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Contents

Abstract

Nowadays, the presence of oral communication strategies when it comes to learning a foreign language is indisputably fundamental. In this research project, the objective is the introduction and development of oral communication strategies through activities based on three different methodologies, which are Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Learning. This hypothesis is supported by three theoretical assumptions established after a period of research, and these can be summarised in the following way: These three methodologies undoubtedly foster the development of the communicative competence rather than the grammatical competence; the focus of attention of these methodologies is oriented mostly towards real-life events and authentic language production; and these methodologies coincide in contributing together to the development of L2 students in terms of their oral communication strategies.

These methodologies have been tested and discussed by means of the implementation of spoken interaction activities during the practicum period that is part of the masters' degree in English teaching. Two groups of Spanish high school students have participated in this study; they are in the first year of Bachillerato, therefore belonging to an intermediate level of English. This masters' thesis has been conducted due to several materials destined to collect data: a students' questionnaire as well as a teachers' questionnaire; a continuous assessment rubric and a communicative task rubric; my own observations in class combined with diary entries and notes, and my high school tutor's perceptions about each lesson. The results obtained from the application of the activities have been presented and examined, to then state that the data that has been gathered is unfortunately not enough, making the outcomes sort of unresolved. Consequently, it has been considerably complex to verify the authenticity of my hypothesis and provide an answer to the research questions proposed for this masters' thesis.

Even though my hypothesis has been considerably demonstrated, some ideas in relation to the topic of this research project have been acquired in order to continue investigating and apply them in future studies or in my future profession as an English teacher.

Key words: Communicative competence, Communicative Language Teaching, Cooperative Language Learning, English teaching, Foreign language, Observations, Oral communication strategies, Questionnaire, Rubric, Spoken interaction, Task-Based Language Teaching.

1. Introduction

This is obviously not the first time that oral communication strategies have been the subject of study. For instance, several authors such as Nakatani (2005), Nijaradze, & Doghonadze (2015) and Oxford (2017) have already done research respecting oral communication strategies in relation to the educational field; especially, their relationship with second language acquisition and learning strategies.

Therefore, it is undeniable to say that the use of oral communication strategies by second language learners is becoming quite a relevant topic, as there seems to be among English teachers a debate in the sense that there is uncertainty with regard to which methods and activities may be employed to promote the oral communication strategy use. Considering this issue, the aim of this research project is to suggest the employment of three different methodologies – Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Learning – that may be combined in order to foster the use of oral communication strategies.

A series of authors have already introduced and analysed each methodology separately as well as the effectiveness and helpfulness they provide in the field of language teaching. For example, Long & Crookes (1992) offer several approaches to Task-Based Syllabus Design, and Nunan (2013) addresses essentially Task-Based Language Teaching and suggests multiple ideas to design tasks; then, Littlewood (1988) introduces Communicative Language Teaching and the distinct types of communicative activities; furthermore, Richards & Rodgers (2014) present the main notions about Cooperative Language Learning as well as different task types. Nevertheless, I intend to do something slightly different, that is, the intention is to answer three research questions that have been proposed for this study, which are as follows:

1. Do English teachers truly focus on activities involving spoken interaction in the classroom? Or are they actually activities based on speaking production?

2. Therefore, are learners able to acquire the necessary oral communicative strategies to be proficient in English spoken interaction contexts through the activities that will be employed in this study?

3. Which way do Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching and Cooperative Language Learning affect the way learners foster

their communicative competence, their authentic language production, and their enhancement of oral communication strategies?

In order to achieve these goals, I will start this research project with a literature review section where I will introduce three theoretical suppositions which I believe that the three aforementioned methodologies have in common. Then, I will proceed explaining in detail each methodology, addressing the most important characteristics of them as well as their correlation; and also, justifying why they are so relevant to this study. After that, I will present a series of concepts, which are Formal Reduction Strategies, Willingness to Communicate, and Metacognitive Strategies, all of them connected with Second Language Acquisition; and subsequently, related to the topic of this dissertation. Besides, at the very end of the literature review section, I will briefly mention the research questions that have been selected for this research project.

The next section is the methodology, where I will clarify the procedure that I followed so as to conduct this study with the help of a practical context, which has been the practicum period at high school. Then, I will succinctly describe the multiple materials that I have employed throughout this study with the objective of collecting data. These materials are the following: a teachers' questionnaire and a students' questionnaire; a continuous assessment rubric and a communicative task rubric, and my observations – diary entries and notes – during the classes as well as my high school tutor's observations. Later, I will talk about the different concepts that are related to the activities that have been implemented during the practicum, such as the types of communicative activities, task-based activities, and Cooperative Language Learning activities that have been applied. To finish with this section, I will explain the activities that I decided to implement in class; however, I will not reveal any information regarding the results of these activities, as this is reserved for the following chapter.

The penultimate section involves the results and corresponding discussion of the questionnaires, the rubrics, the comments and observations of my high school tutor as well as mine, and the several activities that have been implemented during the practicum period. Moreover, all the activities will be related to the concepts previously established in the methodology section.

The last section of this research project contains some conclusions regarding everything that has been presented and discussed until that point; especially, it is the moment in which I will state if I have succeeded in demonstrating my hypothesis or not,

to then conclude by proposing myself a few goals for further investigation concerning the topic of this study.

This research project has also been conducted due to personal reasons. I have always been interested in speaking and spoken interaction skills, and I think that nowadays they could be perfectly defined as the most complex skills to be implemented in the class basically because most of the students are reluctant to cooperate and participate. That is to say, some are shy, some are always speaking in Spanish, etc., so all these factors together may complicate teaching these skills to a certain extent. Hence, related to these skills, there are the oral communication strategies, which is why I decided to do this essay.

2. Literature Review

Among the diverse methodologies that could be used and applied, Communicative Language Teaching as well as its close relative named Task-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Learning, are the most suitable for this study, as they certainly have several similarities in common.

This specific relation is based on three theoretical assumptions shared by these pedagogical theories previously mentioned and which may be presented:

1. All of them undoubtedly foster the development of the communicative competence rather than the grammatical competence.

2. The focus of attention is oriented mostly towards real-life events and authentic language production.

3. There is a common contribution to the development of L2 students in terms of their oral communication strategies.

The reason behind introducing these statements is the support every single one of the aforementioned teaching approaches provide to L2 students in their learning process and, more specifically, in the progress and improvement of their spoken language and oral communication strategies. Having said that, it is convenient to highlight the relevance of both these shared ideas and teaching theories throughout this study and the fact that they will be defended. In addition, the effectiveness of them will be examined and tested via practical means, and therefore, they will be reviewed and further analysed in the results and discussion section of this dissertation.

In order to proceed, it is necessary to introduce then each of the three methodologies selected for this study, as well as their relationship with the previously mentioned ideas.

2.1. Communicative Language Teaching

First of all, it is an approach which, as can be inferred from its denomination, defends the idea that the act of teaching should adopt communicative strategies and their very own transmission to students, as well as not exclude and certainly prioritise the teaching of the communicative competence while teaching a language.

Also, in other words and according to Richards (2006), the Communicative Language Teaching approach "can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom" (p. 2).

Regarding its origins, it must be said that this approach began to acquire relevance in the 1970s exactly when applied linguists and teachers started to question the effectiveness of the methods used at the time; that is to say, applied linguists sought an approach to language teaching whose main task were to develop the learners' communicative competence instead of focusing too much on learning structures of all kinds. In other words, they inhibited an approach to go beyond the usual linguistic competence, which is why they questioned the Situational Language Teaching (SLT) approach back then, as it essentially consisted of practising basic linguistic structures in contextualised activities (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Nevertheless, there were other methods apart from SLT that arose earlier in the twentieth century and that did not promote exactly what CLT does. Specifically, this is a reference to the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, and Behaviourism or the Audio-Lingual Method. First, the Grammar-Translation Method – which used to be called the Classical Method because it was employed at the beginning in the teaching of the classical and foreign languages – fostered teaching the grammar of the target language so that students could understand and get familiar with the grammar of their own mother tongue, which would inevitably lead to speaking and writing in their native language better (Chang, 2011; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). However, the underlying idea that the Grammar-Translation Method transmitted is that, as would occur in SLT later, there is a strong tendency to focus on the linguistic form, that is, grammar and vocabulary are considerably studied – affecting positively both reading and writing –, whereas skills such as speaking and listening are overlooked, even pronunciation entirely neglected (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Now, the Direct Method is another approach previous to CLT whose purpose was to learn to use the target language in order to communicate. It became popular once the Grammar-Translation Method did not offer positive results concerning the employment of the target language in terms of communication. One of the differences with the Grammar-Translation Method is that the Direct Method does not permit the use of any sort of translation, that is, meaning is transmitted explicitly in the target language by means of

employing examples and visual aids, but never resorting to the student's native language. Besides, there is a focus on vocabulary acquisition through contexts or topics in which there are oral communication (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Finally, the Audio-Lingual Method, just as the Direct Method, is another oral-based approach, although the Audio-Lingual Method concentrates on teaching the use of grammatical sentence patterns, instead of fostering vocabulary acquisition through contexts. A much more remarkable difference between the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method is that the latter uses linguistics and psychology as a basis. Accordingly, Skinner introduced at the end of the 1950s a few aspects from behavioural psychology which defended the idea that "... the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning – helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement …" with the objective of overcoming the habits related to their native language and acquire the habits associated with the target language (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p. 35).

These approaches give us a hint with respect to the main reason why CLT emerged and became popular: the need to modernise and offer new directions in language teaching. That is to say, the result of this necessity is what people referred to as CLT, an approach which according to Richards & Rodgers (2014) has been described from the very beginning as a way of achieving communicative competence through language teaching, as well as an approach that recognises language and communication as mutually dependent and proposes activities that allow the different skills (reading, speaking, listening…) to occur simultaneously, as it would most likely happen in real life.

From this information, it can be inferred that it is possible indeed to adopt CLT as an approach to foster the students' communicative competence with respect to second language acquisition, while at the same time ensure that there is not an excessive focus on teaching and learning the grammatical competence so that the communicative part does not become eclipsed or overlooked.

As indicated previously, CLT promotes the teaching of the communicative competence. This term was specifically coined by Hymes in the 1970s (1972, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) with the purpose of comparing language from a communicative point of view and Chomsky's theory of competence. On the one hand, Chomsky stated that linguistic theory should be concentrating on "… the abstract abilities speakers possess that enable them to produce grammatically correct sentences

in a language. It was based on a cognitive view of language."; on the other hand, Hymes defended that Chomsky's view of linguistic theory should be included within a more general theory along with communication and culture (pp. 87-88). In addition, Hymes (1972, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014). believed that students who have acquired the communicative competence possess both knowledge and ability for language use with regard to the following characteristics:

- Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible
- Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available
- Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated.
- Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails (p. 88).

In the 1980s, the term communicative competence was further developed at a pedagogical level by Canale and Swain (1980, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) in a paper elaborated by them, explaining that within the communicative competence, there are four dimensions: Grammatical competence – identified by Chomsky as Linguistic competence, and referring to "… grammatical and lexical capacity" –, sociolinguistic competence – comprehending the social context where the communication takes place; for example, role relationships, the communicative purpose for interaction, etc. –, discourse competence – it makes reference to how individual message elements are perceived and how meaning is portrayed considering its relation to the discourse, and strategic competence – alluding basically to the use of oral communication strategies; for instance, maintaining or repairing the communication process between interlocutors – (p. 89).

As can be contemplated, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), in terms of its communicative approach, has been supported by both theory of language and theory of learning. The former cluster has as a goal to concentrate on "language as a means of communication" (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 87), which is precisely what CLT intends to do and what has been presented as one of the three theoretical assumptions; whereas the latter one would be referring to the use of several concepts from learning theory in CLT lessons such as the communication principle, the task principle and the meaningfulness principle. The communication principle basically refers to the idea that there are specific activities which include real-life events and real communication that

unavoidably further language learning. Then, the task principle alludes to the notion of conducting activities that involve using language to fulfil significant tasks so as to foster language learning. Last, the meaningfulness principle, which can be understood as the idea that any language conceived as meaningful promotes the student's language learning process (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).[1] As can be contemplated, these aforesaid principles also have a strong relation with the assumptions that have been stated so far.

There are several experts that definitely support the idea of using CLT in the sense of acquiring and developing language by means of employing communication (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Littlewood, 1988; Nunan, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2011). In fact, this idea has been constantly associated with Task-Based Language Teaching, for both approaches attempt to contribute to the students' learning process, specifically through the use of tasks that are characterised by having a context or a real-life situation which inevitably promotes the appearance and subsequent improvement of certain aspects of communicative language use and knowledge related to grammar, apart from the production of authentic language (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This is so because the aim is not to completely ignore the grammatical competence and impose the communicative one on learners, but to find a balance between these two.

Likewise, a group of authors defend that CLT is presented as an approach based on a functional syllabus, involving teaching and aspects of language. Moreover, it is stated that using just a structural view of language would not be sufficient to explain the way language is employed as a means of communication, which is why a functional viewpoint is required, as it implies the idea that not only can a linguistic form express a number of functions, but also a communicative function can be expressed by several linguistic forms. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Littlewood, 1988; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This statement recalls once again the idea that CLT is an alternative to assure students can produce authentic language and practise their communicative competence through a functional view or way.

Therefore, it can be stated without any hesitation that a connection exists between this aspect of contextualised tasks concerning CLT and the second assumption that has been mentioned at the beginning of this section: "The focus of attention is oriented mostly towards real-life events and authentic language production". That is to say, it is

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[1] In case you would like to know more about theories that underpin CLT, please consult Richards and Rodgers (2014), pages 87-91 for further information.

not impossible to use CLT with the objective of guaranteeing helpful language production while using real-life activities.

Apart from what has been mentioned, it is considerably relevant to briefly introduce some processes highlighted by Cook (2008, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 91) with regard to language learning in CLT that is actually influenced by learning theories such as the creative-construction hypothesis, the particularly interactional theory and the sociocultural learning theory:

- Interaction between the learner and users of the language
- Collaborative creation of meaning
- Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language
- Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding
- Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language
- Paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence
- Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things
- Learning as social mediation between the learner and another during which socially acquired knowledge becomes internal to the learner
- Learning facilitated through scaffolding by an expert or fellow learner (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Richards & Rodgers, p. 91)
- Learning through collaborative dialogue centering on structured cooperative tasks.

Before continuing, it would be appropriate to mention also the roles that should be adopted by teachers and learners while employing CLT, as they make a significant change. Recent ideas reported by Larsen-Freeman & Anderson (2011) as well as Richards & Rodgers (2014) argue that teachers should be facilitators of language production, that is, they must be the ones in charge of helping students to learn and produce real and effective language by means of communication and communicative activities. Besides, the teacher has the role of a guide to ensure that students are going through the correct path. Littlewood (1988) coincides with these authors; however, he adds that the teacher should also be a sort of "co-communicator", sharing the responsibility with his pupils (p. 19). As regards learner roles, it is common to conceive students as negotiators and communicators of meaning. Pupils now acquire a more

responsible role and are invited to be more interactive and participative in classroom activities (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Littlewood, 1988; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The main aspect here is that these roles that are frequently adopted with CLT can be regarded as plainly innovative since they are completely different from the traditional ones, basically because teachers are used to have the active role; in other words, they are the protagonists of the lesson, whereas students play the passive role, most of the times involving no interaction whatsoever neither between students and the teacher nor between students themselves.

2.2. Task-Based Language Teaching

Previous studies have referred to Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), also known as Task-Based Instruction (TBI) as a branch, development, or even "strong version" – meaning that a focus on form, which is going to be introduced later on in this subsection, is rejected (Nunan, 2013, p. 93) – of the communicative approach, also named Communicative Language Teaching (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2014), basically because it follows a number of notions that are defended in CLT: Activities that imply real communication definitely allow language learning to occur; activities that necessarily involve the usage of language so as to accomplish the given tasks; and authentic language undoubtedly contributes to the learning process (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Seedhouse, 1998).

The term TBLT is generally understood to mean any kind of situation in the field of language teaching where functional tasks are utilised with the purpose of concentrating on producing effective language, and therefore, communication for the real world as well as meaning (Van den Branden, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2014).

In addition, Larsen-Freeman & Anderson (2011) contend that TBLT could also be defined as an approach in which language is acquired and developed by means of practise and constant use, as they really learn the language that they need to acquire for a certain task just to achieve it successfully.

Having said that, it can be stated without any sort of hesitation that TBLT represents the second assumption previously established, that is, the idea that "the focus of attention is oriented mostly towards real-life events and authentic language production".

Besides, it is worth mentioning some key assumptions proposed by Feez (1998, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) that very well highlight and summarise a series of principles with regard to TBLT:

- The focus is on process rather than product.
- Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning.
- Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks.
- Activities and tasks can be either: those that learners might need to achieve in real life; those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom. This would be a reference to real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks, which are going to be presented at a subsequent time.
- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus are sequenced according to difficulty.
- The difficulty of the task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the task, the language required to undertake the task, and the degree of support available (p. 176).

Now, TBLT can be considerably regarded as a current approach, since it was born basically in the mid-1980s when researchers started employing tasks as a way of obtaining more information about Second Language Acquisition (SLA). The people in charge of these investigations focused their attention on the oral communication strategies as well as the cognitive processes second language learners utilised. As a result, it was discovered that using tasks for fostering language learning tends to be quite effective, as it provides students with a proper context so as to stimulate their learning processes. Additionally, it is believed that teachers must open a path for students to face not only "comprehensible input", but also to engage in tasks that allow them to be involved in "naturalistic and meaningful communication" as well as develop their oral communication strategies; for instance, to negotiate meaning, to ask for clarification, and so on (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, pp. 175-176). As can be contemplated, what has been stated is that tasks within TBLT make a direct emphasis on the act of fostering pupils' oral communication strategies, the third assumption suggested earlier in this section.

Nevertheless, it is at the aforementioned period of time that a quite relevant "... early application of a task-based approach within a communicative framework for language

teaching… " occurs, and it is known as the "Bangalore Project" (Beretta and Davies, 1985; Prabhu, 1987; Beretta, 1990, all of them cited in Richards & Rodgers, p. 175) or "Procedural Syllabus Project", although the team that performed this project employed the name "Communicational Teaching Project". This is a five-year project which consisted of teaching English as a second language in primary and secondary levels. Furthermore, it was conducted particularly in Southern India, and the intention was not to concentrate on the communicative competence, but actually on the grammatical or linguistic competence, which was expected to expand through activities that focus on meaning (Prabhu, 1987). Besides, it is at this moment when the methodology which developed from the project began to be widely known as "task-based teaching" (Prabhu, 1987, p. 2). Moreover, it must be considered that the Bangalore Project or the Communicational Teaching Project offers a different perspective from the Western way of thinking when it comes to communicative teaching. This is so because in the Western world, communicative teaching has been, generally speaking, training for communication, while communicative teaching for the Bangalore Project implies teaching through communication (Prabhu, 1987, cited in Long & Crookes, 1992). In addition, Prabhu (1987, cited in Long & Crookes, 1992) states that regarding SLA, learners must be provided with a series of opportunities and possibilities in order to improve their comprehension abilities, and this must befall previous to doing any type of demand or having any sort of expectation from the students. Then, he proceeds assuring that obtaining a linguistic structure is nothing simple, but complex, as it requires "... the operation of some internal system of abstract rules and principles when the learner's attention is focused on meaning, i.e., task-completion, not language." (p. 35). In this sense, Prabhu (1987, cited in Long & Crookes, 1992) argues that there is no such thing as a syllabus exclusively based on vocabulary or structure, and the same applies to the preselection or practise of language items; hence, "the basis of each lesson is a problem or a task." (p. 35).

It is relevant to clarify that TBLT is an approach which is based on both the theory of language and the theory of learning, although rather on the latter. About the theory of language, it must be stated that there are two assumptions regarding the nature of language – among many others, although these are especially convenient to be mentioned – which serve as the grounds for TBLT:

- "*Spoken interaction is the central focus of language and the keystone of language acquisition*", which basically means that spoken interaction and

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communicative activities must be conducted in order to foster SLA in TBLT. This justifies why TBLT employs tasks that include somehow spoken interaction or conversations based on a text or task, and also why I selected improving the students' communicative competence as one of the principal assumptions for this study.

- "*Language use involves integration of skills*". It alludes to the idea that language use requires several skills at the same time so as to work. Due to this reason, TBLT uses the majority of the time tasks that demand making use of more than one skill simultaneously. In other words, TBLT uses as a basis a holistic approach to language learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 180).

With respect to the theory of learning, it is supported that TBLT assumes a series of suppositions about the nature of language that are connected with CLT, although it is more oriented towards SLA theory and defined by advocates from a cognitive perspective (Richards & Rodgers, 2014):

- Language learning cannot occur if the learner does not construct meaning by means of employing internal mental processes.

- According to SLA research, a learner overcomes some phases in the process of language learning while they develop their "interlanguage: a language system in its own right". That is to say, language learning is an organic process.

- There should be a focus on form, that is, presenting and teaching grammar not as something aside, but as a feature of language that can be merged with meaningful communication. The purpose of this is to make students aware of certain forms they might have overlooked without this focus.

- Negotiation of meaning is contemplated as an opportunity for learners to develop their language system; that is to say, they are able to learn by constructing meaning in dialogic interaction activities.

- An important aspect about TBLT is that the act of fulfilling tasks may encourage and motivate students and, as a consequence, their language learning. Besides, they produce authentic language in the process – which is related to the second assumption established at the beginning of this section – and cooperate with their classmates.

- In TBLT, tasks' degree of difficulty can vary and be adjusted considering the pedagogical goals. That is to say, a positive aspect about tasks is that they can be

designed taking into account its usage and what is going to be learned; basically, they can be modified for learning particular aspects of language.

- TBLT may offer possibilities for scaffolded learning. In fact, considering a task in which there is more than one person participating, there must be interaction and communication between the aforesaid participants. In this case, the interaction might occur between the teacher and the student(s), or between students, and there is always a person who acts as the guide because their knowledge is undeniably bigger, whereas the other person is the novice or the learner who will develop new knowledge and skills due to both their repeated participation and the guide's help. In short, what has been said is an example of mediation, which is normally known as scaffolding.

- TBLT also resorts to two concepts that play an important part in SLA theory: the "noticing hypothesis" and "noticing the gap". Schmidt (1990, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 181) argues that learners need to notice the forms in the input – which is the language that is heard by the learners – that they want to acquire later from the very same input, and this stage would make an allusion to the noticing hypothesis. Then, Swain (2000, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) defends that noticing the gap may happen whenever learners become aware of both their own productions and those of proficient speakers in the output; in this sense, they are "noticing the gap" between them and better speakers, which is an appropriate and useful way of improving their second language learning. This is simply why tasks can provide an opportunity for students to "notice the gap" and therefore develop their language learning.

Returning briefly to the notion that TBLT and CLT are quite similar to the point in which TBLT is considered to be a developed form of CLT, they also differ in some way. The reason behind this statement is that CLT is said to be based on a communicative function that pretends to be transmitted, whereas TBLT does not fundamentally require a pedagogical function or a particular linguistic form, since it is actually the contrary; in other words, it is the teacher who may employ a great number of linguistic forms that are commonly understood by the context in which they are used (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

According to Wilkins (1976, cited in Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; also 1976, cited in Long & Crookes, 1992; and 1976, cited as well in Nunan, 2013), there are two kinds of syllabi in language teaching: the synthetic syllabi and the analytic syllabi.

While the former seeks to transmit a series of linguistic forms, the latter guides students through real-life contexts and the production of authentic language. In the case of a task-based syllabus, SLA research demonstrates that an analytic syllabus must be used; however, Ellis (2003, cited in Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011) argues that there is also a distinction between a task-based syllabus and a task-based teaching or task-supported teaching. On the one hand, a task-based syllabus is one that is analytic in nature, which entails the disappearance of any kind of linguistic or grammatical items (Sheen, 2003; Swan, 2005, both cited in Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). On the other hand, task-based teaching or task-supported teaching is responsible for using linguistic items; therefore, pupils are involved in structure-based communicative tasks. Now, the purpose of structure-based communicative tasks is to help students become accustomed to employing particular structures that have previously been acquired.

Hence, it is very appropriate to adopt task-based teaching or task-supported teaching as a syllabus for this dissertation, since it does not imply the complete exclusion of linguistic items. This idea is associated with what has been commented before, that is, the intention is to find a balance between both competences: the communicative competence and the grammatical competence – or to be even a little bit unbalanced in favour of the communicative competence) – not to absolutely avoid or reject the latter.

Besides, it can be contemplated how TBLT and, more specifically, the structure-based communicative syllabus defends the notion of fostering or concentrating on the communicative competence over the linguistic one, which corresponds to the first assumption established earlier in this section.

There are two types of tasks that comprise a TBLT syllabus: "real-world tasks" and "pedagogical tasks". The procedure to select one or another consists of assessing their value and availability for students to practise negotiation of meaning and interaction, that is, activities that are both motivating and meaningful to second language learners (Nunan, 2013, pp. 1-4; Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 184).

Therefore, Long and Crookes (1992) and Nunan (1989, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) describe these two kinds of tasks:

1. "Real-world tasks" or "target tasks": As the term suggests, it refers to tasks that are without any doubt helpful and relevant in the real world. Furthermore, it is common to employ this type of tasks when the students' needs are recognised and examined. An example of a real-world task would be using the telephone to call someone.

2. "Pedagogical tasks": It alludes to those tasks whose psycholinguistic basis is closely related to SLA theory and research. They involve communication and interaction, although they do not have to be specifically real-world tasks; that is, they may happen mostly in the classroom. In this case, students' needs have not been identified yet. As an illustration, an information gap activity would be a pedagogical task (pp. 184-185; pp. 43-44).

These two types of tasks are going to be tested later, as they clearly exemplify all of the three theoretical assumptions that have been previously suggested. First of all, they are both communicative and interactive tasks, which entails improving the communicative competence; second of all, they may tasks based on real-world situations or not depending on whether they are real-world tasks or pedagogical tasks, but they are always producing authentic language either way; finally, considering the aforesaid assumptions, it is obvious to state that students would be developing their oral communication strategies through these two types of tasks.

Recent research suggests that there are a few differences between CLT and TBLT in terms of learner and teacher roles. In TBLT, the teacher has the responsibility of selecting tasks that are convenient for both the context and the student group that will conduct them. Moreover, it is necessary for the teacher to elaborate a learning situation plan out of a main task, that is, pre-task activities as well as post-task activities should be provided to the students in order to reinforce the students' abilities and try to solve their needs. However, the teacher acts again as a monitor; to control what the students are doing and supervise that they are going in the right direction. Therefore, it is not that there are differences between both approaches, but rather that there is actually a focus on task completion and production, which is logical considering the goals of TBLT. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Nevertheless, Nunan (2013) has his own assumptions concerning this matter; therefore, he suggests that teachers should be characterised by possessing three fundamental roles in a communicative classroom: to be facilitators of the communicative process, to be participants of the aforesaid process, and to also act as observers and learners.

Apart from these, Van den Branden (2006, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) proposes additional roles for the teacher, such as:

- Encouraging students in the different stages of the task-based activity.

- Organising tasks so that they can be conducted productively (assuring that students possess the necessary material, giving advice for the formation of groups, etc.).

- Concentrating on diverse techniques and pre-task activities that contribute to 'focus on form'. That is to say, to help students realise that a set of characteristics must be detected and considered when using the language. In other words, the goal is to sort of make the pupils aware of their situation and what they are experiencing (pp. 187-188).

Concerning learner roles in TBLT, some authors argue that their main function is to speak to their group members to practise communication and achieve task completion, which does not highlight any difference when compared to CLT. Nevertheless, there are other primary roles that students should adopt while performing task-based activities; for example, to be a 'monitor' in the sense of concentrating on the "focus on form" issue; to reflect about both the message transmitted in the task itself and the way it is communicated. Also, pupils may act as risk-takers, as there might be situations in which they do not have specific linguistic resources and background experience to produce and interpret messages; due to this reason, students will have to develop and improve their oral communicative strategies to fulfil those tasks, such as asking for clarification, guessing from linguistic and contextual clues, paraphrasing etc. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Nunan, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Seedhouse, 1998).

Accordingly, this last statement reflects the idea that TBLT, just as CLT does, is an approach which may definitely strengthen L2 students' oral communication strategies, a main idea previously expressed.

2.3. Cooperative Language Learning

Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) may be defined as part of a much bigger teaching approach widely known as Collaborative or Cooperative Learning (CL) as well as a continuation of the basic principles established by CLT. The intention of CLL is to foster the usage of pair and group activities in the classroom; activities in which students need to cooperate in order to achieve a series of common goals successfully. In other words, peer and group support as well as reciprocal guidance are required so as to accomplish the designated task. One positive aspect that may be noticed by employing

cooperative tasks is that the bonds between students are, in most of the cases, strengthened, in the same way than a positive environment is created, and the anxiety is reduced. Besides, it is an appropriate way of encouraging learners to participate actively during the lessons and make them acquire strategies so that they can coordinate and eventually work properly as a cohesive group able to retain positive learning experiences from conducting this kind of tasks (Ghaith & Kawtharani, 2006; McCombs, cited in Çelik, Aytın & Bayram, 2012; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Now then, it must be stated that other valid views are exposed by different authors; for example, Olsen and Kagan (1992, cited in Rodgers & Richards, 2014) understand CLL as essentially to arrange pair and group activities "so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others" (p. 244). From the information provided so far, it can be already inferred that CLL promotes the development of the communicative competence – which makes it convenient to insist that this does not necessarily entail that the grammatical competence must be omitted –, for there is a clear necessity to interact orally with other group members in order to conduct the designated task; additionally, students would also need oral communication strategies to perform that exchange of information effectively, so it is implied that CLL contributes to their acquisition and development. Likewise, it may be deduced that while doing these group activities and tasks, most of them may involve the production of authentic language related to real-life events, since the majority are conducted in groups; however, this is going to be exemplified later on. Therefore, these arguments support the theoretical assumptions that serve as a basis and that have been set at the beginning of this section.

With regard to the origins of this approach, it is at the beginning of the early-twentieth-century that the US educator John Dewey started to further a new process of learning within the classroom ambiance based on learning in groups cooperatively rather than individually on a daily basis (Rodgers, 1988, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014). However, it is not until the 1960s and 1970s that CL emerges in the United States as a popular and innovative approach. The reason why this approach commenced gaining widespread acceptance is due to the fact that, as the two approaches previously presented, there was a necessity to modernise the traditional learning models and the educators responsible for this that were so concentrated on teacher-centered and competitive classes that discriminated a minority of students whereas favoured a

majority. In this sense, CLL is completely the opposite, for it is a learner-centered approach which favours cooperation and equality in a learning atmosphere (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Having said that, it is also worth mentioning that CLL have been related to both a theory of language and a theory of learning. Concerning the theory of language, it would be certainly an international theory which defends statements such as the following (Richards & Rodgers, 2014):

- Language is a resource for expressing meaning.

- Language is a means of expressing different communicative functions, which is related to CLT in the sense of promoting the development of the communicative competence and, as a consequence, the understanding of functions and meaning. In this sense, this is also connected with TBLT, as one of its aims is to give the students an opportunity to get familiarised with the functions that are expected to be obtained after performing a specific task, as well as with the act of producing authentic language.

- Language is a means of interpersonal and social interaction.

- Language is a resource for carrying out tasks; in other words, cooperating with each other to accomplish different types of tasks (pp. 246-247).

As regards the theory of learning, CLL is closely related to two types in particular (Richards & Rodgers, 2014):

1. Theories related to SLA, which are interested in the negotiation of meaning that takes place whenever learners intend to achieve meaning; that is to say, an investigation of the different oral communication strategies used when conversational interaction occurs between learners: repetitions, confirmations, clarification requests, etc. In this sense, CLL suggests tasks that foster the negotiation of meaning; hence, this is another argument so as to support that CLL really contributes to the second language learners' acquisition and development of oral communication strategies.

2. The sociocultural learning theory, which represents fundamentally the usage of both the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Scaffolding. In fact, these notions tend to be confused, but they are different. ZPD would refer to those tasks that the learner can do with and without help, while Scaffolding makes reference to the idea that an expert or an advanced learner may assist another

learner who is not that experienced. Having said that, CLL is very adequate, as the activities proposed by CLL contribute to the utilisation of these techniques.

In terms of types of CLL groups, Johnson et al. (1994, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) offers three different options:

1. "Formal CLL groups": These sorts of groups last from at least one class period to several weeks. The purpose is to accomplish a particular task and learners must help each other in order to succeed and subsequently reach commonly established goals.

2. "Informal CLL groups": The term alludes to groups that are formed momentarily; they last one class period at the most. The aim is to make learners stay focused and ease their subsequent learning.

3. "Cooperative base groups": These types of groups are formed for long periods of time – at least, one year – and they are composed of members with different capacities and knowledge, that is, it is a heterogeneous learning group. In this case, the objective is to assist and support each other so as to eventually obtain positive results academically speaking (p. 249).

Regarding CLL task types, several authors offer two different taxonomies. On the one hand, Coelho (1992b, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) states that there are three major kinds of CLL tasks and their learning focus, highlighting that each of them has a wide variety of options or alternatives:

1. "Team practice from common input – skills development and mastery of facts".

2. "Jigsaw: differentiated but predetermined input – evaluation and synthesis of facts and opinions". As indicated previously, there is indeed a relation between CLL and TBLT in the sense that most of the activities conducted in CLL are also proposed by TBLT[2], which means that learners produce authentic language and understand functions and meaning that are associated with the task they are performing while working cooperatively.

3. "Cooperative projects: topics/resources selected by students – discovery learning" (pp. 250-251).

On the other hand, Olsen and Kagan (1992, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) propose their own paradigms of CLL tasks:

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[2] See Nunan (2013) pages 56-57 for further information about the different TBLT tasks suggested.

- "Three-step interview": Classic interview, although learners reverse roles and add their comments and experiences with each other at the end of the activity.

- "Roundtable": In groups, each student writes his/her contribution in a paper and passes it to the next person, then this person does the exact same thing, and so on. There is an oral version which is known as Round Robin.

- "Think-Pair-Share": First, a question is formulated; second, there is a thinking process; then, there is a discussion in pairs about the aforesaid question; lastly, the results are shared with the rest of the class.

- "Solve-Pair-Share": This would imply the same process as in "Think-Pair-Share", but with pupils sharing the way they solved the problem via interviews or Round Robin activities.

- "Numbered heads": In this activity, the students are divided in teams and the teachers poses a question. Immediately after, each team puts their heads together in a literal way and assures that everyone knows how to answer and explain it properly. Finally, the teacher says a number randomly and the team that has the specific number is the one responding to the question (pp. 251-252).

With respect to learner and teacher roles, there are some similarities between CLL, CLT and TBLT. In the case of the teacher roles, they are also conceived as responsible for structuring, restructuring, organising and reorganising the different tasks as well as choosing the required material and time. Then, it is added that the teacher must act as a facilitator of learning in the sense that he or she should move around the class solving the students' doubts so as to help them. Undoubtedly, there has been an evolution, as the teacher is not the centre of attention any longer; there are no teacher-fronted classes anymore (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Likewise, the role of learners in CLL is that of monitors of their own learning process, which coincides with TBLT learner roles; although then CLL ads that they should also plan and assess their own learning. Furthermore, another similarity, especially with CLT, is that they must be active and communicate with each other, and it is insisted that the primary role is to work cooperatively with the rest of the group. Besides, it is stated that the best option for CLL tasks is to organise students in pairs and perform pair tasks in which they adopt and switch roles such as "tutors, checkers, recorders, and information sharers" (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 252).

Having presented these three theories, it is clear that there is an interconnection not only between them, but also with the three theoretical assumptions stated at the beginning of this section.

Considering the aforementioned methodologies, it can be deduced that some oral communicative strategies would be produced or developed by students due to their attention, participation, practise and interaction. For instance: *Taking the floor*, *co-operating*, and *asking for clarification*. These examples of oral strategies are intended to support and demonstrate the fact that CLT helps students develop their oral communication strategies, which is connected to what has been explained earlier, that is, with the third shared idea exposed at the beginning of this section.

Nevertheless, there are many more examples of processes or activities that could foster oral communicative strategies, which incidentally are going to be named, further developed and even tested in the following sections of this study.

The oral communication strategies previously mentioned – *taking the floor*, *co-operating*, and *asking for clarification* – have been extracted from a PowerPoint presentation elaborated by university teachers Bazo & Francisco (2018), as they properly and summarily describe the three of them.

The first oral communication strategy would be *taking the floor*. Essentially, this term refers to the capacity of an interlocutor to begin, maintain and finish a conversation, as well as to take the discourse initiative. It also involves, for example, being able to employ different expressions to intercede in a conversation or to obtain some time to think about a response.

Then, the second oral communication strategy is *co-operating*, which basically alludes to the collaboration of the interlocutors whose aim is to continue developing the conversation or discussion they are in. As an illustration, students who possess this strategy, depending on their level, should be capable of doing the following things:

- Ensuring that interlocutors are understanding what they are communicating. This characteristic is related to students who have a lower level of English.
- Being able to invite other people to speak and participate in the conversation. This is a general aspect all learners should be able to do.
- Providing feedback to interlocutors and possessing the ability to establish a connection between their personal contribution and previous ones from other interlocutors. In this case, this is a characteristic that may be observed in higher levels of English.

- The ability to say things in a simple, clean and brief way with the purpose of evaluating the situation of the discussion. This is an idea mostly seen in intermediate or B levels.

The third and last oral communication strategy is known as *asking for clarification*. This term can broadly be defined as the ability to intervene in an interaction to ensure that the other interlocutors are truly listening and following the conversation. This action would include to formulate follow-up questions to verify whether there is comprehension or not as well as solicit further details. Also, it implies to be able to request repetitions and designate that they are understanding the conversation or that rather they are having troubles to comprehend it, which is a typical feature in lower levels.

Hence, these oral communicative strategies are undoubtedly relevant to this research and they are definitely going to be mentioned at a subsequent time.

Previous to proceeding to the next chapter, it is convenient to introduce some aspects that should be considered when it comes to speaking about oral communication strategies.

2.4. Formal Reduction Strategies, Willingness to Communicate and Metacognitive Strategy Training in Second Language Acquisition

2.4.1. *Formal Reduction Strategies*

Apart from the oral communication strategies suggested by Bazo & Francisco (2018) before, there is also another set that can be indeed related to this study. Faerch and Kaspar (1983, Cited in Kendall, Jarvie, Doll, Lin & Purcell, 2005) draw a distinction within Formal Reduction Strategies between Functional Reduction Strategies and Achievement Strategies (pp. 116-118). In the case of the former, there are three types of communication strategies:

- "Topic avoidance": Keeping silent and changing the topic are accurate examples of this oral communication strategy. The purpose is to develop communicative goals as soon as the topic presents linguistic problems to the speaker.

- "Message abandonment": Instances of this oral communication strategy may be "It is hard to explain", "I don't know how to explain" or "Forget about this". This strategy basically implies finishing prematurely a conversation whenever the speaker finds linguistic problems in order to express difficult meanings. Another option would be to essentially discard the intended meaning and subsequently speak about other expressions.

- "Meaning replacement": This strategy refers to the ability of the speaker to communicate a more general expression or meaning based on the original topic and meaning that are intended. Again, it is used in every situation where the speaker has linguistic problems or limitations to express difficult meanings.

As regards Achievement Strategies, they are proposed as a way of overcoming the problems that may appear because of the speaker's lack of linguistic resources. Now, there are six communication strategies within:

- "Code switching": This strategy allows the speaker to use the first language whenever speaking in English as a target language.

- "Interlingual transfer": It refers to transmitting anything said in the first language into the second language.

- "Inter/intralingual transfer": This oral communication strategy implies using structures belonging to the speaker's first language during the communication process.

- "Interlingual based strategies": These involve employing interlanguage systems, meaning that the speaker uses an idiolect which combines features of the mother tongue and the second language. For example, this implies utilising oral communication strategies such as generalisation, paraphrasing, word coinage, and restructuring.

- "Cooperative strategies": It can be summarised in acting cooperatively (e.g. asking questions).

- "Non-linguistic strategies": In other words, anything that is not expressed verbally (e.g. mime, gesture and sound-imitation).

2.4.2. *Willingness to Communicate*

Regarding the Willingness to Communicate (WTC) that a speaker may have in L2, it must be stated that there is a great variety of WTC among speakers, for there is actually a broad range of communicative competence when it comes to L2 learners in the sense that they may possess a successful L2 competence or, on the contrary, they may have no L2 competence whatsoever (MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clément, & Noels, 1998).

This assortment of WTC in L2 is due to a series of factors that unavoidably influence and condition learners, and the intention is to explain them in a very summarised way so as to transmit the main ideas.

According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), there are six variables conditioning learners' WTC in L2.

The first of them is "communication behaviour", which would imply that the student usually conducted actions such as expressing an opinion in class, reading L2 texts, watching L2 television, or utilising a L2 on professional contexts. In order to do so, it is crucial for teachers to be able to provide students with opportunities to practise communication and, most importantly, to foster their WTC with these (p. 547).

The second one is behavioural intention, and it would be related to the Theory of Planned Behaviour which, as the name suggests, it entails that "the most immediate cause of behaviour is the intention to engage in a behaviour and the person's actual control over his or her actions" (p. 548). Considering this statement, a mixture of both intention and opportunity must be possible in order to produce behaviour. For instance, a student may intend to speak in a class, but in the end, for whatever reason, it was not possible.

The third variable is the "situated antecedents of communication", which contains the desire to communicate with a specific person and state self-confidence. The desire to communicate with a specific person can be promoted with the contribution of affiliation and control, whereas state self-confidence is supported by state perceived competence and state anxiety. Therefore, state self-confidence is defined as a temporary feeling of confidence; not everlasting, just depending on the given context. In this sense, both state anxiety and state perceived competence are focused on particular moments, but they can be modified by the learner's prior experiences (pp. 548-549).

It is important to mention that these first three variables are regarded as "situation-specific influences on WTC", while the three upcoming variables are "enduring influences on the process" (p. 547).

The fourth variable is known as "motivational propensities", and these are mostly stable individual differences that are employed in diverse situations. This variable is affected by both situation-specific and enduring influences. Furthermore, motivational propensities are considerably fostered by interpersonal motivation – affiliation and control –, intergroup motivation – again, affiliation and control, but in this case it is at a group level, taking into account the climate and attitude of the group –, and L2 confidence – it must not be confused with state perceived competence, because this refers to the belief in oneself to communicate in the L2 efficiently and in a flexible way –. (pp. 550-551).

The fifth and penultimate variable is the "affective and cognitive context", which could be regarded as the components of L2 confidence. Within this variable, there can be found the "integrativeness", referring to intergroup attitude and motivation; the social situation – in the school with the whole class, at the park with friends, etc. –; and the L2 proficiency or communicative competence – linguistic, discourse, actional, sociocultural, and strategic competences compose together the aforementioned competence – (pp. 552-555).

The last variable is the "societal and individual context", and as can be contemplated, it alludes to the society and the individual. In the case of the societal context, it is compensated by two dimensions, which are "the structural characteristics of the community and their perceptual and affective correlates". About the individual context, it essentially makes an allusion to personality, which tends to be a quite important dimension when it comes to WTC, for it contributes to establish a context in which language learning happens (pp. 555-558).

Hence, the main reason behind presenting these variables is to justify the great variety of WLC that exists with respect to L2 learners. As a consequence, it may influence the results as well of this and many other studies, basically because WTC is interconnected with oral communication strategies – and certainly, with communication in general –.

2.4.3. *Metacognitive Strategy Training*

Previous studies such as those by Cohen (1998), O'Malley & Chamot (1990) and Wenden (1991) mostly referred to metacognitive strategies as a way of promoting L2 skills by means of "raising the learner's awareness of the learning process" (cited in Nakatani, 2005, p. 76). Therefore, it could be stated that the act of "raising the learner's awareness" with regard to their strategies could be employed to foster their oral proficiency through finding a solution concerning the learner's communication problems (Nakatani, 2005, p. 76).

There is a need to be explicit about the relation between metacognitive strategies and the strategic competence. The strategic competence is used so as to finish any sort of language-related problems that learners may experience when communicating orally with others, and this is done only by employing metacognitive strategies consciously (Nakatani, 2005).

Furthermore, metacognitive strategies have recently become a fundamental aspect in SLA; otherwise, it would not be possible to enhance the learner's consciousness of the target language learning process and, as a consequence, L2 skills, including oral proficiency. Likewise, metacognitive strategies allow learners to learn the foreign language by means of using oral communication strategies that facilitate the employment of spoken interaction; in this sense, they encourage the creative use of the target language with the purpose of obtaining meaning in situations characterised by real interactions (Nakatani, 2005).

It is also worth mentioning to say that one mode of developing metacognitive skills is by giving to learners particular oral communication strategies that would undoubtedly promote skills which could contribute to the use of our interlanguage system to achieve and control interaction in spontaneous communication contexts (Nakatani, 2005).

Having said all that, it is clear to state that metacognitive strategies are immensely helpful when it comes to using oral communication strategies in unscripted interaction contexts.

This section has attempted to provide a brief summary of the literature relating to the three theoretical assumptions established and explained at the very beginning of the chapter, with the objective of introducing, justifying and supporting the study that has been conducted regarding oral communication strategies and spoken interaction.

Before moving on to the next chapter, let us consider the three research questions that are proposed to be the centre of the study and expected to be answered by the end of this dissertation:

1. Do English teachers truly focus on activities involving spoken interaction in the classroom? Or, is it that they believe they are doing it but actually they are just concentrating on tasks that are based on speaking production?

2. Therefore, are learners able to acquire the necessary oral communicative strategies to be proficient in English spoken interaction contexts through the activities that will be employed in this study?

3. Which way do CLT, TBLT and CLL affect the way learners foster their communicative competence, their authentic language production, and their enhancement of oral communication strategies?

The next chapter describes the resources, procedures and methods used in this investigation so as to find a response to the aforementioned research questions.

3. Methodology

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the purpose of this study has been to apply three different approaches in a real classroom context with second language learners. These three methods are Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching and Cooperative Language Learning, and they have been employed in order to obtain a response to the aforementioned research questions, as well as to demonstrate the positive similarities that these approaches have in common.

To begin with, it must be mentioned that the participants that have been part of this study voluntarily are students and teachers from the high school *IES Viera y Clavijo*, located within the municipality of *San Cristóbal de La Laguna* – more specifically, in *Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain –*. The pupils belong to the first year of Bachillerato; hence, their level of English varies considerably, since most of them come from different primary and secondary schools. Considering this, their general level ranges from A2+ to B1+, an aspect which must be taken into consideration, as some oral activities might be constrained as a result. With regard to the teachers' level of English, it is obviously advanced, even though their contribution has been limited to a questionnaire that will be reintroduced in the following paragraphs of this chapter.

Regarding the specific number of students and teachers that have contributed to the study, there have been two groups of students from the first year of Bachillerato – thirty-four people in one group and thirty-five in the other one – and six English teachers pertaining to the English department of the aforementioned high school.

Another topic to be emphasised is the procedure that has been followed in order to collect data for this dissertation. This research project has been conducted considering the notion of triangulation, which refers to the employment of three different tools that have been used to collect data in order to support and complete this study.

Having said that, one way of collecting data has been through two rubrics, a continuous assessment rubric and a final task rubric. However, before continuing this explanation, it would be adequate to briefly define what a rubric is and where the term comes from. Popham (1997) defines the term rubric as "a scoring guide used to evaluate the quality of students' constructed responses. […] A rubric has three essential features: evaluative criteria, quality definitions and a scoring strategy". Apart from that, he states that the evaluative criteria "can either be given equal right or be weighted differently"

(p. 72). The rubrics employed for this study has been made considering this definition. In addition, Popham (1997) affirms that one important characteristic that a proper rubric must have is key attributes of the skill being assessed in each evaluative criterion. These evaluative criteria must contribute to the goal of the teacher, which is to help students acquire and increase "their ability to use the criterion when tackling tasks that require that skill" (p. 75).

Originally, the term rubric used to have a completely different meaning; that is, it was not related whatsoever to "the scoring of students' work" (p. 72). Popham (1997) claims that according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word *rubric* dates back to the mid-15th century, and it comes from *ruber*, which means *red* in Latin; and therefore, this word was used to refer to the headings that compose the different sections of a book. Nevertheless, the meaning of this word began to be modified by teachers several decades ago, since they employed the word *rubric* "to describe the rules that guided their scoring" (p. 72).

Back to the concise explanation of the two rubrics that I have made, it must be said that they have been elaborated not only to assess students, but also to make observations that may contribute to this study. The continuous assessment rubric, as the term suggests, has been employed to constantly assess the students in every lesson. This continuous assessment rubric will eventually lead to a second rubric, which has been especially done in order to assess a final task that was requested to the students during the practicum. Both rubrics will be commented in the results and discussion section.

A second form of obtaining data has been by means of my own observations in class complemented by diary entries and notes, and then, the third way to collect data has been through my high school tutor's perceptions and opinions of every class.

An additional instrument used to gather data as well has consisted in elaborating two questionnaires: one for English teachers, and another one for students as second language learners. Nevertheless, this tool has been used prior to teaching the didactic unit, and both questionnaires will be explained below.

3.1.   Prior to Teaching

The English teachers' questionnaire offered a variety of speaking production and spoken interaction activities, and teachers were supposed to tick those which they had

previously practised in class so as to eventually structure them based on their personal preference – in the sense of how useful they think they were for their students –. In the case of the students' questionnaire, they were offered the very same activities that were presented to the English teachers; however, they were just requested to tick those that they had been practising during their English lessons, and then rate them from one to five concerning how much they believed that those activities were primordial for their language learning process. Moreover, several students asked if they were allowed to highlight those activities that they had not practised before but were quite interested in trying. This last aspect was taken note of and analysed for the distinct lessons that were carried out.

The options and examples that have been suggested in both questionnaires for teachers and students to complete are the results of a review of the existing literature from which several sources have been consulted explicitly and exclusively to select a number of activities for the questionnaires. Among these are Bygate, 1999; Bygate and Porter, 1991 and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2001. These sources have been used basically because they present numerous ideas regarding spoken interaction activity types; then, with the assistance of my TFM tutor Sally Burgess, I was able to add more examples of not only spoken interaction activities, but also speaking production ones, based on my experience and what I have contemplated so far.

Apart from the questionnaire, it should be added that immediately after both students and teachers completed their questionnaires, there were some results acquired from both of them; and due to these, a series of activities based on oral communication or spoken interaction were proposed and implemented in the classroom – those that were the highest rated and the most demanded by students – with the purpose of verifying whether these activities influenced the students' situation in relation to the theoretical assumptions established in the previous chapter; that is to say, if these activities fostered the development of the communicative competence, the use of oral communication strategies, and the production of authentic language through tasks based on real-life contexts or not.

Once it had been established which activities were the most popular among students, I conducted some library research so as to consult concepts and further information in relation to the different types of activities that have been implemented and that have as a main purpose, the intention of encouraging oral communication in second language

learners. This should not be confused with the sources employed in order to provide examples of usual oral communication activities when elaborating the questionnaires; in fact, different sources have been referred to with the objective of avoiding any sort of misunderstanding. For example, some interesting concepts are suggested by Littlewood (1988). This author introduces a series of notions that are quite relevant for this study; they are what he refers to as "pre-communicative" and "communicative activities" (p. 8).

Summarily, pre-communicative activities are learning activities that occur before the communicative acts, and their purpose is for learners to acquire the necessary skills so as to successfully perform the subsequent communicative activities. Moreover, pre-communicative activities are particularly divided into two subtypes: "quasi-communicative activities" and "structural activities". However, an emphasis must be made on the former sub-type, as these activities are strongly relevant for this study. Quasi-communicative activities possess a main function, which is to "attempt to create links between the language forms being practised and their potential functional meanings", and they consider both communicative and structural facts in relation to language (pp. 85-86).

Then, Littlewood (1988) provides an explanation regarding the purposes of communicative activities, which are essentially to "provide 'whole-task practice'", "improve motivation", "allow natural learning", and the capacity to "create a context which supports learning" (pp. 17-18). Both types of activities have been employed for this study; nevertheless, there are two subtypes of communicative activities, and a distinction must be conducted between them: "Functional communication activities" and "Social interaction activities" (p. 20). In the case of functional communication activities, they can be defined as tasks whose objective or main intention is to emphasise the functional aspect of communication. In this sense, students are expected to use the necessary language to communicate effectively the diverse meanings they have to transmit, considering the communicative demands that are presented depending on the context. Then, social interaction activities allude to those activities that promote the employment of a language that has to be connected with the social context of the communication event. Having described both subtypes, it can be stated that the ideal thing to do would be to use communicative activities that involve not only a functional aspect of communication, but also a social aspect.

Fundamentally, communicative activities are the basis of CLT and the reason why students are able to produce a great deal of language, as they need it in order to participate in the communication process (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Likewise, these activities are undeniably related to the communicative approach, since they mainly encourage learners to use and develop their communicative competence through the use of oral communication skills and strategies and, consequently, language production (Littlewood, 1988).

As indicated in the previous chapter of this dissertation, Nunan (2013) alludes to two types of tasks that principally constitute a TBLT syllabus: "real-world tasks" or "target tasks" and pedagogical tasks" (p. 1). Whereas the former type implies using language in tasks that are related to situations outside the classroom environment, the latter refers to tasks that indeed occur in the classroom's ambiance. Attention must be centred on pedagogical tasks, as they have been considered for this study.

Another aspect that tends to be highly important when it comes to applying CLL in the classroom is the type of groups that may be formed in order to conduct the designated activities. As described on the previous section, Johnson et al. (1994, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) presents three kind of groups whose differences are basically shortened to the size and amount of group members depending on the length of the activity that has been scheduled.

Hence, these three types are "Formal CLL groups", "Informal CLL groups", and "Cooperative base groups". Since their respective definitions have already been displayed before, the only thing that must be commented is that every single type has been taken into consideration when designing and carrying out activities for this dissertation (p. 249).

Besides, it must be stated that, in the previous section, there were some CLL task types proposed by Coelho (1992b, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) that have definitely played a significant role in this study. There are three types: "Team practice from common input", "Jigsaw", and "Cooperative projects" (p. 251); although readers of this paper should concentrate on Jigsaw and Cooperative projects, for they have deeply contributed to this dissertation.

Likewise, it has been previously indicated that other CLL task types are offered by Olsen and Kagan (1992, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014), and they are the following: "Three-step interview", "Roundtable", "Think-Pair-Share", "Solve-Pair-Share", and "Numbered heads" (pp. 251-252). Among these, three-step interviews as

well as think-pair-share activities have been immensely relevant when it comes to preparing activities for this study.

Before moving on, it is also fundamental to mention that oral communication strategies should also be reminded – the ones suggested by Bazo & Francisco (2018): *taking the floor*, *co-operating*, and *asking for clarification*; as well as those proposed by Faerch and Kaspar (1983, cited in Kendall et al., 2005): "Functional Reduction Strategies" and "Achievement Strategies" (p. 117) –, as they were planned to be fostered through the different activities employed for this study and that are going to be explained right after.

Now, these oral communication strategies have been developed through all the activities, but, especially, by means of carrying out a communicative task, and this is going to be developed in detail right below.

3.2.   During the Teaching Process

From now onwards, the intention is to present the diverse activities that were selected and implemented in class taking into account everything that has been said so far: the theoretical assumptions established at the beginning of the previous chapter, the methodologies explained right after that, the research questions, and the specific concepts that have been mentioned and described throughout this section. Nevertheless, the results of these activities and their relation to the determined methodologies and theoretical assumptions are going to be developed in the following chapter of this research project.

This study has been conducted during my internship period in which a learning situation plan that I purposely based on spoken interaction has been implemented for four weeks – although the original intention was to implement the learning situation plan over a three-week period –. It is necessary to mention that I am not planning to present and explain the whole learning situation, but just those activities that are strongly related to this study and that certainly offered an opportunity to test everything that has been commented on so far – as well as those that were actually part of the questionnaires –.

Besides, it must be stated that these activities that I am going to present were not done exclusively to test this study, but were considered appropriate to my didactic unit;

that is to say, they were used so as to introduce the topic, prepare the students – a sort of warming up –, connect relations between pre-activities and main activities, etc., and most importantly, because they are relevant and valid in the context of the students' learning process.

Before explaining the questionnaires and the activities implemented for this study, it would be suitable to provide a table with a schedule representing the dates in which everything has been conducted.

Timetable (week and specific day)	Activities
19th of April 2019 (before the beginning of the didactic unit)	Teachers' questionnaire and students' questionnaire
22nd and 24th of April 2019 (week 1)	Brainstorming activity
Several days with some interruptions (22nd of April 2019 – 6th of May 2019, weeks 1-3)	Think-Pair-Share/Interviews
29th of April 2019 (week 2)	Jigsaw Reading or Information Gap
9th – 10th of May 2019 (week 3)	Role-play
13th of May 2019 (week 4)	Speed dating
25th of April and 8th of May (preparation classes for the final task, weeks 1 and 3), 13th – 17th of May 2019 (presentations of the communicative task, week 4)	Final task/communicative task

Figure 1. The timetable of the didactic unit highlighting the questionnaires and activities related to this study.

To begin with, the two aforesaid questionnaires (see appendix 1) were delivered to both the English teachers and the second language learners so as to be completed

exactly as has been previously mentioned. This event took place right before Easter Week, as my Learning Situation Plan started to be implemented after that week.

As explained before, the purpose of the students' questionnaire was to identify the students' needs and preferences in order to subsequently elaborate and design a learning situation in which there were activities that could promote their communicative competence, their oral communication skills and strategies, and their ability to produce authentic language, while at the same time having fun through activities that may be of their interest.

In addition, the teachers' questionnaire was delivered to reveal which kind of activities the teachers at this high school usually use during their English lessons; which ones they consider more useful than others and if they are really making use of spoken interaction activities or, rather, they are just speaking production activities.

Moving on to the employment of a series of activities as part of the didactic unit and in relation to this study, it must be emphasised that the topic of the didactic unit was introduced by means of a brainstorming activity. Students were requested to form small groups – also, in this case, informal CLL groups –, then think about any kind of words related to the topic and share them with the rest of their group members – they were asked to write them down as well –, in order to eventually share it with the rest of the class – the words were written on the blackboard around the main topic; in this sense, it was also a sort of association map –.

Earlier in the course students had been asked to do similar activities, although they were exactly pre-communicative activities to think about specific questions, discuss them with the rest of the group, and then share it with the rest of the class. These pre-communicative activities allude to Olsen and Kagan (1992, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014) and their TBLT task types; more specifically, they would be think-pair-share activities[3]. Since these are activities that have been applied in several lessons, they have been employed to obtain information from the students who have participated in this study; that is, they serve as a way of analysing the learners' level of English, as well as their communicative competence, their production of authentic language, and their oral communication strategies.

Nevertheless, the following activities, even though they have been used just once, have also contributed to this collection of data from the students.

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[3] See appendix 2 for some examples of PowerPoint slides used with the students during the didactic unit.

Another important activity which was implemented as part of the didactic unit was a jigsaw reading or an information gap activity, as proposed by Coelho (1992b, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Basically, the activity consisted in forming small groups of three, each of them receiving a small fragment. Then, students were supposed to read their own fragment and explain it to their group members, so that eventually they could realise that actually those three fragments comprised a short story[4]. The purpose of this activity, as the previous ones, was to develop the students' communicative competence, as well as make use of their oral communication strategies, and even try to produce authentic language, for they were explaining or telling someone else a part of a story, which is something that might happen to them in real-life situations.

Among the activities that have been conducted and tested during the elaboration of this study, there is also a role play activity, which has been implemented mainly because there was a particular interest in seeing how efficient role play is for English language learners in terms of spoken interaction and oral communication strategies. However, the events and results acquired from this specific experience will be developed later on in the next section. The activity was carried out in groups of three – in this case, they created formal CLL groups, as there was one class period to write their scripts and another one class to perform them –, choosing a situation out of three that I invented and suggested to them – the one they mostly preferred – and writing a script together in order to perform that very same script in the following lesson. Each situation presented at least three different characters so that all the group members could participate in this spoken interaction activity.

Littlewood (1988) argues that role-play, within the field of simulation, is a considerable alternative if the purpose is to foster the second language learners' creativity; that is to say, in role-play situations, students are the ones creating the dialogue or the conversation from a given situation, instead of being the teacher the one who produces the whole dialogue and subsequently tell students to memorise it.

Therefore, this statement was followed so as to conduct the activity; that is, after forming the groups, they had to select one of the three situations offered to them in order to create a dialogue based on that specific situation[5].

Besides, three norms were established and showed to the students before commencing the activity, which concerned: the amount of time they were supposed to

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[4] See appendix 3 to contemplate the jigsaw reading which was specifically created for the students.
[5] For further information about what was given to them, see appendix 4.

be performing, the idea that everyone had to speak and interact, and that they had to use some communicative constructions – e.g. giving advice about sports – in relation to what they were learning in the didactic unit.

Certainly, a role-play activity is a suitable example of a combination of a functional communication and a social interaction activity (Littlewood, 1988). In other words, it is an activity which allows students to concentrate on employing functional as well as social meanings when it comes to oral communication. Not only did I use this activity because it contributes to the utilisation of the communicative approach and the production of authentic language, but also because, according to the students' questionnaires, most of them enjoy doing this activity in class.

There was another activity the students also showed interest in and wanted to know more about. This activity is commonly known as speed dating (see appendix 5). For this activity, the students were requested to group in pairs so as to discuss a series of questions related to a certain topic. However, the time they had to converse was just one single minute per question, and there was a total of seven questions. An online alarm was employed to inform students each minute. Once the alarm sounded, they were supposed to rotate and speak to the next person, and this was repeated as a cycle until the questions were over. In order to do so, they were placed in a way in which they were all near each other so that they could rotate easily.

Additionally, it is important to mention that speed dating was used as a pre-communicative activity, that is, with the aim of introducing students to the topic that they were going to write about in an opinion essay later on, as well as making them resort to their background knowledge. At the same time, it is an activity intended to promote the communicative approach and the use of unscripted oral communication, among other aspects.

Previous to concluding with this section, it is appropriate to comment and explain a last activity that was also of great interest to the students towards the end of the didactic unit, which is the communicative task. In my opinion, I would say that the communicative task that has been employed in this didactic unit could be regarded as a cooperative project (Coelho, 1992b, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014), for it is certainly a type of CLL task. In this case, students formed formal CLL groups, as they employed two lessons to prepare their presentations and four lessons for the different groups to present in front of the class.

Regarding the two lessons that were employed for the preparation of the communicative task, the students were expected to prepare at least half of the content required for the presentation in the first lesson; then, in the second lesson, they were supposed to find the rest of the content and prepare it, including the PowerPoint presentation. Of course, those groups that were behind the schedule were encouraged to continue working at home.

Therefore, it is convenient to explain what this communicative task consists of. Students were requested to form groups first; then, they were explained that they had to select a competitive sport originated in an English-speaking country; and immediately after, the procedure that had to be followed – in terms of the content and the rules that must be respected throughout the development of the communicative task –, as well as the fact that they had to elaborate a PowerPoint presentation – or a similar programme – and explain everything to the whole class. Concerning this communicative task and what they had to do, the intention has been to basically name several aspects that they had to include in their presentations, and they are the following[6]:

History (estimated date of origin, "place of birth", its development with the passing of time, etc.)

- The rules of the sport

- Materials and equipment needed to play

- Most outstanding championships and tournaments

- Famous people connected to that sport

- Benefits of the sport (give advice to the audience so that they want to try the sport you are talking about)

- Personal opinions and impressions

Apart from the aforesaid aspects, students were also expected and considerably insisted in writing some questions to interact with the audience. This step is extremely fundamental, because without it, the use of spoken interaction, the communicative approach and the employment of oral communication strategies would not be possible in this activity. At the same time, it means that there would be problems to practise the methodologies chosen for this research project, as well as the theoretical assumptions established from the very beginning in the literature review section.

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[6] See appendix 5 in order to observe the PowerPoint slides that were utilised to explain students what this communicative task was about – as well as the rules or norms that were established –.

Hence, as has been said, pupils were provided with two lessons to go to the computers' classroom so that they could reduce the amount of homework; also, they probably wanted look for some information as well as elaborate their PowerPoint Presentations and, most importantly, the series of questions that they were requested to create and ask the audience.

A second intention with respect to the employment of cooperative projects is to promote discovery learning; that is, the idea that second language learners can discover new things every single day, but helping each other, as it is the essence of CLL formal groups.

In the following pages, I will present the results and personal impressions that resulted from this study, justifying the selection of these aforementioned activities and their relation to the chosen methodologies, theoretical assumptions, assessment rubrics and research questions.

4. Results and Discussion

Turning now to the next section, the results from the different activities that have been previously commented will be outlined, along with their respective discussion.

Before commencing with the analysis of the different activities, it must be said that the teachers' questionnaire revealed sufficient information. Out of the three teachers who completed the questionnaire, all of them selected both speaking and spoken interaction activities, although it must be clarified that there was a predominance of spoken interaction activities in comparison to speaking production ones. As regards the order in which they arranged the activities, each of them had different answers, but at the same time, they also shared some similarities. In order to show the results, a table has been elaborated:

Activities	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3
Informal discussions	1	-	6
Formal discussions	2	2	7
Interviews (teacher-student; teacher-students; student-student or group of students	9 (1. Student-student; 2. Teacher-student and 3. Teacher-students	5 (did not specify the type of interviews that are carried out)	5 (did not specify the type of interviews that conducted)
Monologues	11	8	13
Debates	3	9	11
Spoken presentations (individual or in groups)	10 (group presentations)	1 (group presentations)	12 (group presentations)

Describing pictures	12	10	2
Describing and guessing words	7	7	3
Picture difference	-	-	4
Brainstorming	5	-	1
Role-play	6	6	9
Simulation	8	-	8
Theatre/Drama plays	-	-	-
Storytelling	-	-	-
Drilling	-	-	-
Jigsaw Reading or information gap	-	4	14
Quizzes	-	-	-
Speed dating	13	-	-
Dialogues (Reading + Speaking activity; dialogue completion or dialogue creation)	4 (1. R + SA; 2. D.Completion and 3. D.Creation	3 (did not specify the type of dialogue activity)	10

Figure 2. The personal order that each teacher selected in their questionnaire.

Since there are only three teachers, it is convenient to briefly summarise the way in which each of them answered. As can be observed in the table above, each teacher has a personal order regarding the activities they usually implement in class, which is shown by means of enumerating the different activities just as they did in the questionnaire. Those activities that have a "-" imply that the teachers did not select them, and therefore they are not employed in class by them.

The first teacher prioritised the use of informal and formal discussions as well as debates and dialogues – 1. Reading + Speaking activity; 2. Dialogue completion; and 3. Dialogue creation –, leaving activities such as monologues, describing pictures, and speed dating at the bottom of the list.

The second teacher, on the other hand, emphasised the use of spoken presentations – only group presentations –, formal discussions and dialogues, not giving much importance to monologues, debates and describing pictures. As can be appreciated, these two teachers have similar preferences, and they often use spoken interaction activities, which is a positive and unexpected result; however, the latter seems to regard spoken presentations as their top choice, which would be, without any doubt, a speaking production activity – unless there are questions to promote oral interaction between the presenter and the audience –.

In the case of the third teacher, the brainstorming activity, describing pictures, and describing and guessing words were the activities that this teacher mostly employs during English classes, while spoken presentations – group presentations –, monologues, and information gap – or jigsaw reading – are used but not with excessive frequency. With the exception of the information gap activity, it can be said that this teacher offers the most complete selection of activities that promote spoken interaction in the class and that make most of the speaking production activities suggested in the questionnaire a secondary issue. Moreover, out of the three, not only does this teacher encourage the employment of spoken interaction in the class, but also fosters the use of what Bygate (1999) refers to as "unscripted oral communication" (p. 185). That is to say, all the activities that this teacher placed at the top of their list – 1. Brainstorming; 2. Describing pictures; 3. Describing and guessing words; 4. Picture difference; 5. Interviews, etc. – are based on producing unscripted language through improvisation; in other words, they do not involve creating a dialogue or a script to then memorise and consequently recite or simply read aloud. Instead, this focus on unscripted communication implies the idea that learners have to think about what they are going to

say at the moment as well as engage in the conversation and continue it spontaneously. Nevertheless, the other teachers prioritised activities which on the one hand, followed the idea of unscripted oral communication, but on the other hand, fostered scripted oral communication. As an example, spoken presentations entail a previously elaborated script, and exactly the same occurs with dialogue creation. In my case, the intention has been to implement activities which foster unscripted oral communication, being the role-play activity the only exception.

These teachers' responses give a general idea of the kind of activities that English teachers usually implement in their classes, even though sometimes they did not specify the type of activity that they conduct in class – if it is the case of an interview, a spoken presentation or a dialogue –. In short, it has been adequate, but it would be convenient to have more participants next time so that a greater quantity of data may be acquired and contrasted.

The students' questionnaire has already been discussed above, and the results have also been shown, since the most popular and demanded activities are the ones that have been presented in the previous section. The reason behind revealing beforehand the activities that have been chosen is simply because it was necessary to justify their selection with respect to both the learning situation plan and this study.

In general terms, it is clear to say that both questionnaires have been revealing not only to determine the subsequent activities that I implemented, but also to provide an answer to the first research question, which will be addressed in the conclusions section.

As indicated in the previous chapter, it is important to highlight that a couple of rubrics have been used in order to assess the students during the execution of the learning situation plan. One of them is a continuous assessment rubric which, as the term suggests, has been used throughout the entire didactic unit; the students were assessed as many days as possible regarding different aspects related to spoken interaction, which at the same time is implicitly connected with oral communication strategies. The second rubric was rather used at the end of the learning situation with the objective of evaluating the students' performance concerning the final task. As in the first rubric, a series of aspects related to oral communication were assessed.

In the case of the continuous assessment rubric, it could be possible to make a record of the students' progress as the weeks pass; in other words, it might be a way of observing whether they are actually improving or not. Or at least, as Popham (1997)

claims, it should be a way for the teachers to help the students acquire and develop their ability to use a determined skill.

The second rubric is going to be commented later on when discussing the final task that was carried out; therefore, it is time to briefly introduce the continuous assessment rubric to subsequently proceed discussing the different activities that were conducted in the practicum.

Having said that, the continuous assessment rubric can be found in the appendices section, at the end of this masters' thesis (see appendix 6). This rubric has been employed so as to both observe and assess the students.

The continuous assessment rubric has been elaborated and adapted taking into account the original rubric offered by the official bulletin of the Canary Islands to evaluate the assessment criterion number 4 from the English subject[7].

As can be observed, these are the four aspects that have been employed to evaluate each student during the didactic unit:

- General level of English – Grammar, fluency, pronunciation, etc. –.
- Participation in class – volunteering for speaking and giving opinions; doing and correcting activities, etc. –.
- Presents activities and tasks.
- Use of spoken interaction – in English, and whenever they are in pairs or in small groups –.

It is clear to say that the students were assessed on their communicative competence: their level of English whenever they are communicating as well as the effectiveness of their oral interaction with others, which implies the use of oral communication strategies – although this is going to be seen in a more evident way in the communicative task rubric –.

Apart from that, there is another aspect which was evaluated: "Presents activities and tasks". Unfortunately, this could not be assessed very often because they did not always have to submit activities or tasks.

Besides, the number of times this rubric was used in each group varies, as the two groups definitely have a different level of English, pace, etc.; due to this, one group had more lessons than the other one, and this is why it is quite relevant to try to find new

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[7] For further information about this rubric, please go to the following link: http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/boc/2018/218/009.html; it is also cited in the appendices' section (appendix 7)

ways to teach, considering the fact that there is a lot of diversity at schools. My solution was to simply adjust to their pace and not force them to follow the other group's rhythm.

Hence, the results of both groups respecting the previously shown continuous assessment rubric are shown in the appendices section as well (see appendix 8).

The students have been assessed from 0 to 4 each day considering the continuous assessment rubric. Therefore, the numbers used in the results' table represent how many times they have obtained that score – e.g. please, observe student A from group A in the "General level of English" aspect, this student has obtained a 3 twice –. It must be mentioned that not everyone has the same total sum of numbers or score since they did not come to every single class, and logically, they were not assessed in those lessons. Besides, pupils who have "-" instead of numbers is basically due to an absolute absenteeism. Furthermore, group A shows some students with more than one number in a single square – e.g. 2+1 –, this is because they participated actively during the communicative task presentations, in the sense that whenever the group presenting asked questions to the rest of the class, these pupils would answer, so they were rewarded afterwards with this, which would count as an additional score.

As regards the results of the continuous assessment rubric, it can be observed that the majority of the students obtained positive results, and therefore, they received good marks. Only some of them did not reach the minimum score to pass satisfactorily, but it was due to either absenteeism or neglection to work, as they have already failed the subject in the past months. In addition, group B had more lessons in which they could be assessed when compared to group A, but this is due to the fact that group B was actually slower than group A, so they required more lessons to teach the didactic unit.

Concerning my high school tutor's observations as well as mine, there seems to be an agreement between us, as we have very similar comments about each student and their progress with regard to their use of oral communication strategies, their communicative competence, their production of authentic language, etc. These conversations with my high school tutor have allowed me to realise that the activities have considerably worked, along with the rubrics that have been employed, since most of the students that were usually not participative and enthusiastic with her before my arrival, have indeed experienced an improvement.

Having discussed the questionnaires, the continuous assessment rubric, and commented on my observations as well as my high school tutor's, I will now move on

to analyse the different activities and the results that they provided, establishing a relationship between the activities and the methodologies and theoretical assumptions that have been discussed in the previous sections of this masters' thesis. In order to facilitate the comprehension of the following discussion, a table will be presented with a series of objectives representing CLT, TBLT, CLL, and the theoretical assumptions. They are shown along with each activity so as to indicate whether the objectives have been achieved or not:

Activities	Spoken interaction	Use of oral communication strategies	Fosters the students' communicative competence	Production of authentic language	Cooperative work
Brainstorming	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Think-pair-share/interviews	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jigsaw Reading or information gap	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Role-play	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Speed dating	No	No	No	No	No
Final task	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Figure 3. The activities that have been carried out with the respective objectives that were pretended to be achieved.

As has been previously mentioned, the first activity that was implemented during the didactic unit was the brainstorming activity. Now, this is an activity that many

students claimed to be unknown for them, and it was also one of the most demanded to be carried out in the class.

When it was conducted, the results were quite positive. The justification for this statement is that students were highly participative and seemed to be following the lesson as well as the topic. In fact, this situation allowed me to unexpectedly use this brainstorming activity a second time as a warm-up to a debate regarding a specific topic related to the unit.

Therefore, I would say that a brainstorming activity can be an adequate choice to introduce second language learners to a unit or a topic or also as a pre-activity that permits you to verify their background knowledge and how efficiently they can resort to it. Likewise, it is an appropriate way of getting used to the employment of oral communication strategies.

With regard to the different methodologies and theoretical assumptions, it can be confirmed that it is an activity which promotes CLT, as students are talking to each other for a couple of minutes so as to reflect about words that could be related to a particular topic; and also, they will communicate it later to the rest of the class and the teacher, which is another moment where they are practising their oral communication strategies as well as spoken interaction. In this sense, brainstorming is a way of encouraging the students' communicative competence rather than the linguistic one; however, that does not mean that the linguistic competence is being ignored, for it can be imagined that students are making use of their vocabulary and grammatical constructions as well in order to communicate effectively.

Actually, brainstorming would be categorised as a pre-communicative activity, and more specifically, as a quasi-communicative activity, because students employ, through this activity, language forms related to a content area as well as a main function, which could be in the case of the learning situation, to establish links or connections between the aforesaid language forms and the topic of the unit.

Nevertheless, this activity cannot be regarded as a TBLT type of task, because even though students could produce authentic language, it is not anything certain. That is to say, there were no real-life events applied to this activity when it was implemented.

In the case of CLL, it is obvious that it is a CLL activity, since informal CLL groups were formed in order to conduct it, and it undeniably involves the cooperation of the members of each group in order to succeed and accomplish the task.

However, a problem that I noticed after applying this activity is that students tend to go off-topic in the sense that they started suggesting words that were not really related to the topic.

As far as I am concerned, brainstorming is an activity which happens to be appealing for students; hence, in the future, I would like to find a mode of connecting this activity to TBLT. In order to do so, a way must be found to associate brainstorming with the production of authentic language.

In the previous chapter, I mentioned that there were a series of activities which were implemented several days and that could be referred to as think-pair-share or interviews, as they were basically informal discussions about particular topics related to the unit. These activities were, in general terms, considerably enriching for the students, because they interacted with each other in English and they did not seem to get exhausted about it, but completely the opposite. Besides, it must be said that most of the times, the students demonstrated enthusiasm and were willing to participate.

Accordingly, I would say that think-pair-share activities and interviews could be employed as an alternative to the brainstorming activity, since they have many similarities in common. For example, they are also, within the field of CLT, denominated as pre-communicative activities, and more specifically, quasi-communicative activities, for they combine the use of language forms with a main function. In this sense, there is no doubt that CLT is being fostered by means of conducting these activities, for students are interacting with each other, developing their communicative competence as well as their oral communication strategies.

However, even though it must be considered the fact that these activities coincide in some respects with brainstorming, I believe that in this case they can be classified as TBLT tasks, as they are informal discussions which could involve real-life communication and the production of authentic language. Taking into account Nunan's (1989, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014), and Long and Crookes' (1992) division of two kind of tasks within TBLT, it can be assured that these would be pedagogical tasks, since they do not entail real-world tasks, but there is indeed communication and interaction between the students.

With regard to CLL, certain doubts arise when it comes to deliberating whether they are CLL tasks or not. From my point of view, I would say that they could be considered as such because there was oral interaction between the pairs that were formed and they shared a common goal, which was to accomplish the tasks successfully and, in order to

do so, they had to collaborate and communicate with each other. My argument is supported by Richards & Rodgers (2014), who claim that CLL tasks refer to "any instructional activity, mainly group work to engage learners in communication, involving processes like information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction" (p. 254).

Having said all this, I would like to add that these activities also present a difficulty that I have noticed during my practicum at high school, and it is that students work efficiently at the beginning, but if you give them more time than what they actually need to discuss the designated questions or the topic itself, they will automatically switch to Spanish and abandon the activity; hence, there is a risk that it will become difficult to reclaim the control of the class later on. One possible solution to this problem is to be constantly moving around the class to ensure that they are interacting in English and following the activity.

The next activity that was implemented was the jigsaw reading or information gap activity. This is another task which was one in which the students expressed an interest when they completed their questionnaire; hence, they were eager to do the activity when they discovered what it was.

Undoubtedly, it is an activity which promotes the use of the communicative competence – but without overlooking the linguistic competence – as well as the employment of oral communication strategies. As a consequence, it also entails the use of CLT in this activity. Clearly this is the case as students need to communicate with each other so as to explain the different parts of the short story and then arrange the aforementioned short story together. In this process, they are obviously interacting and using oral communication strategies. Besides, the jigsaw reading or information gap would be categorised as a communicative activity, and particularly, a communicative activity which combines a functional communication and a social interaction activity. The justification for this statement is that this activity makes the students use their language to interact and express effectively the meanings that they have to communicate considering the context; then, at the same time, the language they must employ is connected with the social context of the communicative event – in this case, the context would be the theme of the short story, which is related to the topic of the didactic unit –.

As has been explained in the literature review section, a jigsaw reading or an information gap activity is an adequate example of a pedagogical task, because even though it is not real-world based, it implies spoken interaction and the production of

authentic language. Also, it was carried out within the classroom, which is another characteristic of pedagogical tasks.

Then, it can be also categorised as a CLL task, as it implies forming informal CLL groups, and they definitely have to work cooperatively in order to reach their common goal, which is to first realise that the different parts comprise a short story, and secondly, arrange that short story correctly. Meanwhile, they are requested to speak in English, so again they are interacting and using their oral communication strategies. Besides, I would like to add that, from my point of view, jigsaw reading or information gap is one of the most appropriate instances of a CLL task, since if one of the members does not collaborate in the activity, they would never complete it successfully – that is, it requires teamwork –.

Therefore, even though this activity is a convenient opportunity to employ the three methodologies and test the three theoretical assumptions simultaneously, there can be problems as well. For instance, I personally underlined some sentences due to an exercise that I wanted them to do after this activity, and this seemed to confuse them, as most of them were only focusing on the underlined sentences, overlooking the rest of the text. In addition, some of the students were not following my instructions – various people were just telling their fragments to their classmates while they were reading, when they were supposed to read and understand their respective fragment first, and then tell their classmates about it in the second place without looking at it –, which maybe occurred because I did not explain myself properly.

In the future, I should express myself better so that these problems do not happen anymore. Likewise, I should not underline anything whatsoever, not even if the purpose is to use the very same short story for another activity or exercise, since it may bewilder the students.

Another activity which was implemented is role-play. Now, after looking at the students' questionnaire, role-play transmits ambivalence, since some students seemed to abhor it, whereas others loved it. When it was implemented, the results were considerably positive, and I would dare to say that it was the most positive activity out of the ones that were conducted. This is so because the students followed every single instruction – they applied language functions such as giving advice to someone using the modals; also, they used Reported Speech just as they were requested to do it, their scripts barely had grammar and spelling mistakes, etc. – and most significantly, they appeared to have fun while performing their scripts.

When it comes to establishing connections between this type of activity and the methodologies and theoretical assumptions stated within this study, the relation is very evident.

In terms of CLT, it is an activity which definitely fosters the communicative competence; however, it is mostly encouraged when performing, for it is unlikely to happen that students would interact in English while preparing their scripts; that is, they would obviously switch to Spanish. The very same thing occurs with oral communication strategies, they are rather practised during the performance of their scripts.

Moreover, a role-play is the clearest example of a communicative activity which possesses a functional communication and a social interaction. That is to say, it is a task which encourages students to employ a language that is considered as necessary in order to accomplish an effective communication and expression of meanings, while at the same time, this specific language that they are using is related to the social context of the situation being performed, so that there are both a functional and a social aspect of communication.

Then, role-play can also be related to TBLT, in the sense that it would be a pedagogical task, for it has been applied within the classroom, involving communication and interaction between the students when performing the scripts. Additionally, there is no doubt that they would be producing authentic and useful language, since the situations that were suggested to them so that they could create their scripts are absolutely contexts that could occur to them, that is, they are real-life events.

With regard to CLL, this methodology is also connected to role-play, because formal CLL groups needed to be formed – the activity took two classes and a half to first prepare the scripts and secondly perform them –. Apart from that, the different groups required each student's cooperation in order to both elaborate the script and perform it; otherwise, the task would not have been carried out effectively.

Despite all the benefits, the activity did not precisely result as expected, because even though it was quite positive for them in all areas, it is also true that, in the end, they rather performed a simulation, which is good, but it is not what they were asked for. Perhaps, the problem was that I did not really write fictional names in the situations; I just created them and consequently they interpreted that they could use their own identities and names in real-world contexts. In this sense, it can be stated that the situations that I provided them established both the language function and the topic

from the very beginning – although it must be clarified that this was certainly conditioned by the didactic unit –. Hence, this demonstrates that I focused too much on language practice rather than the communication of meaning, which is another reason for saying that this role-play activity was not actually perfect.

The penultimate activity to be discussed is speed dating. Although I was not planning to implement this activity, it was one of the most demanded by the students after filling out their questionnaires, that is why eventually I decided to do it. As far as I am concerned, I did not observe positive results from this task, but this will be addressed in a moment. Before, I should talk about the activity's relationship with the three methodologies and theoretical assumptions.

If I were to examine this activity objectively, I would say that it is a task that could certainly promote the development of the students' communicative competence along with their oral communication strategies. Furthermore, I used it as a pre-communicative activity, with the purpose of helping them get familiarised with the topic that was going to be practised in that specific class. Particularly, speed dating could be regarded as a quasi-communicative activity, because in my case, I organised it in a way in which it entailed both a main function and several structural forms that could be used. The main function would be "to establish connections between the language forms that are being employed and their actual meaning", and the language forms would be mainly linking words that express opinions, cause and results.

As regards TBLT, this would be, again, a pedagogical task due to the very same characteristics that have been previously mentioned. Likewise, the students surely produced authentic language while doing the activity, basically because the topic allowed them to do so, as it was a theme that could be raised in an everyday conversation – video games as competitive sports and their possible inclusion in the educational system –.

With respect to CLL, there are hesitations when it comes to deciding whether it could be classified as a CLL task type or not. In my opinion, it is very similar to the case of think-pair-share and interview activities, because there is certainly oral interaction between the interlocutors; that is, between the distinct pairs that were formed as well as their following pairs; in other words, the simple act of communicating with each other means to me a cooperation in order to fulfil the task objective. Additionally, this argument would be supported by Richards & Rodgers (2014) definition of CLL tasks.

Returning to the results of this activity, they were not positive whatsoever. In fact, the arrangement of the classroom did not allow me to conduct the activity properly. My idea was to request the students to form two rows of pairs facing each other in order to communicate and interact; unfortunately, everything was organised in a way in which it was impossible for the students to move on to their next partner – especially the last person who was supposed to come back to the beginning of the row –. In the end, I was obliged to cancel the activity so that no more time was wasted. Additionally, neither my high school tutor nor I were able to observe whether every single pair was interacting in English and following the instructions. Nevertheless, since I taught the didactic unit to two different groups, the alternative that we intended to do was to simply transform the speed dating into a common think-pair-share or interview activity, which obviously caused more positive results than the speed dating activity. Summarily, the layout of the class was, in essence, the problem to carry out the activity adequately, and the reason why I answered in the table above that every single objective has not been fulfilled in this activity.

In the future, I have intentions of planning to analyse beforehand if the arrangement of the classroom permits this activity to occur; if not, I would try to reflect about ways of modifying the layout, or also changing the classroom only for that particular lesson, for example.

Finally, the last activity before finishing this section of the dissertation would be the social or communicative task; in other words, it is the final task of the didactic unit or learning situation. In the previous section, I referred to it as a cooperative project considering the fact that it coincides exactly with the description that CLL provides about what a cooperative project is (Coelho, 1992b, cited in Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Having said that, it is convenient to first introduce and describe the communicative task rubric, and after that, relate this cooperative project to the different methodologies and theoretical assumptions stated in this dissertation. The communicative task rubric is located in the appendices section (see appendix 9).

As the rubric shows, there are a series of aspects employed to assess each student with respect to the communicative task, all of them rating from 0 to 2 points, except pronunciation and the use of ICTs which rate from 0 to 1 point; and then, the total sum of the points pertaining to the different aspects from this rubric gives a mark of ten points:

- Effective spoken interaction

- Fluency

- Use of oral communication strategies

- Adaptation and flexibility

- Pronunciation

- Use of ICTs

These aspects were actually selected and adapted taking into account the original rubrics used to describe the criteria 4 and 5 corresponding to the English subject within the official bulletin of the Canary Islands; the same procedure was followed with the continuous assessment rubric[8]. Now, these criteria were chosen for the learning situation that was implemented during the practicum, and they basically have to do with spoken interaction and oral communication strategies, so they are also related to this study.

Even though they presented in groups of three people, all these aspects were used to assess them at an individual level; however, the use of ICTs was the only aspect applied at a group level, since that is related to their PowerPoint presentation – which they elaborated working cooperatively – and their familiarity with technology.

Subsequently, I will concisely discuss the results of the communicative task, which can be found in the appendices section (see appendix 11). As can be seen, the students have a mark in each of the aspects previously presented that together result in a final mark from 0 to 10. Before continuing with the discussion, it must be commented that eventually the communicative task was only applied with one of the two groups, since the other one was too delayed with regard to the didactic unit; in this sense, there would be 33 students who fulfilled this task. Moreover, a minority of pupils failed the communicative task, and consequently, they have been highlighted in red. These students either read their whole script or did not formulate questions to their classmates whatsoever, avoiding any sort of spoken interaction. Discussing this matter with my high school tutor became quite revealing, since it turned out to be that the students who had done one of the aforementioned actions had already done similar things with her in previous occasions. Still, the results have been, generally speaking, quite positive, since most of the students obtained very good marks and followed the instructions that were provided, accomplishing the task successfully.

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[8] In order to see the original rubrics that have been mentioned, please visit the following link: http://www.gobiernodecanarias.org/boc/2018/218/009.html, or go to appendix 10.

Next, it is necessary to provide a chart that contains the number of times each oral communication strategy was employed by a student when interacting with the rest of the class. The oral communication strategies that have been considered for this final task are the ones presented in the literature review section – those proposed by Bazo & Francisco (2018) as well as the formal reduction strategies (Faerch & Kaspar, 1983, cited in Kendall et al., 2005) –.

Before showing the chart, it must be commented that eventually the communicative task was only applied with one of the two groups, since the other one was too delayed with regard to the didactic unit; in this sense, there would be 34 students who fulfilled this task.

OCS	Number of times	OCS	Number of times
Taking the floor	4	Code switching	2
Co-operating	27	Interlingual transfer	0
Asking for clarification	13	Non-linguistic strategies	8
Topic avoidance	0	Cooperative strategies	27
Message abandonment	4	Inter/intralingual transfer	0
Meaning replacement	0	Interlingual based strategies	5

Figure 4. Number of times that students have employed these strategies during the communicative task.

As can be contemplated, "co-operating" and "cooperative strategies" have exactly the same number because they are the same type of strategy, but just co-operating corresponds to the strategies proposed by Bazo & Francisco (2018), whereas "cooperative strategies" belong to the strategies offered by Faerch & Kaspar (1983, cited in Kendall et al., 2005). Furthermore, they were the most employed strategies by

the students, as the act of inviting someone to a conversation or formulating questions to somebody implies using these strategies. After them, it follows "asking for clarification" along with "non-linguistic strategies" and "interlingual based strategies". Although "non-linguistic strategies" have to do basically with body language – gestures, body posture, eye contact, facial expressions, etc. –, it is part of the communication process, that is why it is relevant to take into account these strategies as well. Most of the students seem to have indeed dominated the use of the "cooperative strategies" through this activity, and "asking for clarification" could be highlighted too.

Unfortunately, there were some strategies that were not utilised at all; even so, I believe that the results of this communicative task have been acceptable. Nevertheless, it was not an idyllic activity, and there are always aspects that can be improved, but first, it is important to see the relationship between this final task and the methodologies and theoretical assumptions that have been previously established.

In the case of CLT, this activity obviously encouraged students to interact with their classmates by means of asking them questions and subsequently continuing a conversation from there. Following this thought, it is a task that contributes to the development of their communicative competence, but without overlooking their linguistic competence. Besides, as has been observed, it is clear that, in general terms, students can practise and improve their oral communication strategies through this cooperative project.

This would be categorised as a functional communication and social interaction activity, for this communicative task involves employing a specific language in order to transmit a series of meanings without forgetting the social context in which the activity is occurring. In addition, I would like to say that this interaction that took place between the students would be unscripted oral communication, which is precisely what, from my point of view, English teachers should achieve when implementing spoken interaction activities; nevertheless, this is not an easy task.

Regarding TBLT, this would be a pedagogical task, essentially due to the very same reasons stated with the previous activities. Moreover, it is a task which undeniably fosters the use of authentic and useful language, as sports is a common topic that can be easily part of the students' everyday life.

This communicative task would also be related to CLL, since it is fundamentally a CLL task type – a cooperative project –. It required creating formal CLL groups of three

people – because they had weeks to prepare this task – and it is irrefutable that they had to work cooperatively during the preparation of this task so as to fulfil it with success.

In summary, this communicative task employs the three different methodologies while at the same time accomplishes the three theoretical assumptions established in this dissertation. Generally speaking, it is an efficient task.

However, as has been previously mentioned, it must be said as well that, whereas most of the students overcame this task brilliantly, there were a few others who completely omitted the questions' part, forbidding any sort of interaction – and, as a consequence, any possible use of oral communication strategies – between them and their classmates.

The conclusion that I get from this activity is that even though it is original, it is also quite risky, and that if I decide to implement it once again, I must assure that they are following the instructions and understanding every single step of the process, especially the creation of questions for the oral interaction event and the use of oral communication strategies.

In the chapter that follows, I will present and develop in detail the multiple conclusions that I have obtained from this research project.

5. Conclusions

The principal purpose of this study has been to observe to what extent do the three methodologies proposed at the beginning of this dissertation – Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching and Cooperative Language Learning – contribute positively to the development of oral communication strategies, as well as the communicative competence and the production of real language in second language learners who possess an intermediate level of English. In other words, it has been suggested that these three methodologies coincide when it comes to speaking about the previously mentioned theoretical assumptions, and this dissertation has been conducted in order to verify the validity and effectiveness of this idea. In addition, my intention has been also to find an answer to the three research questions that have been presented in the introduction and literature review sections of this masters' thesis.

As explained earlier, several materials have been employed in order to collect data: the students' questionnaire as well as the teachers' questionnaire; the continuous assessment rubric and the communicative task rubric, and my observations as well as my high school tutor's perceptions. However, it must be clarified that the questionnaires have been materials utilised prior to teaching in order to determine the approach that I was going to adopt in the teaching process, so what would count as materials to collect data during the teaching process would be the rubrics and both mine and my high school tutor's observations. In general, I would say that the information that have been gathered is enough; that is, the materials that were used have provided sufficient data to answer the research questions, and therefore demonstrate the validity of my hypothesis.

With regard to the teachers' questionnaire, I must confess that before implementing my learning situation plan, I used to think that English teachers, whenever they conducted oral activities, they would be, in fact, carrying out just speaking production activities or, if it were the case that they would be really employing spoken interaction activities, that they would foster scripted oral communication. However, once I read and analysed each of the three teachers' answers to the questionnaire, I realised that English teachers certainly know the difference between speaking production and spoken interaction activities, while at the same time, most of the activities they selected were based on promoting unscripted oral communication. From this statement, my intention was to follow their steps and implement as well activities which fostered mainly

unscripted oral communication, instead of scripted, but it became a difficult challenge considering the fact that I also wanted to apply those activities demanded by the students and not all of them implied unscripted oral communication. Among the situations in which I implemented activities that promoted unscripted oral communication – bearing in mind that they were interacting in English while doing the activities as well –, there is the brainstorming activity; the think-pair-share and interview activities; the jigsaw reading or information gap activity; speed dating; and the communicative task, although in this case, the unscripted oral communication took place whenever each group formulated some questions to the audience, and hence, the spoken interaction commenced.

Concerning the students' questionnaire, the results were quite acceptable in the sense that there were enough participants, which is why I was allowed to subsequently elaborate and implement the different oral activities; the activities that, according to them, they demanded and enjoyed the most while learning. In my opinion, the most successful activity was the role-play, because even though some students seemed to get nervous while performing in front of the audience, they still enjoyed the experience and practised both their spoken interaction skills and their oral communication strategies.

Moving on now to the following material, that is, the continuous assessment rubric, the results were considerably good. These outcomes were discussed with my high school tutor and we coincided almost every single time, and this strongly supported my ideas regarding each student. Exactly the same thing happened when my high school tutor and I compared our observations and notes. Therefore, these have been fruitful materials as well, and eventually we arrived at the conclusion that there had been a general improvement. However, after finishing the didactic unit, we also discussed about the fact that assessing students constantly in terms of spoken interaction and oral communication strategies is a real challenge, as some days it was even almost impossible to listen to every single student, which is what happened, for example, the day when the speed dating activity was implemented. In the end, even though it worked to a certain extent, I realised how complicated it can be to assess students, specifically, in terms of spoken interaction and oral communication strategies.

Prior to continuing, I would like to discuss the use of rubrics in order to evaluate learners or students. Popham (1997) states that rubrics tend to have four usual flaws: some rubrics have "Task-specific evaluative criteria"; others have "Excessively general evaluative criteria"; they normally have an excessive length, and they are elaborated in a

way in which they associate "the test of the skill with the skill itself" (pp. 73-74). The problem with this, Popham (1997) argues, is that they are apparently helping instruction, but in the end, they have no educational aims. In my case, I would say that my rubrics have both positive and negative aspects. For instance, I believe that the two rubrics have an adequate length respecting the definitions of the aspects that are assessed. Besides, the communicative task rubric has neither too general nor too specific evaluative aspects, that is, they are all related to the evaluative criteria, but they are not specific for that task; they could be used in another one. Likewise, with this rubric, the students were guided in a general way to the respective skill and strategies – spoken interaction and oral communication strategies –, not oriented specifically towards this activity. Apart from that, it could be defined as an Analytic Scoring Rubric, which consists in showing the evaluative aspects with their respective quality definitions and punctuations (Popham, 1997). Perhaps, the mistake resides in the fact that I used too many evaluative aspects, I could have discarded the "Use of ICTs" for example, which is the least related to the evaluative criteria. On the other hand, I observe one more mistake in the continuous assessment rubric. That is, I realise now that my aspects are considerably general, or at least "participation" and "presents activities and tasks", since they are the least related to the assessment criteria. Nevertheless, the positive learning that I have acquired from the prior research as well as the subsequent practical experience at high school is that, from now onwards, I think I will be able to elaborate appropriate rubrics that are based on what Popham (1997) refers to as "educational impact" (p. 73).

The last material that I will reflect upon is the communicative task rubric, and I must say that it is quite probably the best and most adapted material, because despite the fact that the final task was not perfect, it allowed me to collect the necessary data – respecting effective spoken interaction and oral communication strategies – to contemplate whether the students were learning from the experience or not, and also to see which strategies were the easiest for them; which were the most complex; which ones were not used whatsoever, etc. From my point of view, this statement, as well as everything that has been mentioned so far, contributes to the possibility of giving an answer to the second and third research questions, as it can be stated that throughout this study, it has been demonstrated that students have indeed acquired and increased their use of oral communication strategies by means of the different activities that have been carefully selected and subsequently implemented. Likewise, considering the

results that have been shared in the previous section of this research project, Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Learning can certainly promote the use of oral communication strategies, the students' communicative competence, and the production of authentic language, although activities must be selected cautiously if the aim is to combine the three methodologies together and simultaneously.

Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that the circumstances must be always taken into account, since they certainly condition and influence the results; for instance, the students' level of English as well as their learning pace, the excursions and holidays that the groups may have, etc. As an illustration, the situation in the two groups that were part of both the didactic unit and this study was different to a great extent, specifically due to the examples previously provided.

Furthermore, there is another aspect that must be considered and that certainly plays a role in this study. As has been explained earlier in the literature review section, several authors address the students' Willingness to Communicate (WTC), which may inevitably limit the students' L2 communicative competence – or, on the other hand, foster their L2 communicative competence, although normally it is the other way around – (MacIntyre et al., 1998). In this sense, the results acquired might have been influenced even by how the students felt that specific day and what WTC they possessed, which is unfortunately a factor that could make the results of this study seem sort of inconclusive.

Summarily, I would say that I have succeeded in responding to the research questions previously proposed in the introduction and at the end of the literature review section. As a consequence, I think that I have considerably demonstrated my hypothesis. Respecting the first research question, the results show that teachers do focus on spoken interaction activities without confusing them with speaking production activities. Moreover, these spoken interaction activities that they implement are mainly fostering the use of unscripted oral communication, and not scripted. Likewise, in the case of the second research question, it can be confirmed that most of the students have acquired the necessary oral communication strategies taking into account their B1 level, and this can be also observed in the results that have been provided. As regards the third research question, I believe that Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Language Teaching, and Cooperative Language Learning are methodologies which suggest activities that can help L2 students develop their use of oral communication

strategies, their communicative competence, and the production of authentic language. This statement can be reinforced by the numerous activities that have implemented and that undeniably represent these three methodologies. In this sense, the theoretical assumptions previously proposed have also been proved reliable and truthful.

Hence, I think this is a suitable opportunity to continue working on this hypothesis for further research in the future, although next time I would like to establish a series of personal goals with respect to the students' learning process, such as "I must try to foster their Willingness to Communicate through developing their confidence in speaking and spoken interaction" or "I want to ensure that they improve their communicative competence as well as their employment of oral communication strategies day by day".

Finally, I would also try in future studies to implement activities that encourage unscripted oral communication more frequently, because even though scripted oral communication sometimes becomes fundamental as well, I honestly believe that the real challenge for second language learners is to produce language spontaneously; a language that cannot be premeditated and scripted.

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7. Appendices

Appendix 1: The students' questionnaire and the teachers' questionnaire.

Students' questionnaire

Have a look at the following activities and tick the ones that you usually do in class. Then, select a number from 1 to 5 **ONLY** in those activities that you have ticked. Please, take into account how much you enjoy doing those activities and how much you learn from them. If you choose number 5, that means that you love the activity and that you learn a lot from it, but on the contrary, if you choose number 1, it means that the activity is boring and useless for you. Finally, feel free to add any comments, and you can write those comments in Spanish if you want.

☐ Informal discussions (conversations about common topics and daily routines such as hobbies, music, films, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

☐ Formal discussions (conversations about politics, current events, controversial topics such as discrimination, male-chauvinism…Topics are more serious)

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

☐ Interviews (☐ Your teacher asks you a series of questions and you respond them, or ☐ you and your classmates ask and answer each other. In case you do both, tick both and think about a global score)

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

☐ Monologues

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Debates

1	2	3	4	5

☐   Spoken presentations (☐ Individual or ☐ group presentations. If you usually do both, tick the two of them, and again, think about a global score)

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Describing pictures

1	2	3	4	5

☐   Describing and guessing words (in groups or in pairs, you describe words with definitions, synonyms and antonyms, even examples, and your classmates have to guess which word it is)

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Picture difference

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Brainstorming

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Role play (Whenever you are asked to act as a character in a story or context)

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Simulation (Every time you act representing real-life situations and you are playing yourself, not a character)

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Theatre/Drama plays

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Storytelling

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Drilling (The teacher or any audio device says something, and you repeat it several times until you get how it is pronounced)

1	2	3	4	5

☐ Information gap or Jigsaw Reading (In groups, each person has a part of a text and you have to explain it to the rest of the group to figure out the whole story)

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

☐ Quizzes

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

☐ Speed dating (The class is organised so that you and your classmates are placed to maintain face-to-face conversations about certain topics for a short period of time)

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

☐ Dialogues (☐ Creating a dialogue with a classmate, ☐ completing a dialogue with a classmate or ☐ discussing things after reading a text. Again, tick those that you usually do and try to select a common score)

1	2	3	4	5
😢	🙁	🙂	😁	😍

Comments:

Teachers' questionnaire

Observe the following oral activities and tick those that you usually employ in class. Afterwards, establish an order with those activities that you HAVE selected below the list, prioritising the ones that you consider essential and useful in the process of learning a foreign language. To conclude with this questionnaire, feel free to add any comments at the end that you consider relevant; for instance, which activities do you think that fit into the Task-Based Language Teaching approach? Or in other words, which ones do

you find helpful for students to communicate in daily, real-life events and similar contexts?

☐ Informal discussions (conversations about common topics and daily routines such as hobbies, music, films, etc.)

☐ Formal discussions (conversations about politics, current events, controversial topics such as discrimination, male-chauvinism…Topics are more serious)

☐ Interviews (e.g. the teacher as interviewer and students as interviewees or just between students. Please specify in the list or comments section the most common mode: Teacher-student, teacher-students, student-student, group of students)

☐ Monologues (Short speech)

☐ Debates

☐ Spoken presentations (☐ Individual or ☐ group presentations. If you do both, then tick both, and specify your order in the list)

☐ Describing pictures

☐ Describing and guessing words

☐ Picture difference

☐ Brainstorming

☐ Role play (Students play characters within contexts or stories)

☐ Simulation (Students perform real-life situations and they play themselves)

☐ Theatre/Drama plays

☐ Storytelling

☐ Drilling

☐ Information gap (Jigsaw Reading)

☐ Quizzes

☐ Speed dating

☐ Dialogues (☐ reading + speaking activity, ☐ dialogue completion or ☐ dialogue creation. Again, tick those that you usually do, and order them in the list)

Personal order:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

Comments:

Appendix 2: Some PowerPoint slides respecting think-pair-share and interview activities.

Getting to know each other

- How many sports have you practised so far? What sports that you have practised are about **scoring goals**?

- Do you consider yourself a person who has a **healthy lifestyle**?

- What do you usually do to **keep fit**?

- Have you ever practised a sport that has been a **challenge** for you? If you have, did you **give up** on that sport? Or, did you **improve** and carry on?

- Do you think that it is important to have **self-esteem** in order to practise a sport?

Sports and equal rights

- Are prizes, scholarships, budgets, etc. equally distributed to men and women?

- Popularity: Do you think that the media coverage offers the same recognition to men's sports and women's sports? To put an example, when you turn on the TV, do you usually observe news, matches, games, etc. of men playing sports? Or women?

- "Some sports are exclusively for men and some are just for women". What do you think?

- If it is the case that you think that there are no equal rights for men and women in sports, what kind of solutions would you suggest?

Time to discuss!

- Do you usually go training? If you do not, explain what you do instead. If you do, explain what you normally do and the place where you train, is it at home? Is it at the gym? Is it at the park?

- What does the place where you train offer? (heating & air conditioning system, variety of machines, weights, personal trainer, etc.)

- What would be your ideal place to train?

Let's discuss!!!

🚶	How much do you walk every day?
🏋	How much do you exercise per week?
🥑	How many pieces of fruit do you eat every week?
	From 0 to 10, how healthy do you think you are? After listening to your classmate's answers, how would you rate him/her from 0 to 10?

Appendix 3: Jigsaw Reading or information gap activity

Naomi: Mom, dad, <u>can we talk?</u>

Naomi's mother: Sure, <u>what's wrong?</u> <u>Is everything ok?</u> <u>How are you doing at waterpolo?</u>

Naomi: To be honest, I'm just not comfortable at all.

Naomi's dad: What do you mean you are not comfortable? Are you being bullied by the other kids?

Naomi: No, not really. I don't know...<u>I just want to try **taking up** something else</u>, I realised this is not for me.

Naomi's dad: Changing sports again? <u>Are you really planning to **give up** so easily?</u>

Naomi's mother: Calm down. Your daughter needs to explore new horizons, it is normal at this age.

Naomi's dad: Common thing or not, we are paying it, not her! and <u>we cannot afford it anymore</u>!

Naomi: <u>I promise you this will be the last time</u>, I have been thinking about it, and this might be the one! It has to be!

Naomi's dad: I hope so, Naomi, there are no more chances after that, we are your parents and we want the best for you, but you have to make a decision and accept the possible consequences, no matter they are good or bad.

Naomi's mother: That's right, you must reflect about what's best for you, as well as what you enjoy, and demonstrate that you are a responsible person.

Naomi: Thank you, mom. Thank you, dad. <u>I won't let you down.</u>

While skating, Naomi falls off the floor

Coach: One more time, come on.

Naomi: I'm actually a little bit exhausted, <u>may I have a rest?</u>

Coach: The world **championship** is just ahead, there's no time to lose.

Naomi: but…

Coach: ok, five minutes…

During the break

Tiffany: Hey Naomi, you seem sad.

Naomi: Hi! Yeah…<u>I just thought this was going to be easier</u>, the **championship** is in two weeks and <u>I feel that I'm going to do a horrible performance.</u>

Tiffany: Don't be silly! Why would you say that?

Naomi: Basically, because <u>I have been **working out** intensively for three months</u> and I still have nothing! Maybe it is just that I'm **out of shape**…

Tiffany: <u>Why do you have such low **self-esteem**</u>? <u>You have made quite an effort so far and it is going to pay off</u>, I'm sure of it.

Naomi: I hope so Tiffany, I truly do…

Reporter: So, <u>how do you feel?</u>

Naomi: <u>This has been such an amazing experience</u>; <u>I have no words to describe my feelings right now</u>.

Reporter: I can imagine, <u>you did a very good job yesterday</u>.

Naomi: Well, I know I can do better spins, and I almost fell off doing the triple axel.

Reporter: Still, you are the world champion, and that's a real achievement. <u>You should focus on your strengths and not your weaknesses</u>!

Naomi: *chuckles* Thank you so much.

Reporter: <u>Don't even mention it</u>. By the way, are you ready for what is coming? <u>We are aware that the Olympic Games will be taking place next year in Tokyo.</u>

Naomi: Indeed, <u>I will probably start training next week</u>, as it is perhaps the most difficult **challenge** I have ever faced.

Reporter: Well, we really wish you good luck, and we will definitely be there to support you.

Naomi: Right, I'm looking forward to being there representing you guys. Thank you!

Appendix 4: Role-play activity

1) A: You are so happy with this new diet you are following; you tell your friend about it.

B: Your friend tells you that she/he is following a marvellous diet, and you know that diet is terrible. You need to tell her/him to quit it. Ask your friend for advice.

C: Your friend needs your help! He/she doesn't know how to tell his/her friend that the diet that he/she is following is not good at all. Give advice to your friend about how to tell someone to quit a diet politely.

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2) A: You want to join rhythmic gymnastics, but you don't want to do it without your best friend. Ask him/her to do it with you.

B: You hate rhythmic gymnastics and your best friend wants you to join along with him/her. You tell him/her that you will ask your parents if they let you as an excuse. Scare your parents telling them bad things about this sport.

C: Your son/daughter wants to join rhythmic gymnastics, so exciting! But he/she seems to be hesitant. Give him/her advice about the benefits that it has in order to convince him/her.

----

3) A: You practise volleyball. The championships are ahead, and you are looking forward to participating. Tell your coach about it.

B: You are the coach. You know that this person is not ready to compete. You ask your friends for advice.

C: Your friend needs advice about how to tell someone that he/she is not ready for the upcoming championships. Give him/her some advice.

Appendix 5: PowerPoint slides concerning the explanation of the communicative task

In shape: around the world!

What you have to do...

1. Form groups of 3 people.

2. Select a sport from an English-speaking country.

3. Create a PowerPoint Presentation about the sport you have selected.

4. Present it to the rest of the class

List of countries

United Kingdom
United States of America (USA)
Ireland
South Africa
India
Australia
New Zealand
Canada

Rules

Every single member of the group must speak during the presentation.

The presentation should last around 8-10 minutes (15 minutes at most).

Several questions should be formulated to the audience in order to practise spoken interaction.

The rest of the class should also ask questions to the group that is presenting.

Necessary content for your presentations

History (estimated date of origin, "place of birth", its development with the passing of time, etc.)

The rules of the sport

Materials and equipment needed to play

Most outstanding championships and tournaments

Famous people connected to that sport

Benefits of the sport (give advice to the audience so that they want to try the sport you are talking about)

Personal opinions and impressions

A few more things…

Remember to use key information, images or even a video in your slide. Your presentation should seem attractive and entertaining to the audience and at the same time serve as an evidence of your skills to use ICTs.

You are going to be assessed as well during the preparatory lessons for this task.

The rubric that is going to be used in order to assess you during the presentations will be shown to you soon.

Do not forget to ask questions or maybe even prepare activities that will encourage your classmates to speak and interact with you. This is a quite relevant aspect that will definitely be evaluated!

However, the fact that you do not present does not mean that you are supposed to be completely silent and doing nothing! You must interact with the group that is presenting by asking them questions! You will be assessed on this aspect too!

Appendix 6: Continuous assessment rubric

Evaluative aspects	0	1	2	3	4
General level of English	The pupil shows too many basic problems regarding grammar, spelling, fluency and pronunciation. B1 is not his/her level by far.	The student has many problems regarding grammar, spelling, fluency and pronunciation. He/she is slightly under the B1 level.	The pupil shows some problems in terms of grammar, spelling, fluency and pronunciation, but seems to express himself/herself satisfactorily. Possesses a B1 level.	The student demonstrates to have barely a couple of problems with grammar, spelling, fluency and pronunciation. Definitely possesses a B1 level.	The pupil does not have problems with grammar, spelling, fluency and pronunciation. This student reaches the B1+ level.

Participation	The student has not participated in class and completely ignores the lesson.	The student has not participated in class and adopts a passive role.	The student has participated once or twice and seems to be following the lesson.	The pupil participates usually and makes good interventions.	The student participates quite a lot, making good interventions and showing interest for the lesson.
Presents activities and tasks	The student has not submitted the task and has not worked in class at all.	The pupil has submitted the task with too many mistakes and has not been working in class.	The student has submitted the task with some mistakes but has worked in class.	The pupil has submitted the task with barely any mistakes and has worked most of the time during the lesson.	The student has submitted the task and the activity has been perfectly done. Also, he/she has worked in class.

Use of spoken interaction	The student is unable to interact at all in everyday contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, not accomplishing the communicative functions. B1 is not his/her level by far.	The student is unable to interact efficiently in everyday contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, barely accomplishing the communicative functions. He/she is slightly under the B1 level.	The pupil can interact efficiently in contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, accomplishing satisfactorily the communicative functions and intentions. Possesses a B1 level.	The student interacts in an efficient way and showing certainty in relatively predictable situations, accomplishing appropriately the communicative functions and intentions. Definitely possesses a B1 level.	The pupil can certainly interact very efficiently in relatively predictable situations, fulfilling by far the communicative functions and intentions. This student reaches the B1+ level.

Appendix 7: Original rubric for evaluation criterion number 4 (translated to English)

EFL Rubric (Social dimension)

Assessment criterion	Social agent			
	Unsatisfactory (1-4)	Satisfactory (5-6)	Notable (7-8)	Outstanding (9-10)
4. Interacting efficiently in oral exchanges, adjusting the register to both the interlocutor and the context and showing respect towards others' opinions and ideas, with the purpose of getting on with sufficient autonomy in normal or less normal situations in the personal, academic and professional fields. With this criterion, it can be checked if the student as a social agent is able to use sentences, phrases and formulas, demonstrating the necessary fluency to maintain the communication face-to-face, and they also should be able to adapt to the most relevant communicative functions and intentions (showing interest, indifference, doubt, dreams, etc.) as well as informal discussions or conversations in which facts, experiences, feelings, reactions, etc., are described in detail, even though there might be some pauses to seek the right words and hesitations when expressing certain ideas regarded as more complex than others, expressing	When it comes to interaction, the student shows considerable problems and is unable to interact efficiently in everyday contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, barely accomplishing the communicative functions and intentions, and adjusting to the interlocutor and the context with a poor accuracy and fluency. Interrupts or monopolises the turn to speak, commenting occasionally on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner.	The student can interact efficiently in contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, accomplishing satisfactorily the communicative functions and intentions. He or she is able to adapt the register properly and with a certain skill considering the interlocutor and the context, and maintains the discourse with relative fluency. Also, the student shows the necessary flexibility to take and respect the turn to speak,	The pupil interacts in an efficient way and showing certainty in relatively predictable situations, accomplishing appropriately the communicative functions and intentions. Furthermore, adapts the register properly and with a certain skill considering the interlocutor and the context, and maintains the discourse with fluency. Also, the student shows flexibility to take and	It is evident that the student can certainly interact very efficiently in relatively predictable situations, fulfilling by far the communicative functions and intentions. Moreover, the student can adapt the register to both the interlocutor and the context properly and without any problem whatsoever, showing skill and maintaining the discourse and its rhythm with a

with coherence and demonstrating a level of flexibility when it comes to taking and respecting the turn to speak and in cooperating with the interlocutor, although this might not be done always in a graceful way. Likewise, the pupil should have the capability to involve himself or herself adequately in formal discussions or conversations, interviews and academic or professional meetings; however, sometimes he or she could request certain ideas to be repeated or specific doubts to be solved, clearly showing his or her points of view and justifying their opinions, plans and suggestions in detail and coherently. Lastly, it is essential to verify that the student can respond to complementary questions about his or her presentations, pronouncing and intonating with a decent correction. Therefore, with everything that has been said, the goal is to confirm that the student is capable of applying his or her knowledge regarding linguistic elements of common and less common usage as well as being capable of establishing, maintaining or retaking contact with other speakers via using traditional resources	Employs traditional and technological irresponsibly.	commenting generally on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner. Employs traditional and technological resources with enough responsibility. All of that for the student to cope with a satisfactory autonomy in usual and not so usual situations in the personal, academic and professional fields.	respect the turn to speak, commenting frequently on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner. Employs traditional and technological resources responsibly. All of that for the student to cope with a notable autonomy in usual and not so usual situations in the personal, academic and professional fields.	distinguished fluency. In addition, he or she shows big flexibility when it comes to take and respect the turn to speak, participating always and commenting constantly on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner. Employs traditional and technological resources with great responsibility. In short, the student demonstrates that he or she gets on with an outstanding autonomy in common and less common situations in the personal,

and ICT, working in teams valuing and reinforcing other contributions, performing tasks or resolving practical problems, and communicating information about general issues and of his or her interest; observing the sociocultural conventions most adapted to the context. Learning standards: 8, 9, 10.			academic and professional fields.

Appendix 8: Results of the continuous assessment rubric (both groups of students)

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT (40% OF THE FINAL MARK)																				
GROUP A	**General level of English (Grammar, fluency, pronunciation, etc.) 6 LESSONS = 24 points**					**Participation (volunteering for speaking and giving opinions; doing and correcting activities, etc.) 6 LESSONS = 24 points**					**Presents activities and tasks. 4 ACTIVITIES = 16 points**					**Use of spoken interaction (in English, and whenever they are in pairs or in small groups) 6 LESSONS = 24 points**				
GRADES	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
STUDENTS																				
A				2	4	1			1	4+1			1		3					6
B			1	4	1	2	1	1	1	1			2		2				4	2

C				2	4	2			2	**2+1**		1	1	2						6
D					6					**6+1**				4						6
E					4				1	**3+1**	1		1	2						4
G		2	1			2		1		+1	2	1		1	1		2			
H					6				2	4				4					1	5
I		4	1			2	1	2			1		2	1	3	1	1			
J			1	5		1		1	3	1			2	2			2		2	2
K	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
L					6					6				4						6
M				6		2			1	3		1		3					6	
N	1		2	3		1	1		2	2		1	1	2	1	1	3	1		
O					5					5	2			2					2	3
P				1	4					5	1			3					2	3
Q				1	5				1	**5+2**		1	1	2					3	3
R				2	4		1		1	**4**			1	3					1	5
S					5	1				**4+3**				4						5
T		2	4			1	1	1	2	**1+1**	1		1	2			2		3	1
U				1	5				1	**5+1**			1	3						6
V				2	4	1		1	1	**3**			1	3					2	4
W			2	3		1		1	1	**2**	1		1	1	1		1	2	2	

X			1	3	2		1		1	**3+3**			1	1	2			1	3	2
Y			3	3		1		3		**2**			1		3			2	2	2
Z				1	5					**6+2**			1	1	2				2	4
A'			2	2		1	1		1	**1**	2				2	1		1	2	
B'					6				1	**5+1**				1	3				3	3
C'				1	5	2			3	**1**			1	1	2				2	4
D'					4		1			**3**				1	2				1	3
E'					6					**6+2**					4					6
F'				5	1			1	1	**4**				1	3				2	4
G'				2	4					**6+3**				1	3				1	5
H'			1	4	1				1	**5+1**			1	1	2			1	3	2
I'		2	2			2	1	1			2		1		1	1	2		1	
J'				2					1	**1**	3			1					2	

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT (FINAL MARKS)				
GROUP B	**General level of English (Grammar, fluency, pronunciation, etc.) 10 LESSONS= 40 points**	**Participation (volunteering for speaking and giving opinions; doing and correcting activities, etc.)**	**Presents activities and tasks. 4 ACTIVITIES= 16 points**	**Use of spoken interaction (in English, and whenever they are in pairs or in small groups) 9 LESSONS= 36 points**

STUDENTS					10 LESSONS= 40 points															
GRADES*	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	2	3	4
A					9					9	1				3					8
B	3	1	1	1		3		2	1		4					4		1		
C			4	6		2		1	1	6		1			3			1	1	7
D		2	3	2		2	3	1	1		2			1	1	3		2		1
E			2	7	1		1	1	1	7		1		1	2	1	1		1	6
F					10				1	9					4					9
G			6	3	1	1		2	1	6	2				2	1	1	2	1	4
H					10					10					4				1	8
I			9						4	4			1		3	1	1		1	5
J					9	2				7		1			3	1				7
K					10	2		1		7					4					9
L			5	4	1	2				8		1			3		1		2	6
M			1	9		3			3	4				1	3	1			3	5
N			5	5		3	1	2		4	1			1	2	1	2		2	4
O			3	2	5	2		2	1	5					4	1		1	1	6
P			4	5		4		1	2	2	2		1		1	1			2	5
Q			3	5		2		1		5	2				2		1	1	2	3

R				1	9	2		1		7					4				1	8
S				3	4	1		2		4		1			3	1			1	4
T				5	4	2	1			6			1		3	2			1	5
U				1	9			1		9					4				1	8
V				1	9			1		9					4				1	8
W				2	6	2		1		5					4			1	1	5
X					9					9	2				2					8
Y			8	2		1	2	2	2	3	2				2	2			4	3
Z		1	5	1	1	2		1		5					4				1	6
A'				8	2	1		1		8	1				3			1	1	7
B'		6	2	1		5	1	1	2		4					2	1	3		1
C'			4	2		1		2		3	3				1	1		1		3
D'			1	7	2	2		1	2	5	3			1				1	1	7
E'				7	3				3	7	2				2	1			2	6
F'			7	3		3	1	1	2	3	1	1			2	1			4	4
G'			2	5	1	1			1	6	1				3				1	6
H'	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

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Appendix 9: Communicative task rubric

Aspects to be assessed	0-0.5	0.6-0.9	1-1.5	1.6-1.8	1.9-2
Effective spoken interaction	The student is unable to interact at all in everyday contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, not accomplishing the communicative functions. B1 is not his/her level by far.	The student is unable to interact efficiently in everyday contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, barely accomplishing the communicative functions. He/she is slightly under the B1 level.	The pupil can interact efficiently in contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, accomplishing satisfactorily the communicative functions and intentions. Possesses a B1 level.	The student interacts in an efficient way and showing certainty in relatively predictable situations, accomplishing appropriately the communicative functions and intentions. Definitely possesses a B1 level.	The pupil can certainly interact very efficiently in relatively predictable situations, fulfilling by far the communicative functions and intentions. This student reaches the B1+ level.
Fluency	The student has no fluency at all considering the B1	The student shows a poor accuracy and fluency. He/she is	The student maintains the discourse with	The pupil maintains the discourse with fluency. Definitely	The student shows skill and maintains the discourse and its

	level, which is not his/her level by far.	slightly under the B1 level.	relative fluency. Possesses a B1 level.	possesses a B1 level.	rhythm with a distinguished fluency. This student reaches the B1+ level.
Use of oral communication strategies	The pupil never selects and applies the correct strategies to make oral productions of a certain length. B1 is not his/her level by far.	The student scarcely selects and applies the correct strategies to make oral productions of a certain length (and when he or she does, difficulties are detected). He/she is slightly under the B1 level.	The student selects with relative ability and applies efficiently (with some guidance) the proper strategies to make oral productions of a certain length. Possesses a B1 level.	The pupil demonstrates that he or she has fluency and autonomy with regard to selecting and applying efficiently the correct strategies to elaborate oral productions of a specific length. Definitely possesses a B1 level.	There is a demonstration of the student's capacity to select and apply quite fluently and effectively as well as with an undeniable complete autonomy the adequate strategies to make oral productions of a specific length. This student reaches the B1+ level.

Adaptation and flexibility	The pupil does not respect the turn to speak at all. There is not adjustment to the interlocutor and the context. B1 is not his/her level by far	The student interrupts or monopolises the turn to speak, and barely adjusts to the interlocutor and the context. He/she is slightly under the B1 level.	The student shows the necessary flexibility to take and respect the turn to speak. Besides, adapts the register properly and with a certain skill considering the interlocutor and the context. Possesses a B1 level.	The student shows flexibility to take and respect the turn to speak. Also, adapts the register properly and with a certain skill considering the interlocutor and the context. Definitely possesses a B1 level.	The pupil shows big flexibility when it comes to take and respect the turn to speak. He/she can adapt the register to both the interlocutor and the context properly and without any problem whatsoever. This student reaches the B1+ level.
Aspects to be assessed	**-**	**0-0.5**	**0.6-0.8**	**0.9-1**	**-**
Pronunciation	-	The student needs to improve. Too many pronunciation mistakes. Not a B1	The student has some mistakes but possesses a decent pronunciation.	The pupil has a remarkable pronunciation, having barely any	-

		level in this sense.	He/she has a B1 level.	mistakes at all. This student may even reach a B1+ level in this aspect.	
Use of ICTs	-	The pupil does not know how to employ ICTs and is not able to communicate information in an understandable way (Font size, amount of information, etc.).	The pupil knows more or less how to employ ICTs and transmits information in a decent way (Font size, amount of information, etc.).	The student definitely knows how to employ ICTs and transmits information in a clear and effective way (Font size, amount of information, etc.).	-

Appendix 10: Original rubrics for evaluation criteria numbers 4 and 5 (translated to English)

Rubric (Social dimension)

Assessment criterion	Social agent			
	Unsatisfactory (1-4)	**Satisfactory (5-6)**	**Notable (7-8)**	**Outstanding (9-10)**
4. Interacting efficiently in oral exchanges, adjusting the register to both the interlocutor and the context and showing respect towards others' opinions and ideas, with the purpose of getting on with sufficient autonomy in normal or less normal situations in the personal, academic and professional fields. With this criterion, it can be checked if the student as a social agent is able to use sentences, phrases and formulas, demonstrating the necessary fluency to maintain the communication face-to-face, and they also should be able to adapt to the most relevant communicative functions and intentions (showing interest, indifference, doubt, dreams, etc.) as well as informal discussions or conversations in which facts, experiences, feelings, reactions, etc., are described in detail, even though there might be some pauses to seek	When it comes to interaction, the student shows considerable problems and is unable to interact efficiently in everyday contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, barely accomplishing the communicative functions and intentions, and adjusting to the interlocutor and the context with a poor accuracy and fluency. Interrupts or monopolises the turn to speak, commenting occasionally on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner.	The student can interact efficiently in contexts that involve relatively predictable situations, accomplishing satisfactorily the communicative functions and intentions. He or she is able to adapt the register properly and with a certain skill considering the interlocutor and the context, and maintains the discourse with relative fluency. Also, the student shows the necessary	The pupil interacts in an efficient way and showing certainty in relatively predictable situations, accomplishing appropriately the communicative functions and intentions. Furthermore, adapts the register properly and with a certain skill considering the interlocutor and the context, and maintains the discourse with fluency. Also, the student shows flexibility to take and	It is evident that the student can certainly interact very efficiently in relatively predictable situations, fulfilling by far the communicative functions and intentions. Moreover, the student can adapt the register to both the interlocutor and the context properly and without any problem whatsoever, showing skill and maintaining the discourse and its rhythm with a distinguished fluency. In addition, he or she shows big flexibility when it comes to take and respect

the right words and hesitations when expressing certain ideas regarded as more complex than others, expressing with coherence and demonstrating a level of flexibility when it comes to taking and respecting the turn to speak and in cooperating with the interlocutor, although this might not be done always in a graceful way. Likewise, the pupil should have the capability to involve himself or herself adequately in formal discussions or conversations, interviews and academic or professional meetings; however, sometimes he or she could request certain ideas to be repeated or specific doubts to be solved, clearly showing his or her points of view and justifying their opinions, plans and suggestions in detail and coherently. Lastly, it is essential to verify that the student can respond to complementary questions about his or her presentations, pronouncing and intonating with a decent correction. Therefore, with everything that has	Employs traditional and technological irresponsibly.	flexibility to take and respect the turn to speak, commenting generally on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner. Employs traditional and technological resources with enough responsibility. All of that for the student to cope with a satisfactory autonomy in usual and not so usual situations in the personal, academic and professional fields.	respect the turn to speak, commenting frequently on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner. Employs traditional and technological resources responsibly. All of that for the student to cope with a notable autonomy in usual and not so usual situations in the personal, academic and professional fields. .	the turn to speak, participating always and commenting constantly on others' contributions with respect and in a constructive manner. Employs traditional and technological resources with great responsibility. In short, the student demonstrates that he or she gets on with an outstanding autonomy in common and less common situations in the personal, academic and professional fields.

been said, the goal is to confirm that the student is capable of applying his or her knowledge regarding linguistic elements of common and less common usage as well as being capable of establishing, maintaining or retaking contact with other speakers via using traditional resources and ICT, working in teams valuing and reinforcing other contributions, performing tasks or resolving practical problems, and communicating information about general issues and of his or her interest; observing the sociocultural conventions most adapted to the context.

Learning standards: 8, 9, 10.

EFL Rubric (Strategic dimension)

Assessment criterion	Strategic user			
	Unsatisfactory (1-4)	Satisfactory (5-6)	Notable (7-8)	Outstanding (9-10)
5. Selecting attentively and applying efficiently the appropriate strategies to elaborate oral productions (monologues and dialogues) of a certain length, transmitted orally with the aim of taking responsibility for his or her own learning, consolidating his	The student never or scarcely selects and applies the correct strategies to make oral productions (monologues and dialogues) of a certain	The student selects with relative ability and applies efficiently (with some guidance) the proper strategies to make oral productions	The pupil demonstrates that he or she has fluency and autonomy with regard to selecting and applying efficiently the correct	There is a demonstration of the student's capacity to select and apply quite fluently and effectively as well as with an undeniable complete autonomy the

or her autonomy and as a means of personal and social development. With this criterion, there is an objective to be fulfilled, which is to confirm whether the student as an autonomous learner is able to utilise strategies (new formulas and combinations within his or her own repertoire, correction of errors, evaluation and self-correction…) to make well-structured presentations with a certain length and answer questions from the audience, to get on effectively in common and less common transactions and exchanges, to participate efficiently in informal discussions or conversations and suitably in formal discussions or conversations, interviews and meetings, conducting face-to-face oral productions about topics of his or her interest and related to studies or occupations. All of that for the student to continue progressing in his or her own learning, consolidating his or her autonomy and as a means of personal and social development. Learning standards: 8, 9, 10.	length (and when he or she does, difficulties are detected), not even with frequent assistance, conducting therefore the aforesaid productions face to face in both everyday and uncommon situations about topics of his or her interest and themes related to his or her studies and occupations. Due to all these difficulties, the student cannot take responsibility for his or her own learning, cannot consolidate his or her autonomy nor his or her personal and social development.	(monologues and dialogues) of a certain length, carrying out these oral productions face to face in usual and not so usual circumstances about topics of his or her interest and other ones related to his or her studies and occupations. All of that so as to oversee adequately his or her own learning, consolidate his or her autonomy and as a means of personal and social development.	strategies to elaborate oral productions (monologues and dialogues) of a specific length, performing the aforementioned oral productions face to face in normal and less normal situations about topics of his or her interest and themes related to his or her studies and occupations. The purpose is to make the student take responsibility for his or her own learning in an efficient way, reinforce his or her autonomy and as a means of personal and social development.	adequate strategies to make oral productions (monologues and dialogues) of a specific length, conducting the aforesaid oral productions face to face in both everyday and unusual situations about topics of his or her interest and themes related to his or her studies and occupations. In the end, the student is able to entirely assume responsibility for his or her own learning, reinforce his or her autonomy and as a means of personal and social development.

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Appendix 11: Results of the communicative task (group A)

Aspects to be assessed **GROUP A**	Effective spoken interaction (2 points) (0-0.5-1-1.5-2)	Fluency (2 points) (0-0.5-1-1.5-	Pronunciation (1 point) (0-0.5-0.8-1)	Use of ICTs (1 point) (0-0.5-0.8-1)	Use of oral communication strategies (2 points) (0-0.5-1-1.5-2)	Adaptation and flexibility (2 points) (0-0.5-1-1.5-2)	Final mark (10 points)
STUDENTS							
A	2	1.5	0.5	0.8	2	2	8,8+0,1= 8,9
B	0	1	0.5	0.8	0	2	4,3
C	1	1	0.5	0.8	1	2	6,3
D	1.5	2	1	1	1.5	2	9+0,1= 9,1
E	0.5	0	0.3	1	0	1	2,8

F	0	0	0.1	1	0	1	2,1
G	0	0	0	0.8	0	0.5	1.3
H	1.5	1	0.8	0.8	1.5	2	7,6+0,1= 7,7
I	1.5	2	1	0.8	1.5	1.5	8,8+0,1= 8,9
J	0.5	0	0	0.8	1	1.5	2.8
K	2	1.5	0.5	0.8	1.8	1.8	8.4+0,3= 8,7
L	1.5	1.5	1	0.8	1.5	1.8	8,1+0,3= 8,4
M	2	2	0.3	1	1.8	2	9,1
N	2	2	0.8	1	2	2	9,8+0,2= 10
O	1.8	2	0.5	1	1.8	2	9,1+0,1= 9,2
P	1.5	1.8	0.8	1	1.5	1.5	8,1
Q	2	1.8	0.5	1	1.8	1.5	8.6+0,1= 8,7

R	1	2	1	1	1	1	7
S	2	1.8	0.3	1	2	2	9,1+0,2= 9,3
T	0	0	0.5	1	0	0.5	1
U	1.8	2	1	1	1.5	2	9,3
V	1	0	0.1	0.8	1.8	2	5,7
W	1	0	0	0.8	0.5	2	4,3+0,1= 4,4
X	1.8	2	0.1	0.8	2	2	8,7
Y	2	1.5	0.3	1	1.5	2	8,3
Z	2	2	1	1	1.8	2	9,8 + 0,2= 10
A'	2	1.8	0.2	1	2	2	9+0,3= 9,3
B'	1.5	1.8	0.8	1	1.5	2	8,6
C'	1	0	0	1	1	1.5	4,5
D'	2	2	0,6	1	2	2	9,6
E'	1.5	1	0.1	1	1.5	2	7,1
F'	1.8	2	0.5	1	1.8	2	8,6
G'	2	2	0.4	1	2	2	9,4

H'	0.5	0	0	0	0.9	1	2,4