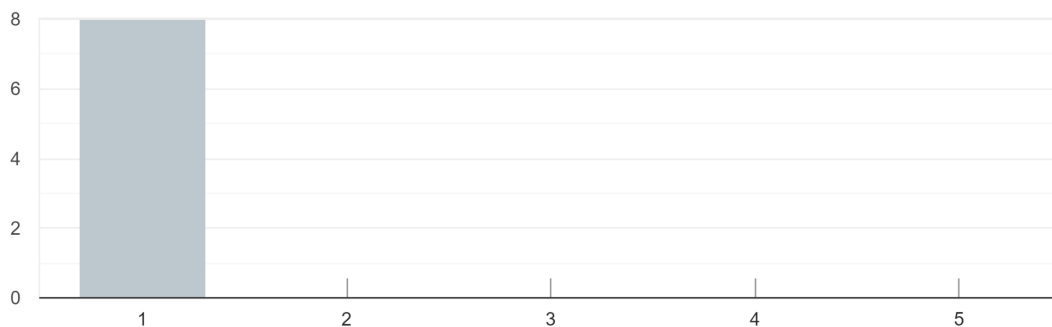
Note. The graph shows the level of use of rubrics to assess the students' speaking skills by EFL teachers.

It can be seen in Figure 18 that rubrics are the leader tool in the assessment of the speaking skill of EFL learners. When asked to comment on their selection, two of the participants gave their opinions and were unanimous in the view that rubrics are a great tool to assess several aspects of an oral presentation and grade their speaking skills.

Figure 19

Different types of assessment used in the EFL lessons

When assessing presentations, which of the following methods do you consider more useful?
8 respuestas
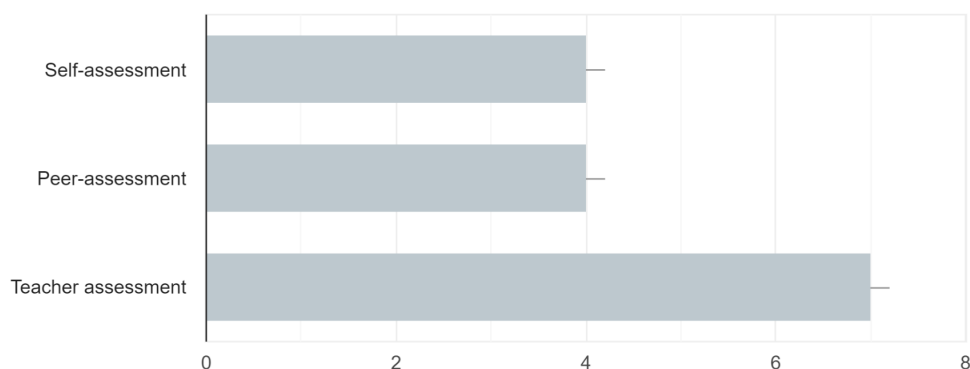
Note. The graph shows the EFL teachers' preference when assessing presentations at IES Profesor Martín Miranda.

Figure 19 demonstrates that in all the cases, the majority of participants agreed that teacher assessment is the main and most useful form of assessment, while peer- and self-assessment can be added to complement and support the teacher's view. Thus, in this way they can avoid a unilateral assessment. This view was echoed by one of the informants who commented on their selection and explained that all of the methods are useful. What is more, another informant explained that when assessing presentations he always gathers one or two students to grade with him.

Figure 20

Number of EFL who teach how to give an effective presentation

A person observing my classes would say that before setting the task, I teach my students how to give an effective presentation.

8 respuestas

● Yes
● No

100%
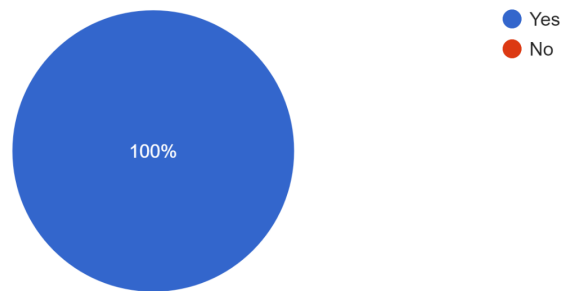
Note. The pie chart shows how many instructors teach their students to give an effective presentation before asking them to present a topic.

Figure 21

Number of teachers who prepare a scaffolded plan before the presentations

A person observing my classes would say that before my students present I create a scaffolded process in which they construct the required sub-skills and competences.

8 respuestas

● Yes
● No
● Other

100%
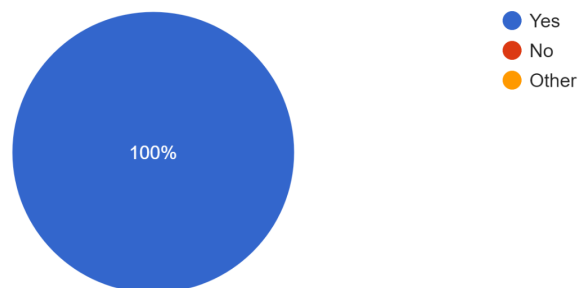
Note. The pie chart shows the percentage of teachers who create a scaffolded process for the students to develop the necessary sub-skills and competences before presenting a topic.

Figures 20 and 21 show that the participants on the whole believe that they use a scaffolded process before the students present. During this process they teach their students how to give an effective presentation, teaching them about aspects such as discourse strategies, body language, or creating attractive and appropriate visuals. Moreover, they set up activities in which the students learn a variety of sub-skills for the

specific presentation they will have to prepare. In other words, before the presentation, they work on the necessary vocabulary, pronunciation, linguistic function and so forth.

Figure 22

EFL teachers' perspective on the long-term benefits of presentations

I believe presentations can benefit students in their future lives, e.g., job opportunities, confidence, social skills...

8 respuestas
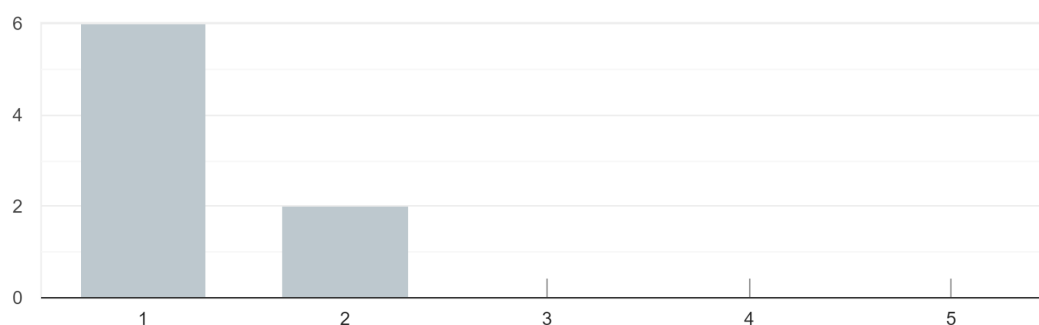
Note. Level of agreement of the EFL teachers at IES Profesor Martín Miranda in relation to the benefits presentations have for the students' future lives.

All the participants agreed that presentations have benefits as regards their future personal and professional lives. As one interviewee said: "They are going to need it everywhere". Other interviewees alluded to the notion of confidence and social skills. Generally, talking about the issue of the advantages of learning how to give effective oral presentations, the participants agreed that teaching them how to present can help them in the acquisition of different skills, such as communicative and organizational skills. As one interviewee put it: "The student should know what to do and how to improve his/her work. The result is important, but in the process to get it, the student learns strategies to face other challenges".

In the final part of the survey, respondents were asked about the disadvantages that teaching and learning how to give oral presentations could have. Some of them answered that there are no disadvantages, but others gave interesting opinions about this matter. Some felt that presentations are time-consuming because not all the students can present in just one session. One informant reported that "it depends on students' perception of this tool as a must to improve their speaking skills or not". They also

highlighted the fact that many students may feel anxious before presenting, but this does not mean that they are not useful. Finally, in relation to the obstacles of instructors when teaching presentations, one individual stated: "you have to take into account the product you want, the language skills you need to cover and the criteria you want to work on. It's also important to explain clearly the aims of the presentation". Therefore, as can be seen, there are many angles to be covered when considering the use of oral presentations as a tool in the EFL classroom to help our students to develop their speaking skills, together with other skills (oral comprehension, written expression…) and sub-skills.

4.2. Discussion

This study set out with the aim of assessing the importance of presentations as final tasks in the development of the speaking skill in secondary education students. Derived from this initial question was the aim of analysing the usefulness of analytic rubrics to assess the students' progress and their presentations. The second aim was to find out if EFL teachers were giving opportunities to their students to practise their speaking skills and, finally, a third aim consisted in evaluating to what extent a communicative approach is useful in a process leading to a presentation as a final task.

With respect to the first research question, the execution of the learning situation plan was successful regarding the students' progression and work. The results of the study showed that students are unaccustomed to speaking activities and active involvement in the EFL sessions. Since they had been in a non-demanding methodology for almost a whole academic year, the results obtained were understandable.

This study confirms that oral presentations are effective in the development of speaking skills. However, in order to take advantage of this tool, it is necessary that the students become part of their learning process, being active participants and getting involved in every debate, activity and reflection made in the EFL class. It is interesting to note that when the time came in which students had to present their final task, only those active during the process students truly demonstrated their progress and hard work. But, those who from the very beginning had decided to be more passive members in the sessions did not pass or their final tasks were very poor. The results of this study show that presentations as means to develop the speaking skill work in a hard-working

and participative atmosphere where motivation is intrinsic, a term used by Dörnyei (1994).

On the question of the use of analytic rubrics as assessment tools, when assessing the students' presentations the rubric was effective because it allowed me to differentiate between different outcomes. It was an easy task to assess during the presentation because this rubric covered many of the aspects to be assessed while speaking and presenting visuals. The students were able to check it before their presentations and all of them agreed on the items this rubric covered. They considered it just and impartial. While observing the students present, the only thing one has to do is to mark all those sections of the rubric that describes better the performance of the student. At the end, all the points are added up and one obtains a final mark. Considering this, the analytic rubric was practical and easy to handle.

Turning now to the questionnaires, the student's questionnaire allowed us to see the perspective of the students in relation to the activities they did throughout the learning process. In general, there was a positive opinion about the activities done in the classroom. However, one anticipated finding was that most of them were not sure if the activities helped them to improve their speaking skill and to prepare their final task. It is important to reflect on the fact that many of the activities planned for the sessions were not done because there was not enough time. It seems possible that if the students had had the opportunity to do them, maybe they would have had a better perspective about their progress. In spite of this, the general level of satisfaction is good. There are some students who did not like some of the activities or experienced too much anxiety and strees when having to present in front of an audience. These findings may help us to understand that students need many more opportunities to practise their speaking skills and learn to get on in these situations. Tasks such as presentations or debates could be highly beneficial for them if they are introduced in the EFL lessons in the long term. Every day there are occasions when students can practise their speaking skills, even if they are working on a reading or a writing task, the activities proposed could encourage them to speak and interact. In a way, part of the results were not very encouraging because there were many students who did not dare to speak in front of their classmates without reading. However, the learning situation was successful if we look at the students' progress from the beginning to the end.

Having a look at the results, it can be assumed that oral presentations could be appropriate tasks for the students if they are presented in an interesting way (appealing topics). Using a communicative approach, providing a scaffolded process and, above all, introducing games where they can learn how to give effective presentations and practising the required vocabulary and grammar, students could highly benefit from oral presentations and enjoy the process.

With respect to the teacher's questionnaire, it must be said that the results were encouraging as a majority of the teachers supported the effectiveness of oral presentations to develop the students' speaking skills as well as the use of rubrics to assess their performance and progress. The findings indicated that presentations are currently the tool that most teachers use to assess speaking skills. Another significant aspect is that there was unanimous agreement about the fact that the teachers provide a scaffolded process so the students can learn or develop the required sub-skills in presentations.

The English Department at IES Profesor Martín Miranda is mainly composed of teachers who have been teaching for more than ten years. There are positive results regarding their training and the results of the questionnaire indicate that they are acquainted with current practices and the communicative approach. These are teachers who use a course book and combine the lessons with extra activities. However, a result that was not so positive is that the students are not always the centre of the learning process and the speaking skill is not practised every day of the week. These results were not very encouraging because it may be the case that EFL teachers are not setting up enough opportunities for the students to practise oral presentations or to participate in activities where they have to interact with a communicative purpose in mind. Moreover, most of them were neutral about their focus on the functional meaning of the language, one of the key aspects of the communicative approach. Finally, it seems that teamwork activities are not always preferred. These findings have important implications for the student's development of the speaking skill since there may be a lack of opportunities to practice and there may be a focus on grammar instead of on language functions.

The initial expectations regarding this study were not beyond the results obtained from the lessons and the two questionnaires. It is clear that there is a tendency to innovate but keeping old habits in the EFL classroom. The findings are not discouraging, but somehow show that there are still certain aspects to be improved, such

as providing more opportunities for the students to speak in front of an audience or follow a communicative approach ideology more often. In relation to oral presentations, the results explain that they can be an efficient and creative tool to foster the development of the speaking skill, but, as it was mentioned, it seems that they should be presented as final tasks more appealing to the students. Both teachers and students have to be fully immersed in the learning process so that the results are positive.

The approach followed in this study should be replicated in the same high school, in different groups and at different levels in order to have a wider view of the benefits of oral presentations. On the one hand, there is abundant room for further progress in determining how presentations can improve the speaking skills of students of different ages and levels. On the other hand, to develop a full picture of teaching practices when it comes to offering opportunities to practise oral presentations or the effectiveness of the communicative approach, additional studies will be needed that analyse these matters in different contexts. It would be interesting to conduct a survey for both teachers and students on a broad scale in Tenerife or the Canary Islands. The reason for this is that the findings here cannot be generalised as they only cover a small proportion of what the education community actually is. Increasing the ratio of research participants would allow us to determine more specific answers to the questions proposed in this research project.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Speaking English is one of the most avidly pursued goals ever. Today, there is a large body of research on the question of developing the speaking skill and which tools can help us to acquire it. Being able to adapt our knowledge of a language to speak in different situations is one of the objectives to achieve whenever an individual starts learning English. In particular, even though reading, writing and listening are essential skills, it seems speaking is the skill which causes more concern. It implies immediacy and requires strategies which allow us to communicate a message and be understood.

The present study was designed to investigate the effectiveness of oral presentations as a tool to develop the speaking skill in the EFL classroom in secondary education. Using a communicative language teaching approach, a learning situation plan was implemented at IES Profesor Martín Miranda during three weeks with 3º ESO B, in which the final task consisted in creating an oral presentation in groups about a crime. Apart from this, the study was conducted to analyse the current teaching practices of EFL teachers and the students' perspective on the use of oral presentations as a tool to work with the speaking skills.

After a literature review and the establishment of a case-study methodology, the learning situation was implemented and teachers and students were participants in a survey which would allow me to have a better understanding of their perspectives about EFL teaching. One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that oral presentations are one of the favourite tools to introduce tasks where the students can practice the speaking skill and teachers can objectively assess their performance using an analytic rubric. In relation to the learning situation, the approach proved to be effective considering that the students enjoyed those activities based on a communicative approach where they had to interact. The questionnaires confirmed that teachers provide a scaffolded process and adequate training in how to give effective oral presentations. However, it was noticed that there is much innovation ahead of us since some of the traditional methods and views are still supported, such as sticking to the role of the teacher as the centre of the learning process or the teaching of specific grammar instead of language functions.

Fortunately, the results are not completely negative. The findings suggest that many teachers usually employ a communicative approach, but not all of their lessons are

based on the practices that characterise this approach. In addition, the research has contributed to our understanding of the importance of introducing in the EFL contextualised classroom dynamics in which the students have to speak in front of their classmates and communicate a message. Students are unaccustomed to dealing with situations in which a whole class is listening to them, their resources when speaking English are limited according to their level and they tend to read the content they have prepared. They feel anxious and, as a consequence, their attitude while presenting reflects their lack of confidence.

There are a number of important factors which one has to consider when implementing oral presentations and expecting positive outcomes. Owing to this, a further study analysing the implementation of the same learning situation in different conditions would be an intelligent next step. More information on the results of other students from different groups, ages and levels in secondary education would help us to establish a greater degree of accuracy about this matter. It is important to remember that one clear source of weakness of this investigation was that the study was only executed in a group, while it would have been interesting to, at least, compare two groups at the same level (e.g. 3º ESO B and 3º ESO A).

This information can be used to promote new practices and innovations in the EFL lessons. Teachers, on the basis of the results, could try to foster more speaking practice in their lessons and give more opportunities for students to prepare presentations. What this study assures is that presentations have a great number of advantages that can improve the lives of students in the long run. From better social skills to more job prospects, presentations are multifaceted in terms of the benefits they can provide for our students once they finish their secondary education phase.

This research project supports strong recommendations in favour of oral presentations. Now that we have seen that these can be actually efficient tools to develop the students' speaking skills, the next step is to broaden the scope of the case study and draw further conclusions after the adaptation of the original learning situation attending to a different context and variables. We can plausibly infer that, on the whole, the original idea of the learning plan works. By means of pertinent modifications, new light will be shed on this topic.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1

Learning situation plan

Gobierno de Canarias
Consejería de Educación,
Universidades y Sostenibilidad

LEARNING SITUATION
CSI Canary Islands

Identification

Trainee's name: Alba Rodríguez Rodríguez
Secondary school: IES Profesor Martín Miranda
ESO/Bachillerato year: 3º ESO B
Academic year: 2021-2022
Timetable fit: From the 5th of May to the 25th of May. Tuesdays 9:10-10:05, Wednesdays 8:15-9:10, Thursdays 11:30-12:25, Fridays 11:30-12:25
Lessons: 12

Justification and description of the communicative task and its relation to PEC, PGA, school projects and other projects

This learning situation has been designed according to Unit 7 – "Fighting Crime" included in *Way to English 3*, from Burlington Editorial. The goals and contents planned for this unit have been adapted and organized progressively in order to prepare the students for the final task: the creation of a presentation in groups describing a crime event. The main intention in the dynamics preparing students for the development of the final task is to teach students how to give effective presentations while simultaneously working with the grammar and vocabulary planned for the unit as well as to test if presentations could be an efficient tool to work on the development of speaking skills. Furthermore, this learning situation aims at following the pedagogical objectives of IES Profesor Martín Miranda. It promotes cooperative work and the development of key competencies, especially the linguistic and digital competence. In addition, this learning situation proposes a learning environment based on action, cooperation, problem-solving,

and, creativity, also present in the school's guidelines. The activities are student-centred and take as a reference the coursebook, as the school's program suggests.

Functional and linguistic content

Language Function: Reporting an event	
Functional exponents: "The suspect was identified by a witness…"; "The gallery's workers are being questioned by the police". **Lexical exponents:** Nouns: *crime, accused, innocent, judge, witness* Adjectives: *unconscious* Verbs: *break into, break the law, cause damage, commit a crime, find guilty, identify, run away, look for clues* **Grammatical exponents:** Present simple passive, past simple passive	**Pronunciation:** the difference between /æ/ and /ʌ/ **Culture:** The Firefighters of New York **Assumptions:** The students already know how to use the present simple passive using the most common forms. They also know some basic words related to crimes such as *dead, escape, thief* or *police*. **Anticipated language problems:** In general, these students are not used to speaking in public in the form of oral presentations and they are not usually active participants in the class. Some of them may have a lower level of English (especially in terms of grammar and vocabulary) and some of them may also be shy, but cooperative work could help them to overcome these obstacles.

EFL Rubric (Social dimension)

Assessment criterion	Social agent			
	Poor (1-4)	Average (5-6)	Good (7-8)	Excellent (9-10)
3. The student produces brief, comprehensible texts, adequate to the recipient and the context, about everyday, general or personal interest topics in order to participate with progressive autonomy in regular or	The student produces brief texts about everyday or general topics, pronouncing and modulating the voice **with constant mistakes,**	The student produces brief texts about everyday or general topics, pronouncing and modulating the voice in a	The student produces brief texts about everyday or general topics, pronouncing and modulating the voice in a	The student produces brief texts about everyday or general topics, pronouncing and modulating the

| less common situations in the personal, public, educational and occupational context. **Learning standards:** 8. The student delivers brief, rehearsed presentations, well-structured and using visuals (e.g. slides or PowerPoint), about particular aspects of interest or related to the student's studies or job, and answers to brief and simple questions by the audience about the content of the presentations. | **pauses and hesitations that make the comprehension of the message impossible**. The student uses traditional and technological resources **poorly and in a deficiently active way**, and **insufficiently** applies linguistic elements that are regular and common, **for which the text lacks cohesion and coherence**. | **quite clear and intelligible way and without interrupting the discourse in an evident way**. The student uses traditional and technological resources in an **active way** and **applies with some ability** a limited repertoire of linguistic elements that are regular and common **to organize the text in a simple way and with enough cohesion and coherence**. | **clear and intelligible way and without mistakes that interrupt the discourse** in an evident way. The student uses traditional and technological resources in an active way and **with motivation** and **applies with ability** a limited repertoire of linguistic elements that are regular and common to organize the text in a simple way and with **adequate cohesion and coherence.** | voice in a **really clear and intelligible way without mistakes that interrupt the discourse**. The student uses traditional and technological resources in an active way, with motivation **and curiosity** and **applies with noted ability** a limited repertoire of linguistic elements that are regular and common to organize the text in a simple way and with **great cohesion and coherence**. |

EFL Rubric (Strategic dimension)

Assessment criterion	Strategic user			
	Poor (1-4)	Average (5-6)	Good (7-8)	Excellent (9-10)

5. The student applies the most adequate strategies to elaborate monologic or dialogic brief oral productions and with a simple and clear structure, transmitted orally or by means of technical devices in order to gradually take responsibility of his/her own learning, to develop his/her autonomy and take advantage of the mutual enrichment of learning in a group. **Learning standards:** 8. The student delivers brief, rehearsed presentations, well-structured and using visuals (e.g. slides or PowerPoint), about particular aspects of interest or related to the student's studies or job, and answers to brief and simple questions of the audience about the content of the presentations.	The student applies **with great difficulty, incorrectly**, even **frequently with help**, **some** of the most adequate strategies to elaborate oral monologic brief productions with a simple and clear structure, carrying out these productions face to face or by means of a technical device, about specific aspects about topics of his/her interest or related to his/her studies or job. **All this makes it difficult to gradually develop a dominant role** in his/her own learning, acquire autonomy and take advantage of the mutual enrichment of learning in a group **and persist in the execution of tasks.**	The student applies **with some ability and correction, using guidance, the most** adequate strategies to elaborate oral monologic brief productions with a simple and clear structure, carrying out these productions face to face or by means of a technical device, about specific aspects about topics of his/her interest or related to his/her studies or job. **All this in order to gradually develop a dominant role** in his/her own learning, acquire autonomy and take advantage of the mutual enrichment of learning in a group, **showing sufficient interest and perseverance.**	The student applies **with sufficient correction, fluency and autonomy** the most adequate strategies to elaborate oral monologic brief productions with a simple and clear structure, carrying out these productions face to face or by means of a technical device, about specific aspects about a topic of his/her interest or related to his/her studies or job. All this in order to gradually develop a dominant role in his/her own learning, acquire autonomy and take advantage of the mutual enrichment of learning in a group, **showing interest and perseverance**.	The student applies **with correction, fluency and autonomy** the most adequate strategies to elaborate oral monologic brief productions and with a simple and clear structure, carrying out these productions face to face or by means of a technical device, about specific aspects about topic of his/her interest or related to his/her studies or job. All this in order to gradually develop a dominant role in his/her own learning, acquire autonomy and take advantage of the mutual enrichment of learning in a group, **showing great interest and perseverance.**

Key competences	
Linguistic competence	**Cultural awareness and expressions**
Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology	**Learning to learn competence**
Digital competence	**Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship**
Social and civic competences	

Methodology
The sessions proposed in this learning situation plan follow a competence-based methodology. From the perspective of the communicative approach, the activities the students will carry out in the classroom will be student-centred and contextualized, trying to be as close as possible to real-life situations. During the implementation of the learning situation, we will focus on the functional perspective of language and we will provide a comprehensible input at all times, using the target language whenever possible. Only when clarifications are needed and to assure the students understand what we are doing, we will switch to the student's first language (Spanish). The activities will be worked individually, in pairs, and in small groups of four. The approach promotes autonomous work inside and outside the school and ICT tools are used to help the students achieve their goals. Finally, in order to fulfill the final task, the activities follow a holistic approach, thus working with all the skills complementing the main skill (speaking).

					Activities and exercises for the learning situation
1. Week one, lesson 1. Date: 5th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
10-15 mins.	**Activity 1. Warm-up activity: *brainstorming*** We start the lesson by asking the students which words come up to their minds when they hear the word "crime". In groups, we give them two minutes to try to remember as many words as possible and write their words in a	Brainstorming	Mentimeter and code for the students Tablets and internet connection Digital screen	Groups of four and three	

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	Mentimeter presentation. They will need a code to submit their words. Then, we can start a short class conversation about TV shows or films about crimes they have recently watched and reflect on why people like them.				
10-15 mins.	**Activity 2.** *This or that?* In a presentation, we show the students different images related to the vocabulary about crime. Every picture comes with a set of two words (preferably one related to the revision vocabulary and one taken from the new vocabulary). We ask the students to choose the word that describes the picture. In this way, we are helping them to learn the new vocabulary in an inductive form by contrasting what they already know with what they do not know yet.	Observation	Online presentation quiz Digital screen Internet connection	The whole class	
20-25 mins.	**Activity 4.** *How to solve a crime?* We start this activity by asking the students how they think a crime is solved. They discuss the matter in groups and then a representative of each group explains their main idea. Then, the activity starts. In this activity, we are going to bring printed images from the slideshow on page 90 (student's book) and also papers with words from the unit vocabulary. First, every student gets an image or a word from the vocabulary. Then, they have to find a person who has the image related to the	Observation	Printed images and vocabulary from page 90 in the coursebook Digital screen	Groups of four and individually	**Homework:** The students do exercises 1 and 2 on page 90. In exercise 1 the students have to point out the three figures in the picture and say who they are (witness, judge, accused). Then, in exercise 2 they should relate the

| | word they have, or the other way around (they should behave in a civilized way during this process). An example of a word-image match would be: student A has an image of a man and a woman looking at some footprints, student B has the word *footprint*, and student C has the word *identify*. They form a group.

The teacher checks if the groups of image-words they have created are correct by showing the slideshow. It is advisory that the teacher starts reading it in a storytelling style. | | | | sentences to these three roles. These two exercises can be useful to reinforce the vocabulary learned in the first session. At class, the teacher will show the answers and will ask for doubts. |

Comments/observations
The last activity planned for this lesson, "How to solve a crime", was ended for two reasons. In the first place, the students did not understand the purpose and instructions of this activity. While they were immersed in doing the activity, I noticed that the expectations and ideas I initially had did not coincide with the situation in the classroom. In the second place, the students were not behaving appropriately, they were talking loudly and the classroom became a mess. That is why I immediately made the decision to stop the activity, ask them to sit down individually and do an activity from the book.

2. Week one, lesson 2. Date: 6th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
10-15 mins.	**Activity 1. Warm-up activity: *guessing my keywords*** Give every student one half of an A4 paper and tell them to write three words associated with the topic of the unit. Then, each student passes the paper to the next student. No one can look at his or her paper. Once everyone has it, break students into groups, and place each group in a	Observation	A4 papers cut in half	The whole class	If the students are not able to keep a calm state in the classroom, this activity could be

					done dividing the class in groups.
	different part of the classroom. They have to clip their paper to their chest or back. Students walk around their space in the classroom speaking to other classmates and trying to guess the three words they have. They can use synonyms but under no circumstance can they mention the keyword to their classmates. During the activity, the teacher could play some music.				
10 mins.	**Activity 2.** *Match A to B* The students do exercise 3 on page 90. First, the teacher reads the title of the exercise and explains what they have to do. Then, the teacher gives them some time to do the exercise, they compare their answers in pairs and we correct it afterwards.	Worksheet	Student's book: page 90 Digital book and screen	Individually and pairs	
10 mins.	**Activity 3.** *A dialogue about law* This is a listening activity in the student's book, page 90, in which students listen to a dialogue in which a guy is in trouble with the police and he is waiting to find out if he will go to prison. First, the teacher plays the audio. While the students listen, they must take general notes and try to answer exercise 1. We correct the exercise in class. Then, the students listen to the audio again for the second and third time so the students can fill out exercise 2.	Worksheet	Student's book: page 90 Digital book and screen	Individually	
15-20 mins.	**Activity 4.** *Introduction to the new linguistic function*	Observation	Presentation with the two versions of	Individually	

| In a presentation, we show the students two texts: one of them is written in passive and the other is not. We ask the students to read the two texts for the first time and identify the main difference between them. The second time they read the texts, we ask them to focus on the difference between the verbs. Once everyone has read the text twice, the teacher asks the students for their opinion. | | a text in the student's book, page 93

Digital screen | | |

| **Comments/observations** |
| We did not have enough time to do the last activity. Since it was the introduction to the new linguistic function, I decided to leave this activity for the following session. |

2. Week one, lesson 3. Date: 10th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
15-20 mins.	**Activity 1. *Remember what was altered*** In this activity, we simulate a contest. The teacher divides the class into six groups. The teacher arranges a series of objects in a part of the classroom and every group looks at this part of the classroom for 30 seconds. Then, the students turn their backs while the teacher alters the order of five objects: the teacher places new objects, removes others, or changes the place of those already present in the scene. The contest begins. Once any group has noticed a new change, a representative in each group has to raise his or	List of sentences	Classroom furniture and objects	Groups of four and one group of three	

	her hand as soon as possible before other representatives do the same thing. The goal is to spot the five differences. The representative has to use the passive in a sentence to say what has changed (the sentence must be created by the whole group). When two or more students have raised their hands, if the first student fails either using the passive or saying the difference, it's the turn of the next student. The teacher can set up more than one scene depending on how fast the students spot the differences. For each correct guess, the group wins one point (the points can be written on the blackboard). The winner is the group with more points. There is a different representative in the same group each time the group participates (i.e. they have to change their role). There has to be a note taker who writes down all the sentences the group has created for the game.			
15 mins.	**Activity 2.** *Look at the scenes and complete.* The students do exercise 6 on page 91. They have to look at the pictures taken from scenes in a film and complete the unfinished sentences putting the verb in the present simple passive according to what they see in the image. E.g. Nick is robbed (image of Nick being robbed). Then, they check the exercise in pairs and the teacher shows the answers.	Worksheet	Student's book: page 91 Digital book and screen		
15 mins.	**Activity 3.** *Are there…?* Students do exercise 7 on page 91 from the student's book. This exercise consists in creating sentences with the words given. Then, students should try to answer the questions	Worksheet	Student's book: page 91	Individually and pairs	**Homework:** the students do exercise 8 on page 91. This is a reading exercise in

			Digital book and screen		which the students fill the gaps using the past simple passive correctly according to the subject of the sentence. At class, the teacher will show the answers and will ask for doubts.
	according to the pictures shown. Then, in pairs, the students compare and check their answers.				

Comments/observations
In this session, we skipped the warming-up activity because the students had not seen the linguistic function yet. Thus, they could not carry out the activity. It was replaced by the fourth activity of the previous session.

2. Week one, lesson 4. Date: 11th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
10 mins.	**Activity 1. Warm-up activity: *The hot potato*** In this game, the students review grammar and vocabulary simultaneously. We divide the class into three groups and the teacher gives them a ball to toss from one to the other. The student with the ball has to create a sentence using the passive and one of the words the teacher has written in the whiteboard. Each group has a note taker who writes the sentences the group is inventing. The group that finishes before the other two is the winner.	List of sentences	Three soft balls Words from the vocabulary written on the whiteboard	Groups of eight	

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10-15 mins.	**Activity 2. *Present simple passive or past simple passive?*** Students do exercise 4 from page 93, from the student's book. This is a "filling the gaps" exercise in which the students should either use present simple passive or past simple passive according to the information presented in each sentence. First, we ask the students to read the sentences and see if there is anything they do not understand. Then, they complete the activity and the teacher corrects it by asking the students for the solutions.	Worksheet	Student's book: page 93 Digital book and screen	Individually	
10 mins.	**Activity 3. *Which verb?*** Students do exercise 6 from page 93, from the student's book. In this activity, there are six verbs the students have to include in the sentences given in coherence with the meaning of these sentences. First, we ask them to read the sentences and see if there is anything they do not understand. Then, they complete the activity and the teacher corrects it by asking the students for the solutions.	Worksheet	Student's book: page 93 Digital book and screen	Individually	
20 mins.	**Activity 4. *Inventing a murder (spider web style)*** The whole class sits in a circle in the classroom. The teacher throws online dice (9 dice version) and takes out a yarn ball. This game is about inventing a story together. The teacher starts taking a thread of the yarn ball in her hands and starts telling the story using the dice ideas. Then, the teacher passes the ball to another person without letting go his/her piece of thread. Every person says one sentence and takes a piece of thread. The funny part of this game is that the thread cannot touch the floor more than	Observation	Story Dice Yarn ball Digital screen and internet connection	The whole class	**Homework:** students do the reading on page 97. At class, the teacher will show the answers and will ask for doubts.

	three times. If this happens, the person who let it fall has to tell the story since the beginning.				

2. Week two, lesson 5. Date: 12th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
15 mins.	**Activity 1. Warm-up activity:** *pose and play* To begin this session, the teacher asks the students to stand up and form two circles. We explain to them that they will be given a piece of paper with a word or expression from the vocabulary for which they will have to strike a pose that represents it. To begin with, the teacher steps forward and says the word accompanied by a physical representation he/she came up with. Now, student A says the teacher's word and action plus his or her word plus the action. The game continues until everybody has finished saying their word.	Observation	Cards with words from the vocabulary	The whole class	
40 mins.	**Activity 2.** *Asking for a report* Students are divided into groups. The teacher brings four images of a crime scene. Half of the students are given *images a and b*, and the other half *images c and d*. In this	Oral interview Written police report form	Student's book: page 95	Groups of four and one group of three	**Homework:** students fill out a police report form that they can find in the student's book,

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| | | Digital book and screen

Four images

Some guide questions in the whiteboard | | page 96. They upload it to Google Classroom. |

activity, the students have an interview in which, in each group, two students ask questions to fill out a crime report and the other two answer the questions according to the picture and the students' own contributions. The roles are reversed to answer the questions about the second image. The teacher gives the students 10 minutes to write a schematic report and rehearse. Then, each pair presents the short interviews.

Although many students share the same image, every group invents their own story of what happens after what they can see in the picture.

Comments/observations
Since the usual situation is that spoken interaction activities take too much class time, I skipped the first activity to do activity 2. Not all the groups presented their interviews. Only three were left for the next session.

2. Week two, lesson 6. Date: 13th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
15 mins.	**Activity 1. *Our group, our final task*** In this session, we will start by explaining to our students the final task. The teacher has to cover the most relevant aspects: what they are going to do (presentation), the topic (crime), materials (PPT presentation, 2.0 or 3.0 tool…), how to do it (in groups, scaffolded process, research, draft…) and main goals. At the end of the explanation, the	Observation	A presentation of the final task	Individually	

	teacher gives some time to the students to create their own groups (five groups of four and one group of three).				
15 mins.	**Activity 2. *Our group's name*** Once the students have created their groups, it is time to choose a name for their group, draw/design a logo and choose a motto that defines them. To design the logo, we can encourage them to use a design app such as Canva. If they like drawing, they can draw it. E.g. Group name: The killer journalists; Logo: a knife stabbed in a camera; Motto: We kill the news, that's why we triumph.	Observation	Tablets and internet connection Poster boards for the students to write the group's information (in case they prefer to present their information in this format)	Presentation groups	
20 mins.	**Activity 3. *Our topic*** The rest of the session is dedicated to researching a topic the students would like to talk about in relation to the crime field (i.e. illegal actions punished by law). They can choose a famous crime (e.g. the *Money Heist*'s robbery, the Zodiac Killings, some story in recent news in the newspaper about a murder…). It is advisory that they use the internet in order to research famous crime stories, gather information about the story they have chosen, or read a newspaper in order to find interesting crime stories. There is also the option to invent their own crime.	Observation	Tablets and nternet connection Poster boards for the students to write the group's information (in case they prefer to present their information in this format)	Presentation groups	**Homework:** the students prepare a short announcement in which they explain their group's name, logo, motto and the topic they have selected. They can bring to the next session the information in a paper, poster board, video…

	In the same document, poster board or presentation in which they present their groups' name, logo and motto, they also have to include the topic they have chosen to present.				

Comments/observations

There were seven absences this day and many of the students' groups had someone missing. Therefore, we could not see the rest of the interviews of the last session. It was not fair for them to do the activities planned for this session because they were meant to be collaborative. Then, I decided to take advantage of the spare activities I could not have done in the previous sessions such as "Remember what was altered" and "Pose and play".

2. Week two, lesson 7. Date: 17th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
10 mins.	**Activity 1. *Our groups*** The groups present their group's name, logo and motto, as well as the topic.	Homework: material with the group's information			
15-20 mins.	**Activity 1. *A good presentation?*** This activity is the beginning of the preparation for the final communicative task. The teacher will play two videos included in a presentation: a good and well-prepared presentation and a bad presentation. In groups, the students have to reflect and discuss the main difference between both videos and which one they liked. They share their opinion with the teacher and the rest of the class in the *Mentimeter* presentation.	Observation	Mentimeter presentation Tablets and internet connection Digital screen	Presentation groups	

Time	Procedure/development (sequence of activities)	Products/ Evidences	Teaching aids and resources	I.P.	Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises
20-25 mins.	**Activity 3.** *Effective presentations: an introduction* We are going to show the students two videos of kids explaining how to give effective presentations and one video with specific tips for body language. These short videos cover the most important rules when presenting, especially how to move and how to look like. In groups, we create a list of rules for their presentations and we hang it on the wall. Besides the suggestions made in the videos, the groups can add new ideas to the list of things they should (not) do when presenting.	Observation	Video 1 Video 2 Video 3 Poster board and markers	Presentation groups	

Comments/observations

Most of the students did not bring the task I had asked them to do: create a group's name, a logo, a motto, and the topic they will talk about in their presentations. I asked those who had the groups' information to give it to me because both had written it on paper and I registered in my class tasks checklist who had done it. For the rest of the students, I asked them to upload to Google Classroom a video, paper or infographic showing their group's information. Then, we did the second activity, which took most of the session. I gave them the last 10 free minutes to work on the research for their presentation topic. We did not do the third activity.

2. Week two, lesson 8. Date: 18th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
55 mins.	**Activity 1.** *A mini-presentation* This session starts by playing a short video about how to make a mini-presentation about a topic. Students should follow the rules as much as possible; however, as they are not presenting a research question, they can avoid	The mini-presentation	Video	Presentation groups	

	explaining methodological matters. In this activity, we want our students to understand how they can present their topic in just a minute and a half, catching their audience's attention and conveying the main ideas of their topic. After watching the video, we give them some time to prepare a short text with an introduction, interesting idea, topic of presentation and conclusion. They should already know the story they will talk about. Afterwards, they present it to their students and the class discusses some mistakes or things they would change in the student's presentations. The aim of this task is to teach students how to make an effective introduction for a presentation and give them the opportunity to work in their presentations at class so they do not have so much work to do during their free time.				

Comments/observations

This mini-presentation was uploaded to Google Classroom instead of presenting it in the classroom. The deadline was Saturday 21st of May, a few days before the presentation of the final task to allow the teacher to correct the students' videos and give them feedback.

2. Week three, lesson 9. Date: 19th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
25 mins.	**Activity 1.** *It's time to shape our stories*	Observation	Student's book: page 96		

	On page 96 from the student's book, activity 3 helps students to shape their story and to plan the full presentation. The teacher uploads the activity to Google Classroom so that the students can see it in their tablets and complete it in groups.		Digital book and screen Tablets and internet connection	Presentation groups
15 mins.	**Activity 2.** *Learning some expressions* The teacher asks the students to do an online exercise in *Wordwall* in which they have to classify useful expressions for presentations in three groups: introduction, list of contents, body and conclusion.	Observation	Digital screen Wordwall exercise	Individually
10 mins.	**Activity 3.** *Presentations need visuals* First, the teacher shows different slides from bad presentations and the students give their opinions about them (if they like them or not, whether it is easy to read or not…). The teacher can lead the conversation by asking questions such as: is it easy to read? can the people at the back of the class see perfectly what is written on this slide? After the debate, the teacher plays the video with some instructions. They should take notes while they watch.	Observation	https://www.orai.com/blog/worst-presentation-ever/ Video	Presentation groups
5 mins.	**Activity 4.** *Kahoot time* To assess the student's knowledge about how to give an effective presentation, the teacher brings a Kahoot to class	Observation	Kahoot	Presentation groups

	with questions about visual aids, body language, and useful expressions… The students do this exercise in teams.			

Comments/observations
I could not access the Wordwall exercise using PC of the classroom. I tried many times using different search engines and there was no success. Instead, we worked and debated about the videos planned for this session and also one of the videos planned for the previous session about body language and tips to present. We also debated about what a bad slide in a presentation is. There was active participation. We did not have time for the Kahoot.

2. Week three, lesson 10. Date: 20th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
15 mins.	**Activity 1. *Speed presenting*** This activity is inspired by the speed dating practice because the students are going to talk with other students about their presentations. During this minute they have to say with whom they are working and the presentation they are preparing. The students stand up in a line. One of the lines, line A, moves to its right after 1 minute. Line B remains in its place, it does not move.	Observation	The tables and chairs need to be arranged in line, chairs in front of each other in each side of the line.	Pairs	
15 mins.	**Activity 2. *Snowball fight*** Each student writes in a piece of paper their doubts or insecurities about this final task. Once everybody has written theirs, they throw it in the air in any direction. After the snowball fight, we start reading the class's papers and comment about them.	Observation	Papers and pens	Individually	

	This activity could be helpful for those students who sometimes are afraid to talk or ask questions since the participation is anonymous.				
25 mins.	**Activity 3.** *Working on our presentations* The students can keep working on their presentation content and their visual aids.	Observation	Tablets and internet connection	Presentation groups	

Comments/observations
I gave the students time to work on their presentations since it was important for me that they took advantage of the sessions and the teacher's help. I knew some of them had not worked enough and most of them did not have the groups' presentations yet. Some of the groups asked for my help in the creation of their presentations' draft and others took the time to finish their mini-presentations. During the last minutes of the session they played Kahoot in groups and the three winners were given a prize.

2. Week three, lesson 11. Date: 24th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
55 mins.	Oral presentations	The oral presentation and visuals	Digital screen Internet connection	Presentation groups	

Comments/observations
Just one of three groups had prepared the presentation for this session, although they did not have prepared their visuals. I gave them some time to prepare a presentation. The rest of the groups presented the next day.

2. Week three, lesson 12. Date: 25th of May					
Time	**Procedure/development (sequence of activities)**	**Products/ Evidences**	**Teaching aids and resources**	**I.P.**	**Differentiation/ Extension activities/exercises**
55 mins.	Oral presentations	The oral presentation and visuals	Digital screen Internet connection	Presentation groups	

Comments/observations
Two groups did not present their presentation because they had not come and also, they had not prepared anything. I did not give them the opportunity to present it another day because they had known when the presentation days were for more than two weeks and it would have been unfair for the rest of the groups to give them one more day.

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Final comments/observations

In general, the main problems that aroused during the implementation of the learning situation were associated with the interferences of classroom management. The students took much time doing the activities and, because of this, many of the planned activities were not done. Also, some of these activities were not as successful as others because the students did not understand them or because they did not behave appropriately. There were also some problems I did not predict, such as issues with the PC: slow software, some webpages did not work, the sound was not high enough… In spite of this and the fact that there was no time to carry out many of the activities, I believe the learning situation was successful and effective.

Appendix 2

Rubric and rubric checklist for the final task

ASSESSMENT CRITERION: SPEAKING				
	Poor (1-4)	**Average (5-6)**	**Good (7-8)**	**Excellent (9-10)**
Use of grammar and vocabulary	- There are a lot of grammar mistakes - Does not use words from the unit vocabulary - Does not use the present and past passive voice	- There are some grammar mistakes - Limited unit vocabulary - Uses the present and past passive voice once or twice	- There are barely any grammar mistakes - Uses many words from the unit vocabulary - Uses the present and past passive voice sometimes	- There are no mistakes in grammar - Uses all vocabulary related to the unit - Uses the present and past passive voice correctly
Fluency and coherence	- Hesitates a lot - Uses Spanish continuously - Incoherent - No detail included in the description	- Several hesitations - Uses Spanish on several occasions - Sometimes incoherent - Low degree of detail included in the description	- A few hesitations - Uses Spanish on a few occasions - Few incoherencies - Medium degree of detail included in the description	- No hesitations - Does not use Spanish - High level of coherence - High degree of detail included in the description
Pronunciation	- Pronunciation is poor - No effort at accent	- Some errors in pronunciation - Little effort at accent	- Pronunciation is good - Some effort at accent	- Pronunciation is excellent - Excellent effort at accent
Use of technology and visuals	- Unskilled use of technology - Poor and disorganized presentation - No preparation at all	- Use of technology with difficulty - Basic presentation - Little preparation	- Use of technology is good - Organized and creative presentation - Enough preparation	- Use of technology efficiently and correctly - Organized, innovative and clean presentation - Excellent preparation
Confidence and body language	- No confidence at all in attitude - Incorrect and negative body language - Does not follow the guidelines presented in class - Reads always from the paper	- Little confidence in attitude - Body language needs to improve - Follows one or two tips - Reads sometimes from the paper	- Some confidence in attitude - Body language is good - Follows some of the tips - Reads from the paper once or twice	- Always confident in attitude - Excellent and positive body language - Follows many of the tips - Does not read from the paper

RUBRIC CHECKLIST FOR THE FINAL TASK

- **Group/Level**: 3º ESO B   - **Timetable fit**: From the 5th of May to the 25th of May

GRADE	Use of grammar and vocabulary				Fluency and coherence				Pronunciation				Use of technology and visuals				Confidence and body language			
	POOR 1-4 (0)	AVER 5-6 (1)	GOOD 7-8 (1.5)	EXCEL 9-10 (2)	POOR 1-4 (0)	AVER 5-6 (1)	GOOD 7-8 (1.5)	EXCEL 9-10 (2)	POOR 1-4 (0)	AVER 5-6 (1)	GOOD 7-8 (1.5)	EXCEL 9-10 (2)	POOR 1-4 (0)	AVER 5-6 (1)	GOOD 7-8 (1.5)	EXCEL 9-10 (2)	POOR 1-4 (0)	AVER 5-6 (1)	GOOD 7-8 (1.5)	EXCEL 9-10 (2)
STUDENT																				
*****, César		+			+					+				+				+		
*****, Manuel		+			+					+				+			+			
*****, Acaymo			+					+			+			+					+	
*****, Giovani			+				+				+					+		+		
*****, Xyomara			+				+				+					+		+		
*****, Leonid																				
*****, Aroha				+				+				+				+				+
*****, Reachel																				
*****, Noah																				
*****, Alexander																				
*****, Erika				+				+				+				+				+
*****, Anabel				+				+				+				+				+
*****, Thais																				
*****, Cristian				+				+				+		+						+
*****, Yareth			+		+					+						+		+		

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*****, Mario		+			+			+		+			+		
*****, Michel		+			+			+		/		+			
*****, Sofía	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
*****, Saray			+			+			+			+			+
*****, Nohemi			+			+			+		+			+	
*****, Sheila		+		+			+					+	+		
*****, Abraham	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
*****, Duane		+			+			+		+			+		
*****, Paula			+			+			+			+			+

Appendix 3

Class tasks checklist

CLASS TASKS CHECKLIST
Learning situation "CSI Canary Islands"

Group/Level: 3º ESO B   **Timetable fit:** 5th of May-25th of May

	Lesson 1 — Brainstorming (0.2)	Lesson 2 — Book exercises (0.2)	Lesson 3 — Book exercises (0.2)	Lesson 4 — Book exercises (0.2)	The hot potato game (0.2)	Asking for a report (0.2)	Written police report (0.2)	Group presentation (0.2)	Mini-presentation (0.2)	Final task presentation (0.2)
*****, César	+	+	+	+	+	+	/	/	/	+
*****, Manuel	+	+	+	+	+	+	/	/	/	+
*****, Acaymo	+	+	+	+	+	+	/	+	+	+
*****, Giovani	+	+	+	+	/	+	+	+	+	+
*****, Xyomara	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
*****, Leonid	+	+	+	+	+	/	/	+	/	/
*****, Aroha	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
*****, Reachel	+	+	+	+	+	/	/	/	/	/
*****, Noah	+	+	+	+	+	/	/	+	/	/
*****, Alexander	+	+	+	+	/	/	/	+	/	/
*****, Erika	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

*****, Anabel	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
*****, Thais					+	+				
*****, Cristian	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
*****, Yareth	+	+	+	+	+	+				+
*****, Mario	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
*****, Michel	+	+	+	+	+	+				
*****, Sofía	+	+	+	+	+					
*****, Saray	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
*****, Nohemi	+	+	+	+	+	+				+
*****, Sheila	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
*****, Abraham	+	+	+	+	+					
*****, Duane	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
*****, Paula	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Appendix 4

Sample of the observation checklist for key competences

OBSERVATION CHECK SHEET FOR KEY COMPETENCES

Pupil's name: Achievement	Week 1				Week 2				Week 3			
	Little Adequacy	Average Adequacy	High Adequacy	Excellent	Little Adequacy	Average Adequacy	High Adequacy	Excellent	Little Adequacy	Average Adequacy	High Adequacy	Excellent
Linguistic competence												
Understands and is being understood both orally and written												
Language in use and reflection about the language depending on the context												
Digital competence												
To look for and get electronic information												
Responsible use of the ICT												
Cultural awareness and expression												
To be aware of the different cultural elements: music, art, literature												
Ability for the artistic expressions												

Learning to learn competence												
To be aware of the way to learn and reflect about it												
To dedicate time and effort to learn and reflect about what we have learnt												
Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship												
Awareness of the need of autonomous study												
Ability to work alone and in cooperation												
Social and civic competence												
Awareness of the different cultures that surround us												
Ability for the multicultural dialogue												

Appendix 5

Students' final marks

FINAL MARK
Learning situation "CSI Canary Islands"

Group/Level: 3º ESO B   **Timetable fit:** 5th of May-25th of May

	Behaviour (1 p.)	Class tasks (2 p.)	Final task (7 p.)	Final mark
*****, César	0.5	1,4	2,8	4,7
*****, Manuel	0.5	1,4	2,1	4
*****, Acaymo	1	1,8	5,25	8,1
*****, Giovani	0	1,8	5,25	7,1
*****, Xyomara	0	2	5,25	7,3
*****, Leonid	0	1,2	0	1,2
*****, Aroha	1	2	7	10
*****, Reachel	1	1	0	2
*****, Noah	0	1,2	0	1,2
*****, Alexander	0	1,2	0	1,2
*****, Erika	1	2	7	10
*****, Anabel	1	2	7	10
*****, Thais	1	0,4	0	0,4

*****, Cristian	1	1,8	6,3	9,1
*****, Yareth	1	1,4	4,9	7,3
*****, Mario	1	1,8	4,9	7,7
*****, Michel	1	1,2	3,15	5,4
*****, Sofía	1	1	0	2
*****, Saray	1	2	7	10
*****, Nohemi	1	1,4	6	8,4
*****, Sheila	0	2	3,9	6
*****, Abraham	1	1	0	2
*****, Duane	1	1,8	4,55	7,4
*****, Paula	0	2	6,65	8,7

Appendix 6

Students' questionnaire: participants

Gender
14 respuestas

- Female
- Male
- Other

35,7%

64,3%

Age

	14 years old	15 years old	<15 years old