

## Communicative approach strategies to enhance oral production on A2 level students



*Estrategias del enfoque comunicativo para mejorar la producción oral de los estudiantes de nivel A2*

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### Abstract

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Introduction: communication is the essence of life; at all levels, it cannot be seen only verbally or extra verbally, but in the process of interaction with the surrounding environment. Objective: his literature review aimed to analyze the efficiency of the different communicative language teaching strategies applied in the language classroom and their improvement in students' oral production. Method: it accomplished a bibliographical analysis of 51 sources in the communicative approach field regarding strategies in spoken production of the English language. The searching emphasized the effectiveness of the different communicative language teaching strategies applied in the language classroom and the students' enhancement in their oral production. This article selected several research tools such as books, scientific articles from indexed journals, and graduate theses. A meticulous search was carried out in databases such as Dialnet,

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Scielo, Eric, Google scholar, Semantics Scholar, Research Gate, and university digital repositories. Results: the most common and effective communicative approach strategies for oral production in the English language were identified; for example, debate, class presentations, problem-solving, modeling, comprehension questions, dialogs, pair and group work, role play, peer teaching, project-based, jigsaw, games, songs, use of realia, and authentic materials. Conclusion: the efficiency of the communicative language teaching strategies was widely proved; for that reason, their employment is highly recommended to contribute to the students' oral production enhancement.

**Keywords:** communication, competence, strategy, oral production, language skills

### Resumen

Introducción: la esencia de la vida está en la habilidad de comunicarse a todo nivel, no se puede ver solo de forma verbal o extraverbal, sino en el proceso de interacción con el medio que nos rodea. Objetivo: esta revisión literaria tuvo como objetivo analizar la efectividad de las diferentes estrategias comunicativas de enseñanza del lenguaje aplicadas en el aula de idiomas y su mejora en la producción oral del alumno. Método: se realizó un análisis bibliográfico de 51 fuentes en el campo de las estrategias del enfoque comunicativo en la producción oral del idioma inglés. En la búsqueda se enfatizó en la efectividad de las diferentes estrategias de enseñanza comunicativa aplicadas en el aula y la mejora de los estudiantes en su producción oral. Se seleccionaron varias herramientas de investigación como libros, artículos científicos de revistas indexadas y tesis de posgrado. Se llevó a cabo una búsqueda meticulosa en los navegadores de búsqueda, a saber: Dialnet, Scielo, Eric *Google Scholar*, *Semantics Scholar*, *Research Gate* y repositorios digitales universitarios. Resultados: se identificaron las estrategias del enfoque comunicativo más comunes y efectivas para la producción oral en el idioma inglés tales como debate, presentaciones en clase, resolución de problemas, modelado, preguntas de comprensión, diálogos, trabajo en parejas y en grupo, juego de roles, enseñanza entre pares, basado en proyectos, rompecabezas, juegos, canciones, uso de material real y auténtico. Conclusión: se concluye que la efectividad de las estrategias comunicativas fue ampliamente probada; por ello, su uso es muy recomendable para contribuir a la mejora de la producción oral de los estudiantes.

**Palabras claves:** comunicación, competencia, estrategia, producción oral, destrezas del lenguaje.

### Introduction

Since ancient times, the human being has needed to communicate to survive and evolve. This communication is not a simple process because several elements must converge so that the message is clear, and the sender understands it satisfactorily. However, this achievement is not always quick and easy. From the hieroglyphs and cave paintings, man has taken advantage of everything to transmit any message beyond his limits to transcend

his borders. Throughout history, humanity has evolved in each field. Nowadays, communication is developed in a global context and carried out through sophisticated technological tools, namely emails, instant messages, video calls, among others, in seconds (Cristal, 2003).

A salient part of communication is the message. That message needs to be understood, and for this to happen, language is a key and indispensable piece (Yule, 2010). At present, English is the 'universal' language; hence, the need to learn has become a primary objective in education. From the educational standpoint, this need means that from the first years, the students are provided with means and resources so that they acquire and develop a communicative competence that enables them to express themselves, to communicate with their peers, and to understand the information in different situations (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2016). Therefore, communication plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language since the objective of learning a language is to use it in an authentic context with communication and interaction purposes (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2001).

In the teaching of English, communicative interaction tasks and activities are produced where information exchanges take place where the protagonists (teacher and student) interact in different contexts and situations. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), these spaces encourage the growth of oral interaction skills and the student's communicative competence. However, communication issues might occur during the interactive process, so the teacher and the student use communication strategies to solve those difficulties. Following the emergence of the communicative approach as a methodology, communication strategies have become the most significant subject of study in research on teaching a second language (Harmer, 2007). Therefore, oral communication strategies are also a key objective in this research as tools to solve problems and limitations in communication.

The present study focused on establishing the level of incidence that the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach has in the development of oral production. Therefore, two variables were set. Along with it, this approach foment the use of English in a more fluent and accurate form in A2 level students. Communicative language teaching is a set of principles employed in the acquisition of a second language to enhance oral production in English learners. CLT emerged around the 1970s as an effective response to scholars and linguistics who were unsatisfied with the grammar-translation, direct method, the audio-lingual, and the situational language method employed in the L2 instruction (Richards, 2006).

The first variable (CLT) features some principles from cognitive, psychology, and humanistic psychology perspective. They are the basis of many of the pedagogical and methodological conditions of this approach. First, the learning process must be meaningful for the student, who is willing to relate the new task to what he already knows and how this retention occurs in the long term (Ausubel, 1973). Second, the best way to learn to communicate is "learning by doing"; that is, by actively participating in

communication activities that are promoted inside and outside the classroom (Ausubel, 1973; Beltran, 2017).

The second variable is the development of the English language in oral production. It is part of the productive skills of the language called speaking (Harmer, 2007). According to the Common European Framework of References for Languages ([CEFR], 2001), speaking focuses on the production of oral texts, which are assimilated by the audience who is listening. Furthermore, oral production speeches, providing information, and instructions involve reading texts aloud to address lectures in public. Additionally, speaking includes the speaker's abilities, from the production of simple isolated phrases related to people and places in the lowest level of performance to clear and well-designed speeches in the C2 proficiency.

Besides Savignon (2002), stated that CLT focuses on the performance of communicative functions rather than structures. The basic concept in CLT is communicative competence, that is, the main goal now of acquiring a new language. Furthermore, Richkeit and Hans (2008), claimed that the term linguistic competence was coined by Chomsky in the 1960s. He contrasted competence (that is ideal speaker-listener) and performance (that is perfect linguistic knowledge). For his part, Dell Hymes in the 1970s argued Chomsky's vision suggesting that his view omitted language aspects. The term communicative competence was intended by Hymes who proposed this competence not only as a theoretical need but also in a practical form (p. 17).

Moreover, the objective of this research resides in analyzing the effects of the different communicative strategies applied in the language classroom and their improvement in student's oral production. Even though EFL teachers apply the CLT method in their classes, some of them do not understand how to implement this method with their pupils effectively. It occurs because of the lack of teachers' professional development and training, innovative methodologies, infrastructure, and a well-structured English curriculum (Dos Santos, 2016; 2017). Despite the governments having designed curricular formats to teach English for communication and production purposes (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2016), there are some struggles at the macro, meso, and micro levels.

Globally, English is the spoken language of millions of people. However, not all countries have the same level of oral production performance. Recently, Education First English Proficiency Index, reported that English language students' performance has improved in some places in the world. That is the case of the Netherlands, Denmark, and Finland, where people have the highest level of English proficiency. This private institution stated that in countries where the English level is the highest is because of educators. They focus on communicative abilities, listening and speaking practice daily, and the English curriculum is oriented to the student's major. On the contrary, in Tajikistan, people have the lowest level of English proficiency. Education First (2021) stated that this low level is due to teachers' grammar and translation focus in their teaching practices rather than communicative and meaningful activities in the classroom.

The interest in learning the language continues to thrive throughout Latin America. However, test results indicate that English proficiency is impoverished. The educational system is not generating students with the necessary levels of English proficiency since it does not point to the use of an appropriate method to boost students' oral production, and Ecuador is not an exception. According to the Education First (2021), English Proficiency Index Ecuador is the country with the lowest English level in the Latin American ranking. Not only at the level of the country but also at the level of the city of Cuenca, the same thing happens, the lack of pragmatic knowledge of the CLT. Calle et al. (2012) focused on the public schools in Cuenca to verify the reasons for the poor knowledge and low performance in English students, and it was related to the absence of effective strategies used by the English language teachers.

Furthermore, this study involves bibliographical research by means of primary and secondary sources through which data regarding empirical and non-empirical studies was gathered. The data was compared to support the defended idea suggested. By means of research synthesis, it is established that CLT developed and fostered oral production in A2 ESL-EFL students due to real context activities and strategies implemented during class time to improve communicative competence through information exchange, meaning negotiation, and interaction. In addition, in communicative language teaching, the classes are learner-centered, so students participate actively; they are the main actors of the teaching and learning process.

The communicative method aims at communication and interaction. It allows students to achieve the four competencies, oral, written, comprehension, and production in real situations. Hence, it consents students to communicate and interact in authentic settings spontaneously using the foreign language without the necessity of remembering grammatical structures. For this reason, the teacher should select activities based on the communicative method (Molina, 2018, p. 9).

It is imperative to implement communicative language teaching (CLT) approach to master students speaking skills, one of the most complex ones to acquire. Moreover, this research is of evident interest for EFL English teachers, and everyone implicated in the teaching field because it has analyzed the strategies and activities used in CLT to enhance oral production in A2 students. Therefore, it is likely to assist those professionals interested in boosting their teaching practice. The importance of this research dwells in the fact that it provides communicative strategies and activities reported in the pertinent literature to aid learners in the acquisition of the second language.

Besides, starting from the point of English as a global language, this research is topical. Since, in Ecuador, English is taught as a foreign language. In the current professional experience, it has been noted that grammar and vocabulary are the main focuses in the class. Consequently, it is necessary to devote time to comprehension and productive skills. Most of the time, the results obtained support how a theoretical exam was answered. However, the accurate test of mastering a language must be producing the oral

language correctly and maintaining a conversation. That is why oral production was the main topic that this research project focused attention on.

This research was also pertinent to the research field because students demonstrate poor oral production (ability to speak and communicate at conventional speed). It was evident in the Education First diagnostic test in the English language. Likewise, schools do not have a project in the English area that actively engages teachers to develop oral expression in students. The educational institutions do not adequately apply methodological strategies that foster the spoken production of the English language. Even though the Ministry of Education of Ecuador has designed a curricular document as a guide for teachers, it is not completely implemented in the classroom. Sporadically planned activities in the teaching-learning process negatively affect the development of students' oral production.

Finally, it must be said that this research was widely justified due to its interest, importance, topicality, and its pertinence. Firstly, this study possesses interest for the reasons regarding the impoverished English language proficiency in Ecuador. For that reason, it is essential to contribute with research to understand the problem and offer solutions. Therefore, with this analysis, outstanding information was gathered. Secondly, it is important that students and teachers, while developing the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language, do not concentrate on grammatical structures or vocabulary lists rather than being able to use the target language to communicate. Thus, in the English classroom, it is necessary to contribute with an investigation related to the implementation of communication strategies that allow achieving a more successful interaction.

### **Methodology**

A research synthesis was held to carry out this project that analyzed the different communicative language teaching strategies applied in the language classroom and their improvement in student's oral production. Research synthesis is a set of operations aimed at representing a document and its content in a different form. It is an exploratory and descriptive bibliographic revision in nature (Norris & Ortega, 2000). Therefore, synthesis is an orderly process that requires a rigorous reading of different research sources on a specific topic. In other words, the researcher analyzes and synthesizes bibliographic documents, and the author creates a new scientific product for its dissemination and publication based on their information.

The information obtained in this research was subjected to different cognitive processes such as selection, synthesis, analysis, comparison, among others. It allowed the researcher to build a scientific base that supports the development of the research. At the beginning of this study, to collect the initial body of literature, some keywords were combined in the databases Dialnet, Scielo, Eric, Google scholar, Semantics Scholar, Research Gate, and university digital repositories, using the following search equations: [communicative language teaching] + [oral production], [communicative approach] and [speaking skills], [communicative tasks] + [communicative strategies] + [spoken production]. In the same

way, some official pages such as Ministry of Education and Education First were examined.

After the initial search, 75 studies were located even though 24 were not relevant to the objective of this review; they were excluded. Finally, Dialnet 2, Scielo 4, Eric 9, Research gate 10, thesis from university repositories 9, Semantics Scholar 6, Google Scholar 11 were reviewed. To proceed with the corpus selection, the topic, the objectives, the abstracts, the research methodology, the results, and if necessary, the full articles were examined to decide whether the information they contained was related to the synthesis objective.

To be included in the synthesis, the studies report had to meet all the following criteria: publications in the English language, scientific articles from indexed journals in the educational area. All these documents should have an information standard that contains statistical data, definitions, pedagogical interventions, proposals, and literature reviews. They were comprised from 2016 to 2021, which means that the documents dating from five years ago were considered.

**Table 1**

*Table of sources*

Sources	Fr.	Percent
Dialnet	2	4%
Scielo	4	8%
Eric	9	18%
Research Gate	10	20%
Thesis from university repositories	9	18%
Semantics Scholar	6	12%
Google Scholar	11	22%
Total	51	100%

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The exclusion criteria considered for this review were articles not related to pedagogical interventions in students of A2 English level of performance. Moreover, the aforementioned documents published before 2016 were discarded. Likewise, those that did not have a year of publication and author; similarly, the articles did not belong to any journal of impact and relevance in the teaching-learning process. The chosen files for the development of the bibliographic review were essential because they were mentioned and cited in various investigations; generally, each document was cited with a minimum of 10 citations. The study of various parameters of the work was fulfilled employing the discussion. It conveyed the perspective of the different works cited. Besides, it considered students' problems, causes in the lack of students' attention, diagnoses, teaching-learning activities, and pedagogical interventions.

## **Theoretical framework**

### *Communicative Approach*

Communicative Language Teaching is an approach where the emphasis is placed on helping students employ the language in a wide variety of contexts prioritizing learning the language functions (Blair, 1982). Its main objective is to help students create meaningful sentences (rather than to help them build perfectly correct grammatical structures or achieve perfect pronunciation). This means that learning a foreign language is evaluated considering how the student develops his communicative competence, which could be defined as the learners' ability to use knowledge and thus communicate appropriately.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), this approach provides relevance to the interactive communicative process between teachers, participants, and peers. Here the teacher facilitates the communication process between all the participants; he acts as an independent participant within the teaching-learning group; the student, on the other hand, contributes his ideas of how teaching-learning should be. The teacher investigates, analyzes the student's linguistic needs, advises, and manages the learning process in the group. The Communicative Language Teaching approach aims to reduce students' anxiety, who at some point may show problems in language production. Therefore, the teacher creates a friendly environment of guidance and resolution of linguistic conflicts, giving the student greater security and confidence to display improvement in his skills.

Students' and teachers' roles in the CLT approach: teachers and students constitute the main elements of the CLT approach with different roles. The teachers are facilitators who promote communication the whole time among students. They are also advisors who monitor the classroom activities and the students' performance to scaffold them. Furthermore, the teachers are co-communicators in charge of the students' participation and engagement (Harmer, 2007). On the other hand, the students play a crucial role in becoming independent learners who are also communicators. They oversee meaning negotiating to produce self-understanding and following their peers (Barberán, 2017).

### *Oral Production*

Oral production is one of the so-called skills or language abilities; it is one of the ways where the language is used together with written production, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension. Oral production, expression, and interaction reflect a process where psycholinguistics, linguistics, the ethnography of communication, and didactics intervene. Therefore, the better some fundamental elements of these disciplines are understood, that is, comprehending how it is, how it is employed, and how to learn the orality of a second language, the better the oral production will be mastered (Vaca & Gómez, 2017).

According to the Common European Framework of References for Languages ([CEFR], 2001), oral production refers to the oral text produced by language users. That spoken



message is listened to by the audience. Some oral production involves giving information and instructions in public, participating as a lecturer in conferences, meetings, and oral presentations; role-playing; singing; and talking spontaneously, in general. Oral production deals with some elements such as vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and suprasegmental elements, specifically stress, rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation.

Fluency: it deals with the learner's confidence and comfortability while speaking (Harmer, 2007). As well Dewi et al. (2017) implemented a study where the communicative approach was the focus of their research. The results revealed that students' fluency was enhanced through games in the classroom. Thus, students could speak with a certain level of confidence, making connections among points that they learned with gamification. That was a clear indicator of a good accomplishment of fluency.

Grammar: it is not only important in writing but also in speaking because it helps the speaker's understanding of tenses and correct structures of sentences. Rambe (2017) implemented a study with the CLT approach, which used some communicative classroom activities combined with teaching grammar in a context to improve speaking skills. Therefore, students use grammar to convey meaning for the listeners to understand.

Vocabulary: it is of paramount importance to improve oral production with some classroom activities such as realia, visual aids, cooperation, other strategies; for example, dramatization, questions, debates are suitable to improve vocabulary (Levina, 2017; Fitri, 2020). The results are the improvement in the student's understanding and uttering of words.

Suprasegmental Elements (stress, rhythm, intonation, pronunciation): oral production deals with the pronunciation of the sound of the language as a complex area. Moreover, it has other issues, such as stress, rhythm, and intonation (Darcy, 2018). To cope with this important part of speaking, teachers must emphasize communicative activities to make students learn from real-life situations in the classroom.

### *Level of Competency A2*

Level of competency A2 refers to the elementary knowledge that the language user must communicate. This level is based on the precepts from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It specifically includes the learner's ability to understand and communicate by using simple and frequently used expressions. Those expressions encompass everyday personal and family information such as familiar, personal, and professional places. That way of communication requires simple and direct information belonging to nearby requirements.

## **Results**

In this section, the most relevant data and perspectives concerning the communicative approach strategies to enhance oral production on A2 level students are presented. In this regard, the outstanding results were divided into subsections, specifically the use of

communicative language teaching in the classroom, perceptions on the use of communicative language teaching, and teaching strategies of communicative language teaching.

*The Use of the Communicative Language Teaching in the Classroom*

Regarding communicative language teaching in the EFL classroom, Sheeba and Karthikeyan (2020), stated that CLT assisted in knowing and mastering how human beings utilize the target language to communicate with every different verbal exchange inside and outside the classroom in authentic contexts. The selected studies to achieve this research were the ones that included the CLT effects on speaking as well as the strategies used. Furthermore Toro et al. (2019) supported the usage of CLT in the EFL classroom to boost speaking skills. As stated by Lai-Mei and Seyedeh (2017), it could benefit students due to the real communicative contexts and the language exposure to opportunities to produce and use the language in any situation. Similarly, AL-Garni and Almuhammadi (2019), Guado (2021), Phoeun and Sengsri (2021) and Toro et al. (2019) claimed the implementation of communicative language teaching in the classroom by using appropriate activities to improve and deal with students' deficiencies in the second language (L2).

Besides Rabab'ah (2016) inspected the effects of communication strategy instruction on EFL students' oral production in Jordan. The participants of this study were 80 learners divided into two groups (control and experimental ones). The researcher employed the participants' pre- and post-IELTS speaking test scores, transcription data from the speaking IELTS test, and 'Click On' Exit Test scores to gather the information. Similarly, authors Guado (2021), AL-Garni & Almuhammadi (2019) and Rabab'ah (2016), recommend implementing CLT in the classroom. It is because the authentic language contexts provide students with the opportunities to increase motivation for learning a language, train the student to use that second language in an authentic communicative environment, practice and use English independently, among other characteristics. Therefore, students could benefit from CLT due to the assistance they gained from the effectiveness of the communicative strategies. Besides, it is suggested that teachers must be flexible while performing CLT in their classrooms, playing the role of facilitators of the teaching and learning process (Sekiziyivu & Mugimu, 2017).

Nonetheless, this approach is not always efficient due to teachers' misunderstandings concerning its application (Denkci-Akkas & Coker, 2016). Therefore, foreign language teaching presents some challenges and problems to the teacher; for that reason, teachers must apply this approach in different settings (Naranjo & Naranjo, 2017). In Ecuador, there are a lot of challenges in the classroom, not only due to many classes but also because of outer noise, shortage of technology, lack of students' motivation and participation, and differences in proficiency level. Thus, the latter reason results from the different students' socio-economic backgrounds. Those students who can afford private English courses are the ones who mostly participate in the classroom and sometimes are worried or bored due to their partner's lack of participation. In this regard, teachers must

implement different perspectives in their pedagogical practice to support students in their language communication competence.

### *Perceptions on the Use of CLT in the EFL Classroom*

This research analyzed the different teachers' perspectives on the use CLT in the EFL or ESL teaching process. Tootkaboni (2019) ascertained that the concept of including CLT in classroom practices is not unfamiliar for teachers. However, they are still struggling and unconfident regarding CLT incorporation in their teaching practices. In the educational field, perceptions expressed and applied by educators play an essential role in enacting any new approach. Moreover Radosavlevikj (2021) stated that many institutions employ the CLT approach as the principal method in their teaching practice. This method instigates students' interaction because the teacher is just a co-communicator or facilitator in the teaching and learning process.

In the same vein Yanti (2017) and Hou et al. (2021) analyze teachers' perceptions regarding CLT principles and the challenges in implementing this approach. To obtain the information, the authors utilized data collection tools such as observations and questionnaires. The questionnaire was a Likert scale to inspect teachers' perceptions towards CLT, while the classroom observation checklist was to verify the relation of theoretical perceptions and authentic practice. Thus, the results suggested that it was noticeable that most of the teachers have a clear understanding of what CLT is theoretically; however, it was not evident in their teaching practices.

Similarly, Tootkaboni (2019) confirmed that teachers possess significant perception levels regarding CLT; nonetheless, there is an inconsistency between teachers' theoretical understanding and their practical application. The researcher worked with 154 Iranian English teachers in two phases (questionnaire and classroom observation) to recognize teachers' beliefs. The questionnaire provided the educator with 28 statements with the six-point Likert technique of scale construction, and the design of the classroom observation included six CLT features. It was observed that the teacher expressed a high knowledge regarding CLT principles such as the importance of the learners' role, group work activities, teaching in context meaningfully, among other characteristics. However, the findings suggested that during the class observation, teachers did the opposite of what they mentioned in the questionnaire generating incompatibility with what they expressed.

### *Communicative language teaching strategies to improve oral production*

A communicative strategy is a series of programmed and planned actions that are implemented based on certain interests and needs, in the space of human interaction, in a great variety of times. A strategy carries a principle of order, selection, of intervention on an established situation (Sekiziyivu & Mugimu, 2017).

In this regard, there are some findings related to the most practiced and named effective communicative strategies in the teaching-learning English process.

**Table 2**

*Effective communicative language teaching strategies*

<b>Strategies</b>		
<b>Cognitive Practicing</b>	<b>Metacognitive Planning</b>	<b>Socio-affective Cooperation</b>
Debates	Problem based	Pair/ Group work
Class presentation	Class presentation	Dialogue
Problem solving	Comprehension	Information gap
Modeling	Questions	Role play
		Peer teaching
		Project based
		Jigsaw
		Songs
		Games
		Realia
		Authentic material

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Authors like Rubin (1981), Smith (1996), Devia et al. (2017) and Ounis (2016), have researched the most effective communicative approach strategies. These strategies are divided into three main groups cognitive, metacognitive, and socio affective. The first one is related to the use of language such as roleplays, class presentations, debates, problem-solving, among others (Alamri, 2018; Benítez, 2007; Bushra, 2016; Levina, 2017; Lobachova, 2019). Secondly, metacognitive strategies are concerned the communication among students to plan something; and this can be done through problem-solving, class presentations, comprehension tasks, and questioning (Carvajal 2020; Darcy, 2018; Hyuningsi, 2019; Mwelwa and Mwanza, 2020; Zyoud, 2016; Sekiziyivu and Mugimu, 2017). Finally, the socio-affective strategies are mostly applied in contemporary research (Espinoza and Cortez, 2019; Ochoa et al., 2016; Kholstinina et al., 2021; Lai-Mei and Seyedeh, 2017; Maulana et al., 2020; Toro et al., 2019). The most outstanding socio-affective communicative strategies are pair/group work, dialogues, information gap, role-play, peer teaching, project-based, jigsaw, songs, games, realia, and authentic material use.

### **Discussion**

In the most recent publications that have been the subject of this literary review which focused on the strategies of the communicative approach to improving the students' oral production in English as a foreign language, several findings have been made. The first, that there are some concerns about the application of learning strategies. At the same time,

significant research documents were found on the subject, even though it is a field where there are many remains to be done. Sometimes, learning strategies are exclusively called communication strategies forgetting that the latter is part of the former. On the other hand, communicative strategies have greater prominence than learning strategies considering that the goal of learning is communication without considering cognitive, affective, social, and cultural factors into communicative competence. Besides, other strategies apart from the communicative ones are necessary to be developed.

The concept of the learning strategy applied to the teaching field of foreign languages is closely related to the methodological revolution that began in the 1970s. The communicative approach contemplates other areas of science, such as humanistic psychology, cognitive psychology, and studies on the theory of learning and language acquisition up to that time excluded. These new contributions influence a new conception of both the language learner and the role of the teacher. Hence, affective factors are considered in education because it starts to increase motivation and confidence in learners and reduce their anxiety. This component plays a fundamental role since it is related to the importance of learning in a relaxed environment while having fun. Cognitive factors are also examined in the learning process; thereby, individual variables, different learning styles, and strategies developed by the learner to overcome barriers or difficulties in the new language studied.

Regarding learning a language, a strategy is conceptualized by carrying out a communicative task, whether learning a language is learning to communicate with it. The methods for learning a new language will be based on understanding, expressing, or interacting. Thus, it does not mean that only communication strategies are activated; as Ausubel (1973) states, learners need both general and common strategies (cognitive or affective) and other specific ones as communicative.

Furthermore, the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (2001), despite talking about the ability to learn and reflecting the idea of the autonomy of learning, as well as self-evaluation for conscious learning, does not offer a definition of a learning strategy but rather reference exclusively to communication strategies. It is understood that the strategies must be linked to the performance of communicative tasks; therefore:

“Communicative strategies which are most efficient for accomplishing the particular task. The user or learner naturally adapts, adjusts and filters task inputs, goals, conditions and constraints to fit his or her own resources, purposes and (in a language learning context) particular learning style” (Common European Framework of Reference for languages, 2001, p. 159).

Although, from this concept, there are other beneficial strategies applied for learning. As it was mentioned previously, during the learning process, learners plan, assess objectives or evaluate themselves to control and be aware of and responsible for their learning. Moreover, this requires the use of metacognitive, affective, or social strategies. However, the CEFR does not indicate any classification of this type of strategy.

On the other hand, the use of language is conceived as a phenomenon that occurs in a social and cultural context, which responds to an intention and is identified under certain circumstances that determine it. Therefore, to achieve communicative competence, other sub-competencies that are part of it must be accomplished, such as linguistics (mastery of the linguistic code: grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.), discursive (ability to construct and interpret a text coherently and cohesively), sociocultural (ability to know the sociocultural context in which communication occurs and make appropriate use of language) and strategic (ability to fill deficiencies and balance resources to communicate with success).

It is perceived that this research focuses on communicative ones. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that to achieve linguistic, discursive, and sociocultural competence are also utilized strategies, which are qualified as learning. For example, in linguistic competence, it is necessary to apply some games, realia, authentic material, and information gap strategies to learn vocabulary. In the cognitive strategy, it could be utilized problem-solving, modeling, questioning, and comprehension questions to deduce grammar rules.

As reviewed so far, there are some reasons to include the teaching of the strategies in the language learning curriculum. Consequently, learning strategies deserve attention due to several aspects. For instance, the contribution to the main objective (which is communicative competence while favoring the sub-competencies), the process on the development of capacities or abilities rather than on the acquisition of knowledge, students' independence, supporting of learning and helping solve problems, the flexibility, and some factors (affective, cognitive, and social).

## Conclusions

After the whole process, which is enriching, conclusions came up:

- The efficacy of the different communicative strategies applied in the language classroom and their improvement in students' oral production was widely analyzed. Communicative strategies such as debate, class presentations, problem-solving, modeling, comprehension questions, dialogs, pair and group work, role play, peer teaching, project-based, jigsaw, games, songs, use of realia and authentic materials, among others, were found as the most effective and commonly applied in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language.
- The effectiveness of teaching a language depends on the teachers' ability to understand the methodology used and the effects it can have on students and their needs. If, on the one hand, the primary student's need is to communicate orally, then opportunities must be provided to develop this ability focusing on language as a means of communication to provide the student with enough tools to communicate. On the other hand, the student must be guided to seek their growth as a language learner and their opportunities to be aware of their responsibility in this instructional process and develop autonomy. Since they will be the ones who receive the benefits of their learning.

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