



UNIVERSIDAD DE JAÉN
Centro de Estudios de Postgrado

Master's Dissertation/
Trabajo Fin de Máster

THE DIFFICULTY OF ACQUIRING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN ENGLISH AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

Student: Cano Cuevas, M^a de las Nieves
Tutor: Dr. Rubén Chacón Beltrán
Dpt.: English Philology

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	4
2.1. From language to communicative competence	4
2.2. Chomsky and Hymes, from the structural to the functional view of language	6
2.3. Halliday's contribution to the functional perspective	6
2.4. Canale and Swain's definition of communicative competence	7
2.5. Communicative Language Teaching	8
2.6. Key competences	13
2.7. Methodological strategies included in the current legislation in Andalusia	15
2.8. Possible roles of the teacher	18
2.8.1. Academicist model: learning	18
2.8.2. Behaviorist or technical-efficiency model: learning to do	19
2.8.3. Humanistic model: learning to be	20
2.8.4. Socio-critical model: learning to transfer	20
2.8.5. Constructivist or cognitivist model: learning to learn	21
3. METHODOLOGY	21
3.1. Objectives	22
3.2. Initial hypotheses	22
3.3. Instrument	23
3.4. Participants	28
3.5. On-going modifications to the questionnaire	29
4. RESULTS	29
5. CONCLUSION	41
6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	44
7. LINES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	45
8. BIBLIOGRAPHY	45

1. INTRODUCTION

We live in an increasingly globalized world, therefore, the study of at least one foreign language becomes very beneficial and almost essential.

English, in particular, has a special relevance: it is one of the official languages of the European Union, to which Spain belongs, and of the United Nations, and it is also one of the most widely used languages at an international level in various fields of work: economics, international commerce, tourism, medicine, industry, telecommunications, etc.

The number of English speakers in the globe did not surpass seven million during Queen Elizabeth's reign. According to David Crystal (1985), at the start of Elizabeth II's reign (1952), 250 million people spoke English as their native tongue, with another about 100 million learning it as a foreign language. According to the most current estimates, there are now over 300 million people who speak English as their mother tongue. Nonetheless, this sum is significantly eclipsed by the number of individuals who speak English as a foreign language, which is estimated to be more than 500 million people.

Because of its widespread spread outside the British Isles via commerce, invasion, and colonization, English has become a world language.

The practice began in the 17th and 18th centuries with English colonization in North America. The British dominated the Indian subcontinent beginning in the second part of the 18th century. Throughout the nineteenth century, British power and influence grew. During this time, British control was also established in several regions of Africa.

Because of English's global spread, it is currently the world's most frequently spoken language (second after Mandarin Chinese and the first most learnt all over the world) and due to the way it expanded, there are now various variants of English, and it is used for a multitude of reasons in a wide range of social circumstances. Then there are three types of English speakers: native speakers (inherited language), those who learned it as a second language in a bilingual culture, and those who use it for practical, administrative, professional, or educational purposes.

The majority of the Spanish population is part of the third group of speakers, that is to say, those who learn it as a foreign language with a practical purpose. Our country, according to Kachru's English circles (Kachru, 1992), may be put in the expanding circle, which is the most exterior position within English knowledge:

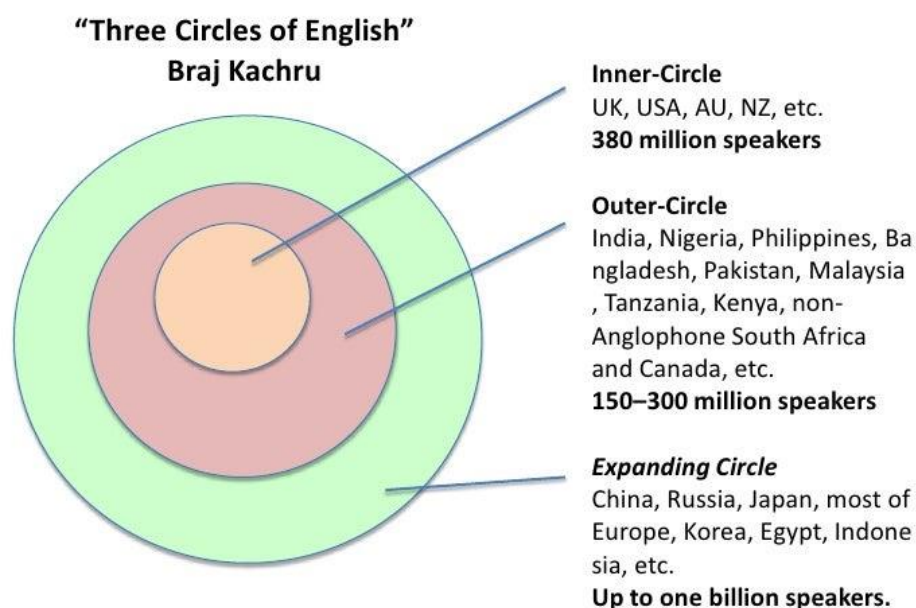


Figure 1. The Three Circles of English (Kachru, 1985)

This suggests that English is not our mother tongue or that it does not have an official status in our nation. English is still studied as a foreign language in Spain, which is an obstacle for both teachers and students.

Although the value of understanding this popular language is highly recognized and governments encourage pupils in high school to study English as a required subject, not every student enjoys English or wishes to experience what studying a foreign language entails. Furthermore, learners do not have enough opportunity to practice the language that they learn at home due to a lack of free access to English-language TV channels or films, which makes learning English challenging in a nation like ours.

Therefore, as regulated by *Royal Decree 1105/2014, of 26 December, which establishes the basic curriculum of Compulsory Secondary Education and the Baccalaureate* and the *Decree 111/2016, of June 14, which establishes the organization and curriculum of the Compulsory Secondary Education in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia* the subject of English is presented as a general core subject in Compulsory Secondary Education (hereinafter CSE), which prepares students for life in society, the development of their competences and the integration in a diverse and changing society.

Learning another language, and implicitly another culture, educates in the respect for pluralism and equality, avoiding racist or xenophobic attitudes, and enables students to communicate peacefully with people of other culture, as concludes Decree 111/2016, of July 14.

In addition, the aforementioned Decree highlights tourism in Andalusia as an economic pillar, which adds importance to the learning of English as a vehicle for coexistence and the dissemination of the touristic value of this Autonomous Community.

However, the Cambridge Monitor barometer, published in 2017 by Cambridge University Press (cited in Soler, 2017), places Spain as the country with the worst level of English among the EU countries included in the survey and places Andalusia among the communities with the most difficulty in expressing themselves correctly.

This research is motivated to answer the following question: if we as a society are aware of the importance of English and we also study it as a compulsory subject since the beginning of our schooling, why do we have as a result the lowest average level of English in the EU.

Throughout this research, the methodological strategies implemented in CSE in Andalusia are analyzed with the aim of detecting the possible problems in the communicative competence development.

Throughout this Master's degree, teaching foreign languages is presented to us as a possible job opportunity, so this paper proposes some conclusions that could be useful for our future work in this sector.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. From language to communicative competence

Human communication, according to classical writers, is based on a process in which some information is encoded by a transmitter and decoded by a recipient. Language is a common code that these individuals must share in order to communicate. Throughout the progress of language research, particularly in the twentieth century, this viewpoint was steadily challenged.

Linguistics has seen a shift in emphasis in recent years. Concerns about formal elements of language have given way to a rising focus in language use. The language system is no longer

seen in isolation, but rather in relation to extralinguistic variables, allowing the nature of communication to be examined.

Communication as more than the ability to make and correct statements, because we do not always produce right phrases, and not all of our sentences are relevant or appropriate in a particular environment. Communication needs what the sociolinguist Dell Hymes, in 1966, referred to as "communicative competence".

This can be defined as the degree to which a speaker is effective in communicating, considering the appropriateness and efficacy of a message. It is the underlying system of knowledge and ability necessary for communication, according to Canale and Swain (1980).

Communicative skill is thus a crucial component of actual communication, although it is only indirectly reflected due to general limiting constraints such as slips of the tongue or a combination of registers. This is due to the existence of other codes that are needed for communication, besides the linguistic code, which is the language itself.

Language is a rule-governed and generative social interaction instrument. It is typically examined within the context of communication, despite the fact that it is not required for communication. Its primary function is to serve as a code, and it is impacted by the environment since it is a mirror of collective thought.

Speech and language are components of the communication process. Communication is the basic purpose of language, and it entails coding and decoding a message, as well as an addresser and an addressee. However, in addition to the language code, there are three other additional codes:

- 1) Paralinguistic code: It is related to the way we express a message. Intonation is the most complicated paralinguistic code and is used to convey an utterance's mood. Emphatic aims are served by stress. Speed refers to the velocity of delivery and implies familiarity and eagerness. Pauses are frequently utilized to emphasize a segment of a speech or to replace the message itself.
- 2) Non-linguistic code: Gestures, body postures, face emotions, bodily movements, and physical distance are all part of it. The majority of these gadgets are determined by the communicators' culture. Therefore, it is essential to get to know the cultural traits that surround a language in order to master communication in that language.
- 3) Metalinguistic code: The ability to discuss, analyze, and think about language. The quality and appropriateness of the language generated and received are determined by metalinguistic abilities.

2.2. Chomsky and Hymes, from the structural to the functional view of language

The concept of communicative competence is a reply to Chomsky's restrictive definition of competence. Chomsky (1965) distinguished between competence (internalized linguistic knowledge) and performance (real use of that linguistic knowledge), describing competence as an ideal speaker and listener's understanding of language norms and linking performance with language usage. As a result, competence is solely connected with norms of form and grammaticality, whereas performance becomes a residual category of imperfect character as a result of psychological restrictions occurring in language usage.

With the appearance of theories of speech act functions in the field of linguistics, there was a shift away from the structural definition of language (as a series of sentences) and toward a functional definition. Searle (1962) views language as a sequence of acts in the world as part of an action theory, and speech acts are those verbal acts performed when speaking.

According to Hymes (1972), there is no link connecting grammatical form and speech act since grammatically identical phrases might function as various speech acts. The success of speech actions is determined by whether the basic elements of an act are met and if a specific performance is performed in an appropriate environment. As a result, the performance of speech actions is intricately linked to sociocultural influences.

Hymes criticized Chomsky's concept of competence because it overlooked sociocultural elements and did not account for contextual appropriateness. As a result, communication requires knowledge other than how to construct grammatically accurate phrases. This knowledge is produced by communicative behavior norms that assess the amount to which something is 'formally possible,' 'feasible,' 'appropriate,' and 'actually performed.'

2.3. Halliday's contribution to the functional perspective

Halliday (1985) advocated a functional perspective of language, arguing that linguistic structures should be analyzed in terms of their use in communication. He established three major functions of language, each with its own set of communication strategies and intentions:

1. The interpersonal function is associated with the type of social discussion we engage in throughout the day through conversational engagements with others. Communication is restricted to brief interactions with persons with whom one feels at ease, and the topic is

dictated by the participants' current interests. The purpose of communication is to build and sustain social relationships.

2. The ideational function is involved with content expression and information exchange. The purpose of communication is to transmit information in a clear, efficient, accurate, and effective manner.
3. The textual function is concerned with the use of language as an organized construct for the purpose of functioning as a cohesive communicative whole.

2.4. Canale and Swain's definition of communicative competence

Canale focused on the nature of communication, specifically the transmission and negotiation of ideas between two or more people. This communication takes place by the use of oral, written, and visual modalities, as well as processes of creation and comprehension.

Canale and Swain described competence as a knowledge and ability system required for communication. Knowledge includes grammatical rules, vocabulary, and phonetics, whereas competence is the application of sociolinguistic standards in a given circumstance (performance of knowledge in actual situations). Both concepts are elements of communication proficiency. Moreover, they defined actual communication as the application of knowledge and expertise under limited psychological and environmental circumstances.

According to Canale and Swain, communication competence consists of four components:

1. Grammatical competence, which is concerned with language code knowledge. It includes linguistic characteristics and rules such as vocabulary and word structure. It focuses on the knowledge and abilities required to properly comprehend and communicate the literal meaning of utterances.
2. Sociolinguistic competence is the degree to which utterances are appropriately created and understood in a variety of sociolinguistic circumstances, depending on contextual factors (for instance, purposes or customs). The appropriateness of utterances refers to the appropriateness of meaning as well as the extent to which various communication functions are considered acceptable in a given context.
3. Discourse competence is the capacity to combine grammatical forms and meanings to create a coherent spoken or written language. It deals with achieving unity by properly employing cohesion and coherence. Cohesion is concerned with the structural connections between

utterances, whereas coherence is concerned with the ties between diverse meanings in a text, where these meanings may be literal, communicative functions, or attitudes.

4. Strategic competence, which encompasses verbal and nonverbal communication expertise. This competence may be used to compensate for errors caused by limited communication conditions or lack competence, as well as to increase communication efficacy. This sort of competency includes communication strategies, which are crucial in the early stages of second language learning.

Since English as a Foreign Language sessions are the initial stage in the complicated process of language acquisition, it is critical to provide clear rules and objectives for beginners, as their future competency may be decided by the early linguistic foundations. Students must find language in this learning process, which they will accomplish by continually negotiating meaning.

2.5. Communicative Language Teaching

In the last decades of the 20th century we can observe a relevant change in the teaching of foreign languages.

The starting point is the work *Syntactic Structures* by Noam Chomsky (1957), the father of linguistics. Chomsky questions structuralism, that is, he suggests that language is something creative, in other words, that messages are much more complex than an imitation of structures, and that they are unpredictable and independent of stimulus control (Titone, 1968).

This theory leads other authors to reject the idea that language is only a system of signs (CIDE, 2000). The British functionalism of Firth and Halliday, psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, and especially the ethnography of communication (John Gumperz and Dell Hymes), are the linguistic currents that in the sixties and seventies "opened the door" to a series of extralinguistic factors, hitherto considered extraneous to language as a system, such as context or speaker-listener interaction.

Thus, the concept of communicative competence appears, as coined by Gumperz and Hymes in their work *The Ethnography on Communication* (1964), and as a consequence, new methodological approaches to foreign language teaching emerge.

According to Madrid (2001) in his article *Problemática de la enseñanza de las lenguas extranjeras en España*, the sixties are years of economic growth, due to tourism and new scientific and technological advances. In addition, Europe is moving towards its unification and considers that the promotion of foreign languages is fundamental for the understanding among them within a future united Europe, and they commit themselves to it by signing the European Cultural Convention in 1954, thus making foreign languages a priority in education from the second half of the 20th century.

The main methodology used in Spain at that time was the audiolingual method (Rivers, 1964; Brooks, 1966). However, in the seventies and eighties, notional and functional linguistics emerged and developed. During the years 1971-1981, the Council of Europe carried out the *Living Languages* program, which sought to find innovative methods in language learning that would move away from the theoretical point of view and considered languages as a means of interpersonal communication. The preliminary paper was written by the British linguist British linguist Wilkins in 1972 and was based on a series of studies on the needs of European learners (Lin, 2008).

In other words, from this point on, less importance is given to structural units, grammar, and the language curriculum becomes organized around situations (e.g., asking for directions, showing agreement) and notions (e.g., distance, quantity). In the communicative approach, in addition to Wilkins, the linguists Widdowson, Candlin, Brumfit, and Keith Johnson are important (CIDE, 2017). According to Stork and Widdowson (1974):

«Previously it was just a question of teaching about the language; now there is the question of imparting the skill of using the language, which is quite a different matter».

This implies a paradigm shift from methodological approaches based primarily on structures and repetition to an approach based on the authentic use of the foreign language for meaningful communication, although it does not detract from the importance of the of acquiring structures for use in the subsequent communicative production phase (Lin, 2008).

According to Madrid and McLaren (1995) the objective is communicative competence in English, not limited to linguistic aspects (phonology, grammar, semantics...) but also extending to other non-linguistic factors that make up communication as a whole.

In summary, the methodology used from the 1990s to the present day is based on the following elements (Madrid and McLaren, 1995):

- We move from the audiolingual method to the communicative approach,
- we start from a new social context: Europe,
- a functional approach is adopted,
- great importance is given to contextualization,
- a more learner-centered approach to teaching,
- the construction of learning and autonomous learning are facilitated,
- the aim is to develop students' communicative competence,
- the curriculum is organized in the form of conceptual, procedural and attitudinal content,
- it is intended to satisfy the interests and needs of the students.

In the 1970s, other methods emerge that are not based on any linguistic current, but are based on psychology and focus on the learner. These methods, known as humanistic, are Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia and Silent and the Silent Way (CIDE, 2000).

Given the purpose of this paper and the scarce implementation of these methods in Spain, their characteristics are not detailed.

With the *Plan de Fomento del Plurilingüismo en Andalucía (PEDLA)*, a new era in language learning began in 2005. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, this document offers a methodological update to promote language learning, which stresses the development of communicative competence and fundamental language abilities (speaking, writing, listening, and reading). This standardizes the language ability of European residents through a set of indicators, classified as A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. The goal is to develop the linguistic competences of the Andalusian population in their native tongue while also providing them with plurilingual and pluricultural skills.

Simultaneously, an optimistic commitment is meant to acquiring this competence through the implementation of a new learning methodology for learning the languages taught in the curriculum: Content and Learning Integrated Learning (CLIL), including the implementation of the European Language Portfolio as a self-assessment tool in the classroom in the language learning process.

Bilingual education in Andalusia entails a methodological revision not just in foreign languages, but also in other fields, emphasizing a cross-curricular approach to linguistic communication. (Junta de Andalucía, 2016)

All of these methodologies are based on a communicative approach, that is the suggested method currently, because the curriculum should prepare students to use English outside of the classroom as well as in their future.

According to Nunan (1987), the main author of the communicative approach, the core principles of the communicative language teaching methodology are:

- There is an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus on language and on the learning process itself.
- The enhancement of learners' own personal experiences as contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

In accordance with the principles of the communicative approach, the following methodological strategies should be applied (Nunan, 1987):

- The foreign language should be the main vehicle of communication during the lessons.
- A varied and authentic range of materials should be used. It is important that the resources used in the classroom are real, in order to prepare students to real-life communication outside the classroom as well as inside it.
- Activities should be graded and related to students' interests. That way, they will have the opportunity to focus on their learning process. Possible errors should be tolerated as part of the natural learning process and self-evaluation should be emphasized.
- Visual and oral input should be used to foster the development of oral skills. Oral production will be also stimulated.
- The social, pragmatic and cultural traits of the language should be taken into account, with the aim of stimulating students' curiosity, minimize negative prejudices and foster their critical spirit and tolerance. They should have the chance to know the circumstances which

condition the way that the language is. Hopefully, this will motivate them to learn the foreign language and to experience foreign languages in their home countries.

- The formal part of the language should also be studied, to promote the linguistic interest of the learners.
- Students' should be exposed to comprehensible input that will allow them to acquire linguistic knowledge in an inductive way.
- The teacher role should be the driving force of the lessons and guide the activities, but learners should be the ones performing them.
- There should be a variety of activities to adapt the acquirement of the contents to the diverse learning processes and ways of learning.
- Grouping should be flexible, and there should be a special emphasis on group work.
- It is essential to create a positive classroom atmosphere to be able to apply all these strategies and to make tasks motivating for students.
- Different methodological strategies should be applied according to specific unit contents.

Among the methodological strategies associated with the communicative approach, we can find the following:

- Task-based learning: Tasks are used as a language teaching technique. Tasks have a clear objective, an appropriate content, a working procedure and a set of outcomes. These tasks concentrate on a particular structure, function, or semantic field. Students need to use a range of different communicative skills to accomplish them.
- Cooperative learning: Students work through an assignment in small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, to create an atmosphere of achievement. Within a team, each member is responsible for learning and helping their mates learn. This technique promotes cooperation as opposed to competition.
- Gamification: Game mechanics and dynamics are introduced in situations that are not games. It is used to increase the motivation and performance of the students. Thanks to gamification, students find some tasks more enjoyable and feel as the owners of their own learning, and the teacher is able to assess in an alternative way. Gamification should be implemented in teams of different levels of ability to ensure that no student is left behind or demotivated.

- **Game-based learning:** The use of games that serve to improve some linguistic aspect, for instance, to practice oral production, to learn some new lexicon or to practice a grammar content.

Among the latest methodological trends, the following ones are advisable to be implemented:

- **Computer-assisted language learning:** According to Richards, it refers to the use of a computer in the teaching or learning of a foreign language. The facilities of the computer are used to present, reinforce and assess material to be learnt. It should be used as an interactive supplement to the classical instruction.
- **Mobile learning:** According to Traxler, mobile learning is the provision of education and training on smartphones and other similar devices. Students use their electronic devices for specific tasks in order to take advantage of the learning opportunities that they offer.

Besides, the principles of Universal Design for Learning should be implemented with the aim of avoiding segregating or stigmatizing some students with diverse abilities. That means that activities should be designed in a way that are accessible and useful for all students in the same way, regardless of their abilities.

2.6. Key competences

According to Royal Decree 1105/2014, competences are the abilities to apply in an integrated way the contents of each educational stage in order to do activities correctly and to solve complex problems efficiently.

Order ECD/65/2015 of 21st January establishes the relationship between competences, contents and evaluation criteria in Primary Education, Compulsory Secondary Education and Bachillerato.

Key competences go beyond the academic skills mentioned in the curriculum. These competences aim at allowing students to live as integrated citizens of the society and providing them with useful skills for their future employment.

First foreign language, as a subject which is concerned with a language and a culture, integrates all the key competences and allows students to know how a different society works and how to use their skills both inside and outside the classroom.

The seven key competences are:

1. Linguistic communication. It is the outcome of communicative action within certain social practices in which the individual engages with other interlocutors orally and through texts in a variety of modalities and forms.
2. Mathematical, scientific and technological competence. It is the capacity to utilize and link numbers, fundamental operations, symbols, and mathematical language and reasoning in many ways. It requires the capacity to use mathematical reasoning and techniques to explain, understand, and forecast various occurrences in context.
3. Digital competence. It entails using information and communication technology in a creative, critical, and safe manner to fulfill goals relating to employment, employability, learning, leisure, and inclusion and participation in society.
4. Learning to learn. The capacity to begin, organize, and continue learning. This involves the capacity to be motivated to study as well as the requirement to promote organization and learning management.
5. Social and civic competence. The abilities required to apply their knowledge and attitudes toward society in order to interpret social problems in various contexts; to construct responses, make decisions, and resolve conflicts; and to interact with other people and groups in accordance with norms based on mutual respect and democratic convictions.
6. Competence in personal autonomy and initiative (entrepreneurship). The capacity to turn thoughts into acts. That is, being aware of the problem to be solved, as well as knowing how to choose, plan, and manage their knowledge, as well as the essential talents or abilities and attitudes with self-criteria, in order to reach the intended goal.
7. Cultural expressions and awareness. It entails being aware of, comprehending, enjoying, and respecting various cultural and creative manifestations, employing them as a source of enrichment and personal satisfaction, and viewing them as part of people's richness and legacy.

Linguistic studies nowadays emphasize the practical nature of languages and their relevance as a tool for communicating in real-life settings. As a result, one of the primary purposes of communicative language teaching is to improve students' communication ability. This focus

may also be seen in the current key competences differentiation, which emphasizes communication in both the mother and foreign languages.

2.7. Methodological strategies included in the current legislation in Andalusia

The Order of July 14, 2016, which develops the curriculum corresponding to the Compulsory Secondary Education in the Autonomous Community of Andalusia, regulates certain aspects of the attention to diversity and establishes the organization of the evaluation of the student learning process includes all the methodological strategies mentioned in this section.

The methodological approach should be based on the key competences mentioned in the previous section and requires changes in school organization, among which the collaboration among teachers in the development of the curriculum and in the transmission of information about their students' learning is considered fundamental. Complementary and extracurricular activities show the enrichment of collaborative work between teachers of different subjects through interdisciplinary projects in the foreign language.

It is considered necessary to introduce active methodologies as opposed to traditional methodologies, given the eminently practical nature of the study of foreign languages. Among these active methodologies, task- and project-based learning, discussion groups, cooperative learning groups, theater groups, musical choirs, etc., stand out. In this way, group work will encourage creativity and problem solving.

Within the active methodologies, the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) is considered fundamental. The Junta de Andalucía (Regional Government of Andalusia) provides materials such as digital whiteboards, computers or projectors for the adaptation of students and teachers to the advances in new technologies and access to the Internet, blogs, social networks, forums, virtual exchanges with other centers, audiovisual support materials, etc.

There are other factors that must be taken into account, such as the availability of resources at each center or the characteristics of the students, among which the sociocultural context and multiple intelligences stand out.

When dealing with the diversity of students, different rhythms and styles of learning and work should be respected, using both individual and cooperative practice, for which a classroom layout that allows flexible grouping is recommended. The aim is to be innovative and to find

new ways of organizing the available space, always in a way that facilitates oral interaction in English.

The teacher must act as a guide, promoter, and facilitator of student learning, and is responsible for proposing situations whose resolution implies that students put into practice their acquired skills and competencies.

Whatever methodology the teacher considers most appropriate, the starting point should be the student's initial level, and gradually progressing towards more complex tasks.

It is important to emphasize that the language of communication in the classroom should be English. Being in contact with this language facilitates the progression of the students, especially in the oral part.

Competence-based teaching aims to encourage students' autonomous learning so that they acquire an active and leading role in their own learning process. To this end, it is considered essential to foster students' self-esteem and the recognition of their efforts to develop their potential. The classroom environment should be pleasant, relaxed, peaceful, conflict-free and collaborative, facilitating a positive coexistence. To reach this goal, stress management techniques can be used.

In summary, teachers should encourage linguistic exchanges in English so that students know what they are learning, why they are learning it and are able to use their skills inside and outside the classroom, in addition to generating in them the motivation and curiosity to acquire new knowledge and competences.

Finally, it should be noted that, as stated in the Information Guide for Bilingual Education Centers (*Guía Informativa para Centros de Enseñanza Bilingüe*), students' contact with the foreign language or L2 should not, logically, be limited to the school environment, but go beyond it to increase their linguistic immersion.

There are several options to bring students closer to the foreign language, among them, we can mention (Consejería de Educación, 2017) :

- Sometimes watch TV with audio in the foreign language (this is possible with DVDs, DTT, digital TV platforms) with or without subtitles.
- Listen to music in the foreign language with the lyrics of the songs.

- Consult web pages with cultural, recreational and didactic contents, which have been proposed to them by the educational centers. The Internet is an excellent resource that offers endless options and possibilities that should be exploited.
- Engage in conversation with some native speakers of the foreign language who reside in our environment permanently or temporarily.
- Participate in exchanges with students from countries of the language of bilingual education.
- Try to use the L2 among your circle of friends and even with your family. This is especially so in the initial levels when it can be part of another game.

In accordance with Article 7 of Decree 111/2016 of June 14 and Article 4 of the Order of July 14, 2016, the following methodologies are recommended for Compulsory Secondary Education:

The methodological route of the school aims to encourage students to participate in their own learning, facilitate personal progress, develop their full potential, foster self-concept and self-confidence and the process of independent learning, and develop the habit of collaboration and teamwork.

Evaluation allows to define learning results and indicate what is the knowledge that students have acquired in each subject. It is a key process that contributes to educative change and the teacher's professional development.

Thanks to the evaluation, it is possible to make curricular decisions, for instance, the initial evaluation sets up the previous knowledge that should be the starting point of the contents. In addition, some possible educative problems can only be detected by observing the results of the evaluation, since it initiates the processes of didactic research and regulate the process of adaptation and contextualization of the curriculum.

The evaluation of the learning process of CSE students should be continuous, formative and inclusive. It cannot be an isolated process and it is always used with the aim of improving the teaching and learning processes. When we evaluate, we consider the evolution of the student as a whole, therefore the evaluation is a holistic process.

Furthermore, it should always be contextualized and individualized, which means that the pace of learning or special educational needs of each student must be taken into consideration.

Results must always be confidential, with the aim of respecting student's privacy and avoiding any kind of exposure towards the group, considering that during teenagerhood, we tend to be highly influenced by others and this could lead to a loss of motivation or self-esteem. As our goal is to develop students' communicative competence and part of the proposed tasks will be carried out collaboratively, it is essential to make them feel confident enough to express their thoughts and feelings, especially when it comes to talking in a language that is not their mother tongue.

On the other hand, evaluation is an objective and qualitative process, on which dedication, effort and performance are considered from a critic point of view that is aimed to research for quality.

Self-evaluation helps an individual to judge their own performance and to be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, therefore, they can pay more attention to those aspects on which they feel weaker. It is an essential process that allow them to be conscious of their own learning and how it develops and evolves. The self-assessment skill will provide students with a useful tool for judging their informal learning out of the classroom, which is one of the goals of the communicative approach.

2.8. Possible roles of the teacher

According to the classification of Prieto and Domínguez (2013), there are five classic teaching models or paradigms, differentiated by the process of learning, teaching, interaction and relationship with the environment. Each of the 9 + 2 laws of current democracy are related to each educational model.

2.8.1. Academicist model: learning

This model arose during the Moyano Law and the liberal decade of Narváez in 1857. The Textile and Railway Industrial Revolution begins in Spain and people are needed to work eight hours a day, therefore, they are required to socialize at school. This is the origin of compulsory education for Spaniards with the establishment of the Law of Compulsory Schools.

The schools of the academicist model are unitary schools, organized as professional workshops. In the curricular conception, the target groups are considered as homogeneous groups with the same needs. Learning in this model is passive: students have to collect the information they are given and reproduce it by means of notes and then memorize them. As for the role of the teacher, he/she is polyvalent and is in charge of all the services, subjects and students in the school. It is

an expert teacher who is the only source of information about the contents. The curriculum is based on a content program that seeks to provide knowledge. In this model there is hardly any interaction between teacher and student, except for facial and body gestures, which is a barrier. In addition, there is no relationship with the environment and what is being taught.

2.8.2. Behaviorist or technical-efficiency model: learning to do

This model emerged with the creation of the General Education Law of 1970. For 113 years the same educational law had been maintained until this new one was introduced. It is framed in the context of the 2nd Industrial Revolution, which requires manpower to drive industry and attract brands. It correlates with Taylor's (1912) concept of organization and management, and with Fayol's (1920) and Weber's (1949) theories. Tyler (1973) and Taba (1979) were used as references in the design of the curriculum.

In this new model, the school ceases to be unitary and becomes efficient. Functions are already divided (principals, teachers of each subject, specialization, etc.) and larger groups are taught. Therefore, functions and needs multiply. The number of schools in the country also multiplies: in each county there is a school.

The behavioral learning process consists of the student acting according to the acquired attitudes (reproduction of behaviors). We move from a passive learning process to an active one by reinforcement of behavior with reward or punishment.

As for the teaching process, the teacher is now a specialist and a role model to be followed and imitated. Students act with stimulus-response based on positive reinforcement and punishment. The information imparted is a way to provoke and evaluate behaviors.

Communication continues to be unidirectional, from the teacher to the students, who limit themselves to repeating what they have been taught. The minimum feedback that appears is that the student asks the teacher for clarification.

The environment remains unimportant, since there is no social differentiation, and the same discipline is applied to all. The context is used to focus the class and practice.

The curriculum is based on a program with a single objective, which is to shape students' behaviors.

2.8.3. Humanistic model: learning to be

This model emerged in 1982 with the LOECE and the HR development schools. This movement did not develop in Spain. It was a key aspect of the democratic rupture. In it, the self-esteem and self-confidence of the student and him/her in general as a person is important. This model is related to the human resource development theories of E. Mayo (1949), Argirys (1964) and McGregor (1969).

The basis of this model is the learning process, unlike the rest of the previous models where the basis was focused on the teaching process. The learning processes are, for the first time, different and individualized. With respect to the teaching model, neither information is provided nor behavior is shown, but support is given to the development and self-esteem of each student in an individualized way. The teacher is the charismatic leader and works with them on personality, therefore, communication is bidirectional because there is interaction between teacher and student to solve doubts and cover needs. This generates trust, closeness and a feeling of support from the teacher, a key process in this model. Given the proximity to the students in a personal way, their environment becomes important. The curriculum focuses on programming activities to work on attitudes.

2.8.4. Socio-critical model: learning to transfer

This model, whose main authors are Hoyle (1982) and Ball (1987), was born with the Organic Law on the Right to Education (1985), with the socialist party of Felipe González in government. The LODE was created with the intention of creating a network of private centers using public funding (concerted), at the same time as education is carried out in public centers.

In this model, the core of the curriculum is the background, needs and social requirements of the target group, so teachers will focus on it to develop their methodology and group adaptations. Therefore, the curriculum becomes an instrument of social change. The learning process is based on knowing how to react to social change or inequality. Students are taught to defend themselves and fight against inequalities in society through critical reflection. Curricular designs are developed based on competencies and that develop an open curriculum rather than a closed program. Education is used to fight against marginalization, inequality and socioeconomic problems. The teacher acts as a mere socio-political animator or a driving vehicle to promote awareness on the part of the students. The teacher is a conscientious and committed person, adapting to the needs of the students and committing him/herself to making

them see other situations. Communication in this model is bidirectional, and consensus is sought.

2.8.5. Constructivist or cognitivist model: learning to learn

In the 1980s, the cognitivist model began to arrive with the development of technology to study how people think and develop processes. A movement is generated related to the process of training students mentally. The important thing is no longer to develop behavior, but reflections that lead them to make decisions regarding their lives. The school has a symbolic interpretative character or organized anarchy. This conception follows the theories of Ausubel (1976), Bruner (1988) and Novak and Gowin (1988). This model is reflected in the LOGSE law of 1990, which establishes compulsory education up to 16 years of age and gives autonomy to the centers to meet specific needs.

The learning process is key and is the objective that any teacher of this model seeks. The student must reflect and analyze various situations in order to be able to make decisions later (critical information processing).

The teaching process consists of relating at a cognitive level, i.e., thinking about how something was discovered, deducing, applying and transferring information.

The teacher has the role of knowledge builder and seeks through motivation that the student reflects and learns together with him to deduce information. The communication process is key because it is where this interaction takes place. Communication is bidirectional: the teacher develops a mental process through questions for the students to reach an end. Context remains important in this model, as it is taken into account for the analysis of mental processes.

3. METHODOLOGY

Munarriz (1992) states that research can be defined as the process of arriving at reliable solutions to problems posed through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data.

The present research is a quantitative research. Whereas quantitative research deals with numbers and it is expressed through graphs and statistics, qualitative research is expressed verbally. The process of gathering and interpreting numerical data is known as quantitative research. It may be used to discover patterns and averages, to make predictions, to verify causal links, and to generalize results to larger groups.

The opposite of quantitative research, which includes gathering and interpreting non-numerical data (e.g. text, video, or audio), is qualitative research.

3.1. Objectives

The main objective of this research is to detect the possible problems for acquiring the communicative competence, considering the application on a practical sense of the recommendations gathered in the current legislation in the autonomous community of Andalusia.

The specific objectives of the research are the following:

- Get to know which specific methodological strategies are being applied in Andalusian Secondary schools and which are not being applied.
- To analyze what is the influence of the use or lack of use of those strategies in the development of students' communicative competence.
- Check whether Secondary Schools actually apply the methodological strategies associated with the communicative approach or not.
- To determine students' perspectives on their learning process.
- Compare the common points and the main differences between the surveyed methodologies and the methodology proposed in the regulation.
- To analyze the role of the teachers, with the aim of establishing possible improvement proposals.
- To discover the percentage of students' who complement their education with other non-curricular activities, such as language private lessons or language academies, series and movies, video games or social networks.

3.2. Initial hypotheses

Regarding the initial hypotheses that this research aims to prove or disprove are the following, according to the objectives:

- Not all of the strategies are actually being applied, especially, there is a lack of oral production in class and an excess of formal study of the language.
- Students generally are aware of their own learning process but are focused on marks more than on the acquisition of certain competences.

- The role of the teacher will be essential, and it is not always the recommended (promoter, guide). Many times, students are not the protagonists of the lessons, although nowadays, the model should be constructivist or cognitivist, which is the only one that has communication as its key process.

As we can infer from the previous historical overview of educational models, it is worth noticing that communication did not start to be important until the 1990s, and that could lead to think that it is a short period of time for all teachers to implement the 'learning to learn' model. We can also infer that some teachers, especially those who are older, are still using a different style that is nowadays considered old-fashioned.

- The presence of English outside school is limited, due to the fact that English is just a foreign language in Spain, and it does not have an official character, therefore, in order to find input in non-curricular activities, students' need to look for it, which is not very common and may be linked with a lack of interest.

3.3. Instrument

According to Kuechler (1998), the survey is a scientific method of data collection, through the use of standardized questionnaires, administered by specially trained interviewers or distributed for self-administration to a sample.

Monti (2013) defines the sample as a set of people with at least one common characteristic to which the common characteristic to which the survey is addressed, given that the population as a whole is not population as a whole is unmanageable.

As a research method, surveys can serve three purposes (Kerlinger, 1997):

1. To serve as an exploratory instrument to help identify variables and relationships, suggest hypotheses, and direct other phases of research.
2. To be the primary research instrument, so that questions designed to measure research variables will be included in the interview schedule.
3. Complementing other methods, allowing the follow-up of unexpected results, validating other methods and delving deeper into the reasons for people's responses.

The Likert scale (also called the method of summary evaluations) published in 1932 by Rensis Likert, is a psychometric scale commonly used in social science research using questionnaires. It is the most commonly used approach to gradient-ranking responses in

survey research, so the term *Likert-type scales* is often used interchangeably with *rating scale*, although other types of rating scales exist.

Respondents define their degree of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a sequence of items while answering to a Likert item. As a result, the range depicts the strength of their thoughts for a certain object. As a result, Likert scales are used in psychology and social sciences, statistics, business, and marketing.

Likert items that are well-designed have both "symmetry" and "balance." Symmetry indicates that they have an equal number of positive and negative places with bilaterally symmetric distances between them around the "neutral"/zero value. Balance indicates that the distance between each option item is the same, which allows quantitative comparisons like average to be valid across items with more than two candidate values.

A common five-level Likert item, for example, may have the following format:

I completely disagree.

Disagree

I don't agree or disagree.

Agree

I fully agree.

The present questionnaire includes different kind of questions:

- Agreement: They test to what extent respondents agree or disagree with a question or statement. They have the following options:

I completely disagree.

Disagree

I don't agree or disagree.

Agree

I fully agree.

- Frequency: They test how often an activity or practice is carried out. They have the following options:

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

Always

- Multiple alternatives (known as multiple choice): Several alternatives are presented from which the respondent must choose one, or more than one when it is possible.
- Open-ended survey questions: They are free-form survey questions that allow respondents to respond in open text format, allowing them to answer with their full awareness, feeling, and understanding. This means that the answer to this question is not limited to a single option.

Some questions are obligatory, while others are optional, due to the fact that they require an affirmative answer in the previous questions. The previous question (obligatory) is a dichotomous question, i.e., it can only be answered with an affirmative or negative answer. The part of the students who have answered a negative option can no longer answer the second question, since it is linked to the first one. The second is a multiple-choice question, i.e., several options are presented and the student must choose as many as are true. As an example, they are asked if they do any activity related to English outside the classroom. Those who answer either *Never* or *Rarely*, can not answer the next question on which they are asked to choose which specific activities they do.

As for questionnaire contents, they are contingent on the guidelines of the methodological strategies gathered in the Order of July 14, 2016, Decree 111/2016 of June 14 and the *Guía Informativa para Centros de Enseñanza Bilingüe (2017)*. The following blocks of contents have been defined:

- a) The use of English as the main language of communication in class and the encouragement of oral production.
- b) The treatment of errors, according to the communicative approach.
- c) The use of ICTs, audiovisual and real-life oriented material.
- d) The use of comprehensible input for students.
- e) The role of the teacher.
- f) The usefulness of the evaluation and the use of self-evaluation.
- g) The adaptation of the contents to students' interests.
- h) The study of the culture and society of the English-speaking countries.
- i) The study of the formal part of the language, according to the communicative approach.
- j) The promotion of collaborative work and the use of different types of methodology in a pacific environment.
- k) The contact with the English language outside school.

The present research has as its main instrument the following questionnaire made by 20 questions on Google Forms. The questions have been delivered in Spanish in order to ensure that students fully understand them. After all the students' have answered the questionnaire, the results are transformed into percentages and graphics for a further statistical analysis from which to extract conclusions. In addition, any other reflection gathered through the last open question is taken into account.

Questionnaire – Spanish version

1. ¿Es el inglés la lengua de comunicación en clase?
2. ¿Se fomenta la producción oral en clase? ¿Hablas inglés en clase?
3. Cuando hablas inglés en clase, se toleran los errores como parte del proceso de aprendizaje.
4. ¿Se utiliza material audiovisual en clase? (Videos, películas, canciones, audios, podcasts...)
5. ¿Crees que el material usado en clase (textos, audios, vídeos...) es útil para la vida real fuera del contexto de la clase?
6. ¿Consideras que los datos que se aportan en clase son comprensibles?
7. ¿Cómo definirías el rol de tu profesor/a?
Experto, es la única fuente de conocimiento que tenemos.
Modelo, al que imitar.
Líder, que genera confianza, cercanía y sensación de apoyo.
Animador sociopolítico, fomenta la concienciación y el compromiso social.
Constructor del aprendizaje, guía el desarrollo de las actividades y anima a deducir la información, mediante la motivación.
8. ¿La evaluación te permite centrarte en tu proceso de aprendizaje?
9. ¿Llevas a cabo algún tipo de autoevaluación en clase?
10. ¿Las actividades que se realizan en clase se relacionan con tus intereses?
11. ¿Aprendes sobre las culturas y sociedades de países de habla inglesa en clase?
12. ¿Se estudia la parte formal (gramática, use of English...) de la lengua?
13. ¿Es la distribución en el aula flexible? ¿Vais cambiando de sitio y de compañeros?
14. ¿Se fomenta el trabajo cooperativo (en grupos, como clase)?
15. ¿Es el ambiente de clase favorable, es decir, libre de conflictos y agradable?
16. ¿Consideras que las actividades que se realizan son variadas y se usan diferentes formas de enseñar?
17. ¿Se fomenta el uso de las TIC (ordenadores, móviles, tablets, pizarra digital, etc.)?

18. Fuera de la actividad escolar, ¿realizas alguna actividad relacionada con el inglés?
19. Si la respuesta es afirmativa, ¿de qué actividad o actividades se trata? (Elige tantas como sean correctas)
- Ver TV, películas o series, con o sin subtítulos.
- Academia de idiomas o clases particulares.
- Viajes de inmersión lingüística.
- Escuchar música con la letra de las canciones.
- Redes sociales.
- Lectura.
- Consultar páginas webs con contenido cultural, lúdico o didáctico.
- Entablar conversación con algún hablante nativo.
- Intentar usar el inglés en tu círculo de amistades o familia.
20. ¿Deseas añadir alguna reflexión que no haya sido previamente respondida o desarrollar algún punto de vista expresado?

Questionnaire – English version

1. Is English the language of communication in class?
2. Is oral production encouraged in class? Do you speak English in class?
3. When you speak English in class, mistakes are tolerated as part of the learning process.
4. Is audiovisual material used in class (videos, movies, songs, audios, podcasts, etc.)?
5. Do you think the material used in class (texts, audios, videos...) is useful for real life outside the context of the classroom?
6. Do you consider that the data provided in class are understandable?
7. How would you define the role of your teacher?

Expert, the only source of knowledge we have.

Model, to be imitated.

Leader, who generates trust, closeness and a sense of support.

Socio-political animator, promotes awareness and social commitment.

Learning builder, guides the development of activities and encourages the deduction of information through motivation.
8. Does the assessment allow you to focus on your learning process?
9. Do you carry out any kind of self-evaluation in class?
10. Do the activities you do in class relate to your interests?

11. Do you learn about the cultures and societies of English-speaking countries in class?
12. Do you study the formal part (grammar, use of English...) of the language?
13. Is the distribution in the classroom flexible and do you change places and classmates?
14. Is cooperative work (in groups, as a class) encouraged?
15. Is the classroom atmosphere favorable, i.e., conflict-free and pleasant?
16. Do you consider that the activities carried out are varied and different ways of teaching are used?
17. Is the use of ICT (computers, cell phones, tablets, digital whiteboard, etc.) encouraged?
18. Outside of school activities, do you carry out any English-related activities?
19. If the answer is yes, which activity or activities are they? (Choose as many as correct)
 - Watching TV, movies or series, with or without subtitles.
 - Language academy or private lessons.
 - Language immersion trips.
 - Listening to music with lyrics.
 - Social networking.
 - Reading.
 - Consulting websites with cultural, entertaining or didactic content.
 - Engage in conversation with a native speaker.
 - Trying to use English in your circle of friends or family.
20. Do you wish to add any reflection that has not been previously answered or develop any point of view expressed?

3.4. Participants

The questionnaire has been distributed online among students whose common feature is being CSE students' in Andalusia. The questionnaire has received 68 responses. Participants mainly come from the province of Seville, specifically from the Sevillian towns of Lora del Río, Brenes and Espartinas.

There is another small amount of participants that comes from other parts of Andalusia, since the questionnaire has been distributed through social media in order to reach a higher amount of participants, and therefore, a higher level of liability.

3.5. On-going modifications to the questionnaire

The answers of question number 13 (Is the distribution in the classroom flexible and do you change places and classmates?) have been modified from agreement to frequency responses, due to the need of facilitating the comprehension for students. Nevertheless, Google Forms keeps record of both the previous and the new type of answer, therefore the results are doubled. Consecutively, they need to be calculated and the graphic needs to be modified manually.

4. RESULTS

This section details the results obtained through the research method used, in order to subsequently draw conclusions. In other words, each question answers will be analyzed in order to reflect the most noteworthy appreciations extracted from the results of the student survey. The results are going to be analyzed as part of the block of contents that are part of the recommendation of the current legislation:

- a) The use of English as the main language of communication in class and the encouragement of oral production.

¿Es el inglés la lengua de comunicación en clase?
68 respuestas

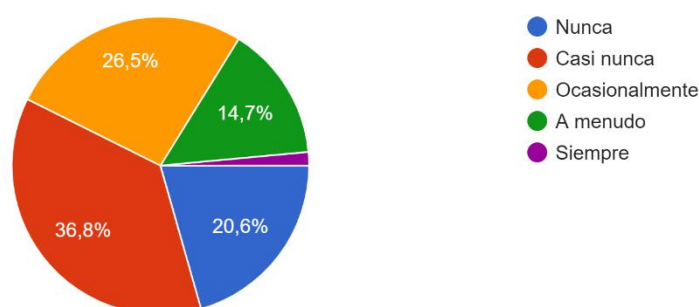


Figure 2. Percentage of English as the language of communication

We can observe that the 83.9% of the answers are negative, that is, a huge majority of students claim that English is never, rarely or sometimes the language of communication in class. Only 1 student said that English is always the language of communication in class, which would be desired for all.

¿Se fomenta la producción oral en clase? ¿Hablas inglés en clase?

68 respuestas

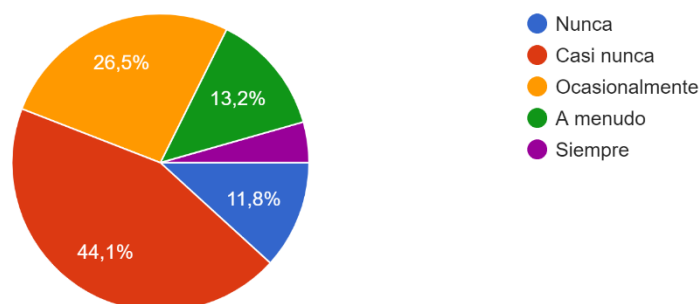


Figure 3. Percentage of oral production enhancement

When it comes to produce oral texts in English language, the results are quite similar to the previous question, as it could be deduced. We can see some small differences. The percentage of students who claim that they rarely speak English in class is bigger, and the number of students who claim that they never do it is a bit smaller, but generally, over 80% of the answers are negative.

These figures show that this methodological strategy is not followed in most cases, with a huge percentage of negative answers, and that could explain why most students are not communicatively effective or fluent.

b) The treatment of errors, according to the communicative approach.

Cuando hablas inglés en clase, se toleran los errores como parte del proceso de aprendizaje.

67 respuestas

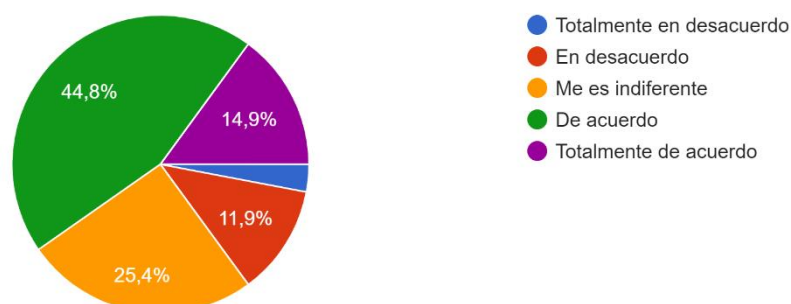


Figure 4. Percentage of the treatment of errors

The 58.7 per cent of students, when asked if errors are tolerated as part of the learning process, agree or totally agree. This is a positive answer, since errors should be tolerated as part of the learning process in the communicative approach. Therefore, we can conclude that the treatment of errors is not one of the most important problems for developing communicative competence.

c) The use of ICTs, audiovisual and real-life oriented material.

¿Se fomenta el uso de las TIC (ordenadores, móviles, tablets, pizarra digital, etc.)?

68 respuestas

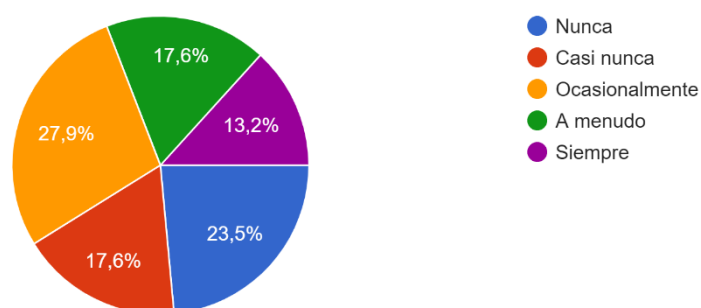


Figure 5. Percentage of the use of ICTs

When it comes to the use of ICTs in class, 41.1 per cent of the answers are negative, while the majority of them are neutral, that means that they use it mostly sometimes. In general, the answer is not the desired one since ICTs should be always or often used.

¿Se utiliza material audiovisual en clase? (Videos, películas, canciones, audios, podcasts...)

68 respuestas

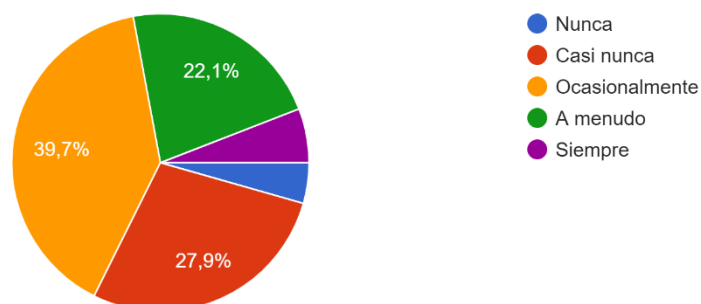


Figure 6. Percentage of use of audiovisual material

The 72% of the answers are negative, that is, this percentage of students never, rarely or sometimes work with audiovisual material in class. These results are strongly negative, since the use of audiovisual material is highly recommended to improve communicative competence and oral skills.

¿Crees que el material usado en clase (textos, audios, videos...) es útil para la vida real fuera del contexto de la clase?

68 respuestas

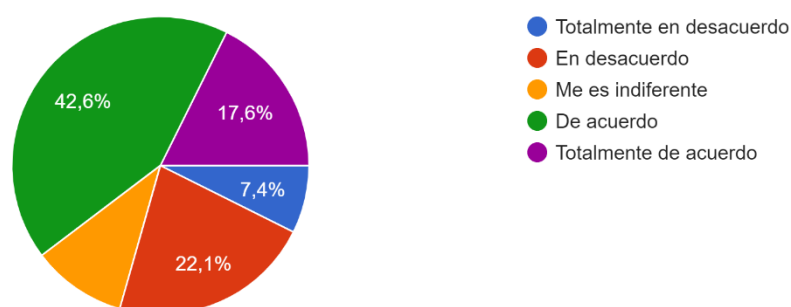


Figure 7. Percentage of the usefulness of the material

Nevertheless, the 60% consider that the materials used in class are useful for real-life context. The conclusion of this block is mostly negative. Two of the reasons why communicative competence is mostly not acquired could be the lack of use of audiovisual input and ICTs. On the other hand, students mostly consider that texts, audios and videos are useful for real-life contexts, so there is no need to completely change the material, but rather adapt them to the new technologies and what they audiovisually offer.

d) The use of comprehensible input for students.

¿Consideras que los datos que se aportan en clase son comprensibles?

68 respuestas

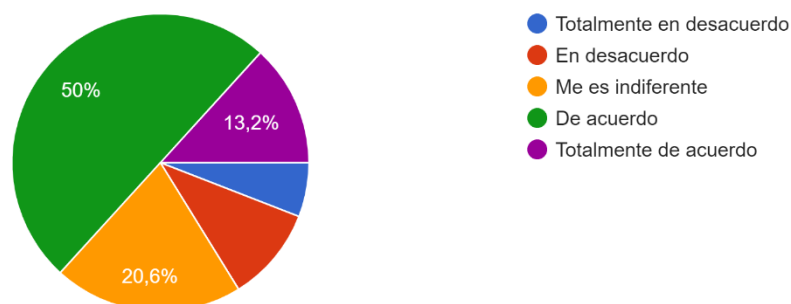


Figure 8. Percentage of comprehensible input

It is essential to give comprehensible input to students, and 63.2% of students consider that the received input is comprehensible. It is a possible result, yet there should be still a higher percentage of agreement.

e) The role of the teacher.

¿Cómo definirías el rol de tu profesor/a?

68 respuestas

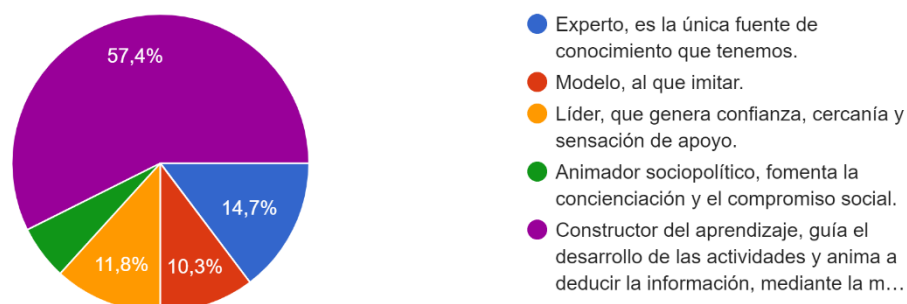


Figure 9. Percentage of different roles of the teacher

According to the communicative approach, the teacher should be a learning guide or builder, and the results show that in 57.4% of the cases, their role is the desired one. However, there is a negative 14.7% of students who say that their teacher is the only knowledge source that they have, which is far from the desired role of the teacher nowadays. The teacher should be

responsible for giving as many sources of knowledge as possible and guide their learning process, in order to teach students to learn by themselves, what is known as the *learning to learn* competence.

f) The usefulness of the evaluation and the use of self-evaluation.

¿La evaluación te permite centrarte en tu proceso de aprendizaje?

68 respuestas

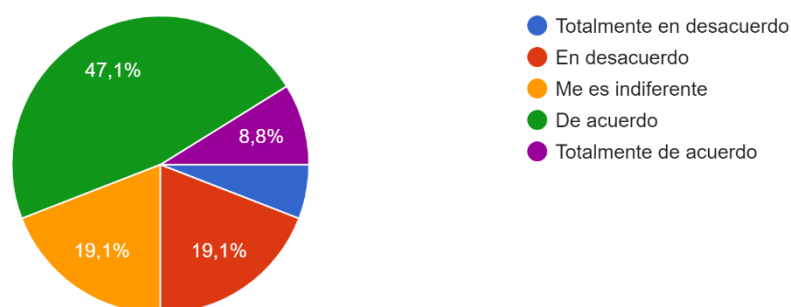


Figure 10. Percentage of evaluation focused on the learning process

¿Llevas a cabo algún tipo de autoevaluación en clase?

68 respuestas

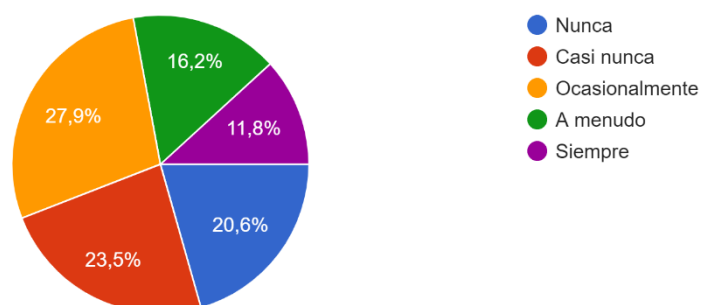


Figure 11. Percentage of self-evaluation

According to students, the evaluation process mostly allows them to focus on their learning process, since 55.9 per cent of them agree or totally agree. Nevertheless, just a 28 per cent of them always or often carry out any kind of self-evaluation. Most of them do it sometimes and the 43,8% never or rarely does it.

We can conclude from these answers that students are conscious of their evaluation process, but they generally should take more part in it, through the implementation of more self-evaluation.

g) The adaptation of the contents to students' interests.

¿Las actividades que se realizan en clase se relacionan con tus intereses?

68 respuestas

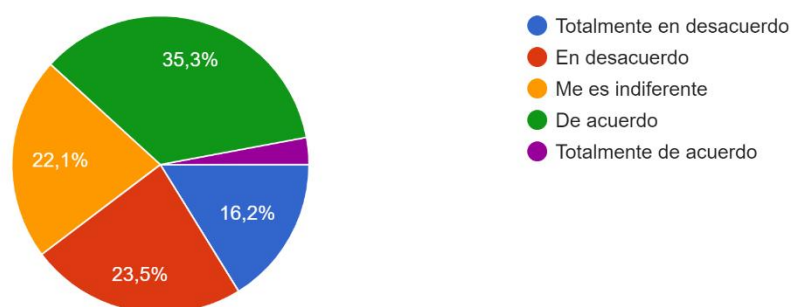


Figure 12. Percentage of activities related to students' interests

The activities carried out in class are mostly not related to students' interests, since just the 38.2% of them claims that they totally agree or agree. This is a negative result, since activities should be adapted to students' interests in order to increase their motivation and engagement and to foster communicative competence.

h) The study of the culture and society of the English-speaking countries.

¿Aprendes sobre las culturas y sociedades de países de habla inglesa en clase?

68 respuestas

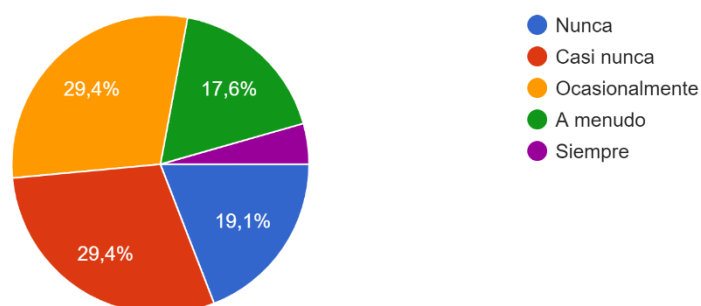


Figure 13. Percentage of culture and society learning

Learning about the culture and society in which a language is born and developed is highly recommended to improve communicative competence, since it involves being able to use the language in their context. However, just a 22% of students always or often learn about English-speaking cultures and societies. This could be another reason for the lack of development of the communicative competence.

i) The study of the formal part of the language, according to the communicative approach.

¿Se estudia la parte formal (gramática, use of English...) de la lengua?

68 respuestas

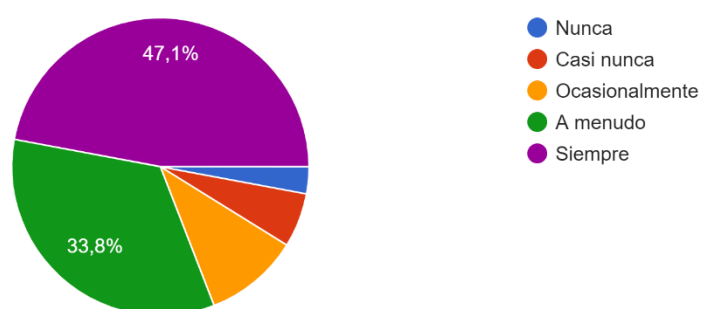


Figure 14. Percentage of study of the formal part of the language

As it was expected, the formal part of the language is studied in many of the cases (80.9% of positive answers), therefore, we can conclude that this is certainly not one of the methodological strategies that avoid communicative competence to be developed and improved.

j) The promotion of collaborative work and the use of different types of methodology in a pacific environment.

¿Se fomenta el trabajo cooperativo (en grupos, como clase)?

68 respuestas

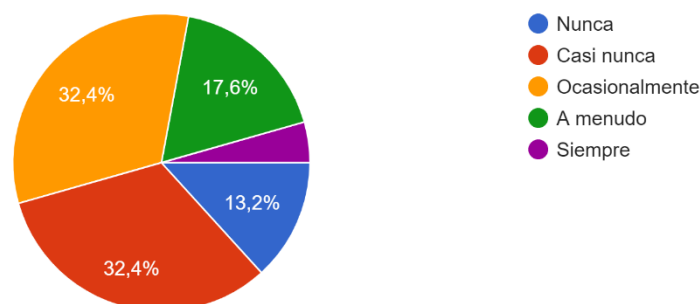


Figure 15. Percentage of collaborative work

When asked if collaborative work is fostered in class, most of them answered “Sometimes” or “Rarely”. Moreover, the 17.6% answered “Often”. Since most of the answers are not positive, we can observe that in general, collaborative work is not as encouraged as it should be, although half of the students do it often or sometimes.

¿Es la distribución en el aula flexible? ¿Vais cambiando de sitio y de compañeros?

68 respuestas

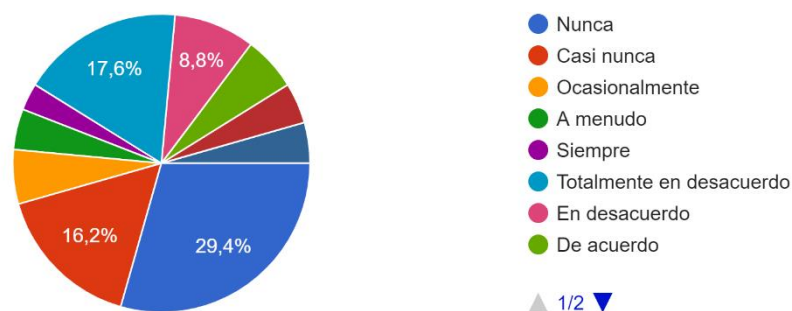


Figure 16. Percentage of flexible distribution of space (pre-modified)

The results of this question have been modified and a new graphic has been manually designed in order to offer a reliable percentage:

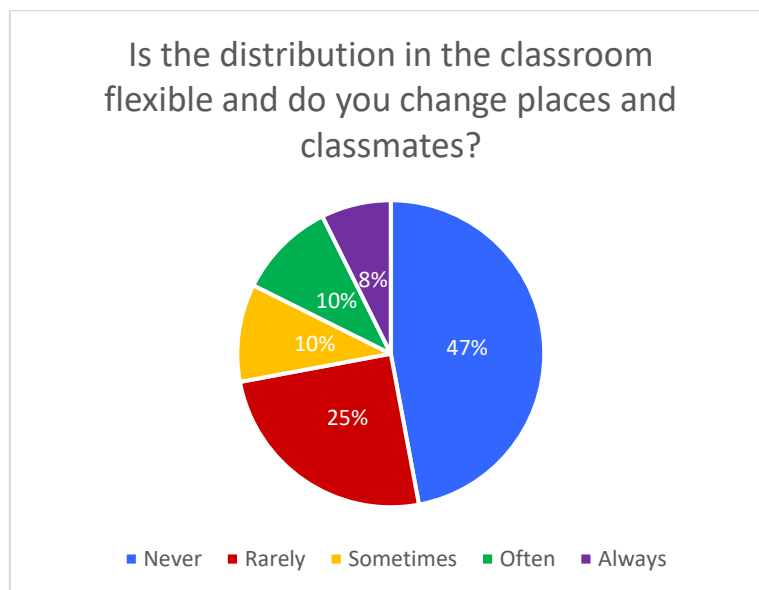


Figure 17. Percentage of flexible distribution of the space (post-modified)

As we can observe, a 72% of students answered that the distribution in the classroom is never or rarely flexible. This shows that this recommendation is mostly not followed.

¿Es el ambiente de clase favorable, es decir, libre de conflictos y agradable?
68 respuestas

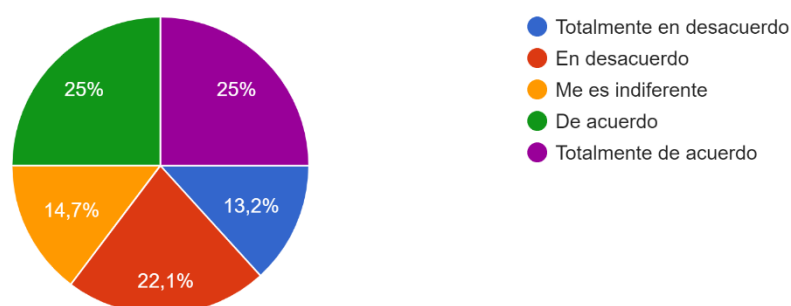


Figure 18. Percentage of favorable atmosphere

Just a half of the students think that their classroom atmosphere is favorable, conflict-free and pleasant. This percentage is not positive, as the environment should always be favorable to be able to apply all the other methodological strategies.

¿Consideras que las actividades que se realizan son variadas y se usan diferentes formas de enseñar?

68 respuestas

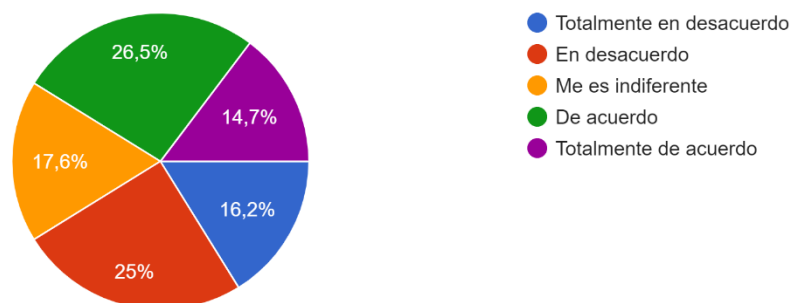


Figure 19. Percentage of the variety of activities and ways of learning

According to the 41.2% of the students, the activities are not varied and different ways of teaching are not used. This is a high percentage for negative answers, that summed to the 17.6% of neutral answers, make the results slightly negative, since another 41.2% agree with the question.

From this section, we can conclude that the classroom environment is not always favorable, the activities and ways of teaching are not always varied and that the distribution in the classroom is never or rarely flexible. These results are not in compliance with regulations and recommendations, therefore, this is another reason for the lack of enhancement of the communicative competence.

k) The contact with the English language outside school.

Fuera de la actividad escolar, ¿realizas alguna actividad relacionada con el inglés?

68 respuestas

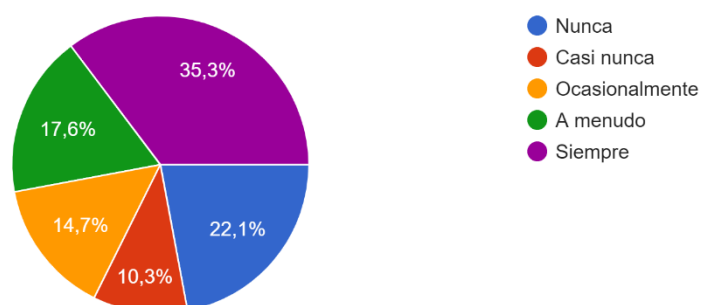


Figure 20. Percentage of contact with English outside school

The results when asked if they do any activity related to English outside school are quite positive, since the most popular answer is “Always”, with a 35.3%. Then, the 17.6% answered “Often”, which makes most of the answers to be a positive response.



Figure 21. Activities related to English developed outside school

The most popular activities among those who carry out any activity related to English are listening to music with lyrics and going to English academies or private lessons, both with a 59.3% of the total number (54 answers). They are followed by social media, with a 50% and then watching subtitled series or movies and TV, with a 40.7%. 29.6% of students try to use the language in their circle and 25.9% choose reading in English, while 22.2% use some cultural or didactic websites. Among the less popular ones, we find language immersion trips, with a 18.5% and speaking with native people, with a 14.8% of students.

From this block, we can conclude that there is a contact with the English language outside the classroom in many cases, although not all the students have it. Then, we can observe from their answers that they are interested in music, and most of them find a help or a way to keep contact with English in academies or extracurricular lessons. Nevertheless, some of the most popular activities include those in which oral comprehension is enhanced, but oral production is not, since the contact with native speakers, for instance, is still limited. This could be one of the reasons why oral production is one of their weakest skills in general, which contributes to a weak communicative competence.

Finally, some students have decided to leave a comment in the last questions in order to add some conclusions to their answers or to address other topics that they consider important. Those comments are translated below:

“More emphasis should be placed on oral communication and comprehension.”

“We do not do group work because of covid.”

“The English teacher, when she explains grammar and/or vocabulary, always adds a bit of humor and her vocabulary was totally funny.”

“That the classes are good the teacher is the best but I would like that they do not leave aside those people who do not fit in with the system and the teacher helps people with difficulties but I say in the family environment that English is encouraged and especially the people who speak it.”

“I think that there should be more speaking in the classes because when it comes to going to a foreign country or having a fluent conversation with a foreigner, we are not prepared for that since we are only taught grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening. In short, there should be more speaking.”.

Two of them agree that oral skills should be fostered more and some others add interesting points, such as the one who talks about the teacher role. They claim that the way in which their teacher uses humor makes the learning process fun, and therefore, that increases their motivation to learn the language. There is another student that explains the reason why there is no collaborative work, which is the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, fortunately, regulations will come back to the way they were before the pandemic and collaborative work will be totally allowed in class. The last contribution to be addressed is the one that talks about people with difficulties. This student claims that people who speak English should foster their use in the family environment, since the system is not always suitable for everyone.

5. CONCLUSION

In this section, the results are interpreted in accordance with the initial hypotheses in order to check if these hypotheses are proved or disproved and responds to the objectives proposed at the beginning of this work.

The first initial hypothesis was that not all the methodological strategies are actually being applied, and that there was a lack of oral production and an excess of formal study of the language. We can conclude that this hypothesis has been proved, for the following reasons:

- Results show that in most cases, English is not the language of communication, and there is a lack of oral production from students.
- The use of ICTs and audiovisual materials is generally limited, which leads to a lack of motivation and use of different and dynamic methodologies. On the other hand, activities are in many cases not adapted to students' interests. As we conclude from the last question, most of students are interested in music and TV, therefore they should be use more during lessons to improve their communicative competence.
- The last recommendation is also linked with culture and society, when being exposed to the music and TV of the foreign countries, students are learning about its culture and are also exposed to real-life material, which is highly recommended in the communicative approach.
- In relation to evaluation, results show that there is a need of more self-evaluation. One of the initial hypothesis was that students generally are aware of their own learning process but are focused on marks more than on the acquisition of certain competences. We can see from their answers that this hypothesis is proved.
- The distribution of the space is mostly not flexible, which hinders the possibilities of working collaboratively and using different ways of learning and types of activities.
- The higher percentage of students claim that the formal part is always studied. Certainly, the communicative approach proposes the study of the formal part of the language, but not always, it should be studied while focusing on the use of it for communication. Hence, we can conclude that there is an excess of formal study of the language. This excess of formal study of the language, added to the lack of oral production, can make students not to trust their knowledge and not to feel confident enough to interact in the foreign language, whether it is in class or outside it, that is why the second initial hypothesis of this research is proved.

The next initial hypothesis was related to the role of the teachers, which was believed to be not always the promoter or guide role. Although it was the most popular role among the answers, the percentage was just a 57.4% of the total number of students, which is not what it should be. We can see that there are still old-fashioned roles that must be avoided in order to promote

communicative competence in the classroom. When teachers have the role of proposing situations to solve, advising on errors and organizing the different activities, students become responsible for their own learning in an active way.

The last hypothesis claimed that the contact with English outside the classroom was limited. Although the percentage was not as high as it could be desired, the results were mostly positive. Consequently, we can conclude that this hypothesis has been disproved in many cases, and proved in others.

Beyond the initial hypotheses, there are some other conclusions to be addressed. The first one is that the right classroom environment is fundamental for the development of the classroom. When the classroom environment is conflictive, it adds difficulties such as a lack of productive time or concentration of students. This leads to less satisfactory results and the application of methodologies that are not very dynamic and playful. On the other hand, where the environment is adequate, cooperative work, active student participation or the use of games, videos and similar activities can be encouraged to a greater extent.

Moreover, it is relevant to highlight the importance of having an adequate classroom available for the subject of English. This includes digital resources, a good Internet connection and a space that allows for group distribution.

On the other hand, the next part of this section highlights the achievement of the objectives of this research. At the beginning of this paper, the specific objectives were proposed with the goal of searching for answers to be responded through the survey.

The first specific objective was getting to know which specific methodological strategies are being applied in Andalusian Secondary schools and which are not being applied, comparing them with those proposed in the current Andalusian educational law, also associated with those strategies proposed in the communicative approach. After analyzing the results, this research has concluded that those methodological strategies that are not being applied in most cases are: the use of English as the main language in the classroom, the use of the ICTs and the adaptation of materials for students' interests, the study of the culture and society of English-speaking countries, the use of self-evaluation in order to increase students' focus on their competence achievement, the flexible distribution of the space to facilitate collaboration and the variety of activities and ways of learning.

However, there are other strategies that are mostly being applied, according to the results, which are: the role of the teacher as a guide or promoter, the contact with English language outside the classroom, the treatment of errors, the use of comprehensible input and the study of the formal part of the language.

The second objective dealt with discovering what is the influence of the use or lack of use of those strategies in the development of students' communicative competence. After analyzing their answers to the survey, we can conclude that there is a lack of implementation of the recommended strategies and that it could be the main reason why students are generally not mastering the communicative competence. We can conclude that the problem is not what is written in the current legislation, which would be optimal if it were actually applied, but rather the lack of its implementation in most cases.

Another specific objective was to determine students' perspectives on their learning process. This survey has allowed them to express their thoughts and ideas, while also giving space for them to write any perspective that they consider relevant. It was considered important for this research to give a voice to students, who are not always taken into consideration when creating educational syllabuses or legislating. After they have expressed their perspectives, it is possible to create educational material and programming lessons that are suitable for them in a higher level, thus helping them improve their communicative competence.

This research has also allowed to accomplish the goals of getting to know what the role of the teachers is and to what extent students complement their studies with non-curricular activities. As it was previously highlighted in the results section, it can be concluded that students' contact with English is mostly related to listening to music, using social media or watching TV or cinema. From this section, it is interesting to use these results in order to create materials for further years that are related to their interests and that could increase their motivation towards the foreign language. It is important to take into account that the teachers' role must be that of promoter or guide, while students must always be responsible for their learning, by being aware of their own learning path, for instance, by frequently doing self-evaluation.

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This work has made it possible to reach the results and conclusions presented in the last sections. However, these data should not be extrapolated to other levels, other schools or other places.

This is an investigation limited to the time available for the delivery of the paper, to the resources available to the author of the work and the geographical location of the author.

Another significant limitation is the number of the sample. If the sample size had been bigger, the outcome of the research could be more representative of the autonomous community.

7. LINES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This work opens the door to possible future research on this topic. Some of them could be:

- Similar research at other levels, in other schools, in other parts of Andalusia or Spain.
- The fulfillment of the objectives of this work by means of other types of methodologies, such as the interview or the observation.
- The realization of the research taking teachers as the sample, instead of students.
- A line of research centered on the same or different sample, but approached from a sociolinguistic perspective, through the study of the differences that aspects such as social class or gender trigger when it comes to learning a foreign language.

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brooks, N. H. (1960). *Language and Language Learning: theory and practice*. New York, Estados Unidos: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1981). A Theoretical Framework for Communicative Competence.

Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic structures*. Berlín, Alemania: Walter de Gruyter.

CIDE (2000). *La enseñanza de las lenguas extranjeras en España*. España: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.

Consejería de Educación (2017). *Guía Informativa para Centros de Enseñanza Bilingüe*. Andalucía, España: Junta de Andalucía

Consejería de Educación (2017). *Plan Estratégico de Desarrollo de las Lenguas en Andalucía*. Andalucía, España: Junta de Andalucía

Crystal, D. (1985). *Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin

Decreto 111/2016, de 14 de junio, por el que se establece la ordenación y el currículo de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en la Comunidad Autónoma de Andalucía. *Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía*, no. 122 de 28 de junio de 2016, 133 a 137. Retrieved from: <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/boja/2016/122/2>

Gumperz, J. J. (1972). *Directions in sociolinguistics: The ethnography of communication*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Halliday, M. A. K., Matthiessen, C. M., Halliday, M., & Matthiessen, C. (2014). *An introduction to functional grammar*. Routledge.

Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. *Sociolinguistics*, 269-293.

Kachru, B. B. (1992). World Englishes: Approaches, issues and resources. *Language teaching*, 25(1), 1-14.

Kerlinger, F. (1997). *Investigación del comportamiento*. México, D.F., México: McGraw-Hill.

Kuechler, M. (1998). The survey method: An indispensable tool for social science research everywhere?. *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol.42, no. 2, pp. 178-200.

Lin, A. M. Y., (2008) Cambios de paradigma en la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera: el cambio crítico y más allá, *Revista Educación y Pedagogía*, vol. 20, no. 51, pp. 11-23.

Madrid, D. (2001). Problemática de la enseñanza de las lenguas extranjeras en España. *La Enseñanza de Lenguas En El Nuevo Milenio*, no. 11, pp. 11-46.

Madrid, D., & McLaren, N. (1995). *Procedimientos didácticos para TEFL*. Valladolid: La.

Monti, C. (2013). *La encuesta como método de investigación*. [en línea] Recuperado de: <https://es.slideshare.net/CarolinaMonti/presentacion-encuesta-26353634>

Munarriz, B. (1992). *Técnicas y métodos en investigación cualitativa* (Apuntes asignatura). Universidad de País Vasco, País Vasco, España.

Nunan, D. (1987). Communicative language teaching: Making it work. *ELT journal*, 41(2), 136-145.

Orden de 14 de julio de 2016, por la que se desarrolla el currículo correspondiente a la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en la Comunidad Autónoma de Andalucía, se regulan determinados aspectos de la atención a la diversidad y se establece la ordenación de la evaluación del proceso de aprendizaje del alumnado. *Boletín Oficial de la Junta de Andalucía*, no. 144 de 28 de julio de 2016, 108 a 396. Retrieved from: https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/boja/2016/144/BOJA16-144-00289-13500-01_00095875.pdf

Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero, por la que se describen las relaciones entre las competencias, los contenidos y los criterios de evaluación de la educación primaria, la educación secundaria obligatoria y el bachillerato. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, no. 25 de 21 de enero de 2015, 1 a 18. Retrieved from: <https://boe.es/buscar/pdf/2015/BOE-A2015-738-consolidado.pdf>

Prieto-Jiménez, E. y Domínguez-Fernández, G. (2013). Modelos docentes: Perfil, funciones, y paradigmas y sus consecuencias en el diseño del currículum: Fases, funciones y formas de ejecutarlos.

Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato. *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, no. 3, de 3 de enero de 2015, 1 a 35. Retrieved from: <https://boe.es/buscar/pdf/2015/BOE-A-2015-37-consolidado.pdf>

Rivers, W. (1964) *The Psychologist and the Foreign Language Teacher*. Chicago, Estados Unidos: University of Chicago Press

Searle, J. R. (1994). *Actos de habla*. Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra SA.

Stork, F. C., & Widdowson, J. D. A. (1974). *Learning about linguistics: An introductory workbook*. Hutchinson Radius.

Titone, R. (1968). *Teaching Foreign Languages: An Historical Sketch*. Washington, Estados Unidos: Georgetown University Press.