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"Don't stop speaking": Using game-based learning to promote fluency in the EFL classroom

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, one of the most important objectives is that our students learn in high school without

seeing it as a punishment. This MA Thesis deals with an educational proposal "Don't stop

speaking" based on game-based learning to promote oral production, more specifically, fluency

in the EFL classroom. It is a whole academic year educational proposal with one session per

unit, in which I propose two types of sessions, an analogue and a digital one, for teachers to

choose from. I want students to leave the routine by working cooperatively and using ICTs in

the classroom. It would be possible to reduce the affective filter and achieve a more relaxed

environment for students to learn and speak a foreign language, which is something that

students are often afraid of.

Keywords: *Game-based learning, Cooperative, Educative proposal, EFL, Fluency.*

RESUMEN

Una de las cosas más importantes hoy en día es que nuestros alumnos aprendan en los institutos

sin verlo como un castigo. Este Trabajo de Fin de Máster presenta una propuesta educativa

"Don't stop speaking" enfocada en el aprendizaje basado en el juego para promover la

producción oral, más concretamente, la fluidez en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera. Se

trata de una propuesta educativa para todo el curso académico con una sesión por unidad, en la

que propongo dos tipos de sesiones, una analógica y otra digital, para que los profesores puedan

elegir. Quiero que los alumnos salgan de la rutina trabajando de forma cooperativa y utilizando

las TICs en el aula. Se conseguiría reducir el filtro afectivo y lograr un ambiente más relajado

para que los alumnos aprendan y hablen una lengua extranjera que es algo a lo que los alumnos

temen a menudo.

Palabras clave: Aprendizaje basado en el juego, Cooperativo, Propuesta educativa, ILE,

Fluidez.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, we live in a world of communication where there is a growing need for effective communication skills. Many people want to improve their communicative competence using other languages for business or simply for leisure. One predominant language is English since it is spoken all around the world. This results in a huge demand for English teaching. Nowadays in Spain, we have many opportunities to learn this language such as through formal instruction. Most young people have studied English at school or high school, and most of their parents want a good future for their sons. So, the demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources is also growing. Apart from the quality, the methodology that English lessons and teachers should follow is also a key point. Throughout history, language teaching has been based on many methods and approaches that may or may not work. But one thing is for sure, the current demand for an appropriate teaching methodology is as strong as ever. As I said before, we live in a world where communication is so important, so we should teach speaking in our language lessons since languages are a requirement when you apply for any job. Therefore, this speaking skill should be practised when you are studying ESL (English as a second language) or EFL (English as a foreign language). English is becoming a language with a global status, and it is already considered the world's most widely used language. It has become a medium of communication among speakers from different countries, and it is demanding learners to acquire good spoken skills in English apart from their academic excellence.

A methodology that is being applied nowadays in the English classroom is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), whose goal is communication. When applying this approach, cooperative learning between peers in pair or group work can be also used in the classroom. Through this cooperative learning, students are able to start being responsible for their own learning. Many researchers have found many benefits of learning in this way since creating a comfortable setting for students to acquire knowledge lowers the affective filter, making learners work and help their peers in each lesson whereas teachers can eliminate those tedious rules about not speaking during the lessons.

One way of teaching oral production is through games and applying game-based learning. It is a type of learning that allows students to acquire knowledge having fun whereas we have a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom. It is an effortless way to motivate those students who do not want to continue studying or are tired. It would also be interesting to use digital game-

based learning to introduce information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the classroom.

These ICTs can be extremely useful when we are trying to motivate our students. ICTs have been introduced in our daily lives, so, why do not use them in our classrooms? Each year, there are more high schools that incorporate ICTs into their classrooms with computers, projectors, smart televisions, etc. Moreover, scientists and researchers have claimed that changing the traditional methodologies and incorporating some technology into the lessons can make the students improve their learning and their interest in the subject.

This essay aims to present, "Don't stop speaking", an educational proposal with several activities using game-based learning to practise and improve oral production, more specifically fluency, in the English language. It will be a proposal to implement in the IES Gómez Pereira, in Medina del Campo, to a group of students from the first course of compulsory secondary education. I will suggest a proposal with a total of nine sessions with analogue educational activities and their alternatives using ICTs and digital game-based learning. This proposal has been designed for the whole academic year. Therefore, each session will correspond to a different unit since the idea is that students have at least one session per unit focused on speaking. So, students should have three sessions by trimester devoted to improving fluency through game-based learning in a more relaxing environment. These sessions are for practising fluency deeply since English is used constantly in the lessons during all the units in the academic year.

Firstly, I will present a theoretical background in which I will explain the methods and approaches that have been used in language teaching during the 20th century. Then, I will focus on communicative language teaching (CLT) and cooperative learning since these aspects will be the basis of my activities and games. After that, I will deal with the teaching of oral production in which I will explain what it is, why it is so important when learning a language, and how it has been taught in Spain. To continue, I will explain the concept of game-based learning and the diverse types that could be included in it together with the difference between analogue and digital games. To finish with this theoretical part, I will deal with ICTs and their use as educational tools in English in foreign language contexts. After all this, I will present my educational proposal of several activities to improve English oral production based on game-based learning and cooperative learning. I will describe several analogue activities with their alternative digital ones. To finish this essay, some conclusions will be drawn followed by the

references I used in this thesis and two appendixes with the materials for the activities from the different sessions and some possible types of evaluation teachers can use when implementing this educational proposal.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Methods and approaches in language teaching

It would be adequate to make a review of some of the methods and approaches that have been carried out in language teaching during the 20th century before the arrival of communicative language teaching (CLT). Communicative language teaching is one of the approaches that is used nowadays by most English teachers.

Language teaching has been characterized by a frequent change in techniques and innovations in the development of the competing language teaching ideologies during the 20th century (Richards & Rogers, 2001, p.1). Language teaching has seen many changes in the ideas referring to syllabus design and in the methodology until CLT was introduced, which produced a rethinking of approaches to that syllabus design and methodology. (Richards, 2006)

According to Richards (2006), to make the review throughout the 20th century, it is convenient to group trends in language teaching into three distinct phases. The first phase, which lasted up to the late 1960s, includes the traditional approaches. These approaches focused on grammatical competence which "refers to the knowledge we have of a language that accounts for our ability to produce sentences in a language. It refers to knowledge of the building blocks of sentences and how sentences are formed" (Richards, 2006, p.3); and the language was acquired through direct instruction, repetitive practice, and drilling. They were deductive methods since first, the grammatical rules were provided, and then, students of the language had opportunities to practice those rules. Other techniques that were used in language teaching within these approaches were question-and-answer practice, substitution and drills, memorization of dialogues, guided speaking and writing practice. These deductive methods suggest that grammatical competence became the basis of language proficiency.

After this phase, the classic communicative language teaching phase appeared from the 1970s up to the 1990s. There was a reaction against the previous approaches and that rejection was spread around the world. Communicative language teaching questioned the focus on grammar

since it was considered that learning a language involved much more than simply developing grammatical competence. People paid attention to the knowledge and skills needed to use that grammar but also to the aspects needed for acquiring communicative competence. So, this competence started to be developed within linguistics and it was considered the goal of language teaching.

As regards the third phase, current communicative language teaching started in the late 1990s and has lasted until the present. Communicative competence was seen as the goal of second and foreign language teaching. Today, "CLT refers to a set of generally agreed-upon principles that can be applied in different ways, depending on the teaching context, the age of the learners, their level, their learning goals, and so on." (Richards, 2006, p.22). This author explains that these previous issues about the learners and their basic information should belong to the field of syllabus design or course design. However, those decisions, which have to do with the best method to teach the contents of that syllabus, are included in the field of methodology.

1.1.1. Communicative language teaching (CLT)

CLT is defined as "a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom." (Richards, 2006, p.2). To recapitulate what has been explained, according to Richards (2006), communicative language teaching appeared as an innovative approach to language teaching in the 1970s and 1980s and it was a shock since all teaching institutions around the world began to rethink their teaching, syllabuses, and classroom materials. Moreover, Richards and Rodgers (2001) also specify that the origin of this approach was found in the changes in the British language teaching tradition in the late 1960s.

The main goal of CLT is achieving communicative competence. Following Canale and Swain's (1980) definition, it is common to use this term to "refer exclusively to knowledge or capability relating to the rules of language use" (p. 5). This communicative competence is achieved by language learners by "using procedures where learners work in pairs or groups employing available language resources in problem-solving tasks." (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.155). According to Richards (2006), some aspects of language knowledge that are starting to be taken into account in this current period are knowing how to apply the language to different situations, functions and goals; knowing how to use the language according to the situation and the setting in which we are and to the interlocutors with whom we are having a conversation; knowing

how to produce and understand an oral or written text; and finally, knowing how to keep up communication despite language limitations.

According to Richards (2006), as regards the type of lessons, the traditional formats began to disappear and the focus was on improving the distinct aspects of grammar and practice through controlled activities in pairs or groups, role plays, or projects. These types of activities that were included in language lessons with the CLT approach also implied new roles in the classroom for both, teachers and students. Teachers had to acquire the role of monitoring and facilitating the information while getting used to students committing errors in their productions. Now, the teacher should not correct all the errors that appear in the classroom but make language learning easier for students. On the other hand, now, students must participate in the activities that are done in the classroom which are mostly based on cooperative learning. Before that, traditional language teaching was individualist and independent. Within CLT, learners are expected to take on the responsibility for their own learning and not rely solely on their teacher. The main goal is that students feel comfortable in the lesson while they are listening and talking with their peers in pair or group work.

According to Richards (2006), these changes in thinking about language teaching have not led us to a single development of a model of CLT, but several different language teaching approaches. "While there is no single syllabus model that has been universally accepted, a language syllabus today needs to include systematic coverage of the many different components of communicative competence, including language skills, content, grammar, vocabulary, and functions." (Richards, 2006, p.26). Although there is not a fixed syllabus model, there is an aspect that is widely used in this approach, which is the cooperative type of classroom activities. All these activities previously mentioned above have something in common which is cooperative learning among the different students of a language lesson. This type of work is essential for students to be responsible for their own learning.

1.1.2. Cooperative learning

As I have explained previously, the student's role was passive in traditional language teaching approaches, whereas in CLT their role is active, which is what a teacher can achieve by implementing cooperative learning in the classroom. Manning and Lucking (1993) suggested that this way of acquiring knowledge provides an alternative to traditional lessons allowing students to work in groups and compete among themselves. However, it is necessary to distinguish between cooperative learning and collaborative learning. Cooper (1995) defines

cooperative learning as "an instructional technique whereby students work together in small fixed groups on a structured task" (p.1), a definition that goes along with the one provided by Panitz (1996) "a set of processes which help people interact together in order to accomplish a specific goal" (p.1). This last author also gives a definition for collaborative learning which is "a personal philosophy, not just a classroom technique. [...] it suggests a way of dealing with people which respects and highlights individual group members' abilities and contributions" (p.1). Both of them emphasize group work, but the main difference between them is that cooperative learning pursues a common goal for all the members of the group. Cooperative learning is also closely controlled by the teacher. Moreover, one main goal of every teacher should be to engage those students who feel more demotivated in their learning. López (2015) also affirmed that some principles of cooperative learning are that the learning process is focused now on the learner who is responsible for his own learning and needs to develop some attitudes and interpersonal abilities for their academic and professional life. The student is in the centre of the process with an active role whereas the teacher is at a second level acting as a monitor and supervisor. Students also learn how to work by themselves and to solve problems without depending on the teacher. It is a key point in the development of continuous and autonomous learning. In addition, students have the opportunity to practice the English language and improve their individual level of proficiency. Moreover, Cooper (1995) explains some other advantages of cooperative learning in his work. She explains how students usually develop their thinking skills, as they should be active, and their knowledge retention to a higher extent. Once they have acquired all these previous aspects, it could be affirmed that cooperative learning increases student satisfaction and comfort in the learning experience. This way of learning also promotes a positive environment toward the language they are acquiring, which contributes to lowering the affective filter at the same time. Yamarick (2007) investigated how students help each other to find answers to questions rather than using the teacher's answers. This does not mean that the teacher's role should be replaced, but it helps students since, in a group, everyone should understand the concepts that have been taught in the lesson. This author also proved that learners felt more comfortable when they were asking questions in small groups and that "students in the cooperative learning class asked questions more often than students in the lecture class, even though I [the author] frequently asked for questions during the lecture" (Yamarick, 2007, p.275).

Apart from all those benefits, "cooperative learning contributes to improved intergroup and interpersonal relationships in multicultural situations and promotes culturally diverse learners'

self-esteem and academic achievement" (Manning & Lucking, 1993, p.12). This occurs because of several factors. As Manning and Lucking (1993), explain, first, learners are working within a group towards the same objective, and they must communicate with the other members of the group creating positive group dynamics. Furthermore, it is particularly important that students recognize the value of helping others instead of working competitively. It would be great if in the classroom there were culturally diverse learners to contribute to those multicultural situations in which students must use the English language.

However, what is the right way to implement cooperative learning in the classroom? Igel and Urquhort (2012) explained three necessary principles for implementing this type of learning: teaching group working and interpersonal skills; establishing some cooperative goal structures in each group, which students only achieve if all the members of the group cooperate; and finally, providing some mechanism for individual accountability. Slavin's (1996) research presents how there are other three central necessary concepts for this type of learning, which are team rewards for students to feel motivated; individual accountability -coinciding with Igel and Urquhort (2012)- for the team to work; and equal opportunities for success for everybody in the classroom. Following Slavin's (1996) idea, it is worth mentioning that this type of learning is congruent with the developmental needs of adolescents since it provides them with some independence and authority within their groups creating a strong motivator for adolescents.

1.2. Teaching oral production

According to Lazaraton (2014), speaking is considered one of the most important skills in second language (L2) learning. Moreover, this skill is the ability by which we, as humans, acquire our first language. Everybody that has learned English as a second or foreign language has been able to experience the complexity of the acquisition of this spoken skill. Furthermore, it is a requirement for obtaining any English language level certificate, so acquiring a high proficiency in this skill is necessary. However, according to Brown (2007), there are some characteristics that lead speaking to have great complexity. Some of these are clustering, hesitation markers and pausing, colloquial language, and suprasegmental features. The goal of students of the language is to be fluent and competent in oral production. To become competent in speaking a foreign language, every learner should achieve fluency, accuracy, appropriacy, and authenticity (Lazaraton, 2014). Apart from those four technical aspects, one key factor of

oral communication is the motivation teachers arouse in their students. They are responsible for motivating and creating a comfortable atmosphere inside the classroom. The teacher also has to bear in mind that in a language classroom there are always students with diverse levels of the language. So, a good teacher is aware of the mixed groups, and s/he has also to promote group learning rather than an individual one. Therefore, the teacher is the one who has to spread the belief among students that they have sufficient potential to speak English and that they are capable of getting that proficiency.

Nevertheless, this is not so easy since, according to Ferris and Tagg (1996), students in language lessons feel that they have great difficulty in participating in the lessons as well as in asking and responding to questions, or simply interacting with their peers in pair or group work in the foreign language. Moreover, other challenges exist when we are dealing with speaking in English lessons. Firstly, students are faced with the idea of studying a second language compulsorily in primary and secondary school, which may be a bit difficult for them if they do not find the right teacher. Furthermore, teachers should have adequate training in teaching these young learners the five basic skills -spoken interaction, spoken production, listening, reading, and writing. If we focus this on Spain, we have another challenge, which is the number of students per classroom, which makes it more difficult for them to learn. This is related to the problem of control and discipline, and to the belief that learning a second language will be of no use to them in the future. Probably, this is caused because of the lack of native speakers in our classrooms (Copland et al., 2014). As students face all these previous challenges daily, they are not able to live the experience of testing their ideas aloud or participating in the debates that can emerge in the lessons when students dare to speak and share their ideas (Zucker, 2016).

According to Alonso's study (2014) about speaking in secondary education (SE), institutions, and state language schools (EOI), students are not able to speak English in a fluent way when they reach the end of their studies at compulsory secondary education even though English is taught obligatorily. Therefore, teaching speaking is a central aspect of language learning since it will lead the student to success in the acquisition of that language. In her study, Alonso stated that there were many differences between teachers of SE and EOI: "although SE teachers are more experienced, they report devoting less time to the teaching of speaking while EOI teachers appear to be more engaged in the teaching of this skill" (p.155). As a conclusion, this author states that if students are not exposed to input, their speaking is not going to improve, and it also causes a lack of motivation in their language learning. It would be pertinent to include audios from native speakers in all language lessons to listen to different accents or to break with

the routine by having conversation assistants in the classroom, if possible, to improve motivation in our students.

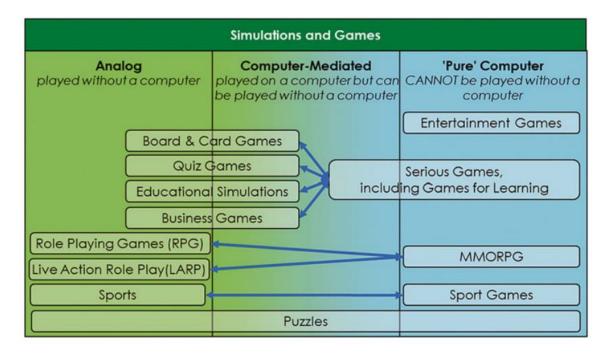
1.3. Game-based learning

As humans, we are able to recognize how games are completely natural to us and how some animals are also capable of playing. Games are part of our culture, and it is an innate activity (Becker, 2015, p.10). Nevertheless, it is difficult to define what a game is, and you can find as many definitions as books and articles are written about it. However, one thing is clear, for games to be effective in our classrooms, we should be able to choose the appropriate ones. Furthermore, there has been evidence throughout the years that one of the objectives of games is to learn (Becker, 2015, p.3). Huizinga (1950) defines a game as "a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy, and the consciousness that it is different from ordinary life" (p. 28). But, as Becker (2015) states, education games are not exactly voluntary since teachers will demand students to do the activity. According to this author, an educational game should have some characteristics. First, it must be interactive since it must produce a change in the player; it must also have some fixed and previously agreed rules and limits; the objectives and goals must be involved to find that motivation in players; finally, it must have a quantifiable measure of progress and a recognizable ending (p. 5).

1.3.1. Games: analogue vs. digital

As Becker (2015) explains, "digital things are those that are represented in one way or another as binary digits. Analogue entities, on the other hand, are continuous, and include the majority of the natural world" (p.11). This means that when we are talking about educational games, the one that exists out of the computer is an analogue game -board games, card games, etc.-, whereas the one that exists only on the computer is a digital game. Within this group of digital games, there are two subgroups: the pure digital games such as Tetris, and Super Mario; and the computer-mediated games, those that are digitalised versions of some traditional games such as Solitaire and chess. Moreover, another type exists which is the simulation, a representation of a system or world through the use of another different system, for example, Wii Sports is a simulation of the real sports they are representing in the game (Becker, 2015, p.12). They are games that cannot be played without a computer.

Figure 1Relation of analogue, computer-mediated, and 'pure' computer simulations and games.



Note. A classification of the different types of simulations and games that exist with examples. (Becker, 2015, p.14)

1.3.2. Game-based learning, digital game-based learning, and gamification

Although I will not deal with gamification, it is necessary to make clear what gamification is since, though it is different from game-based learning, this may be confusing. Becker (2015) defines gamification as the "use of game design elements in a non-game context" (p. 13). These elements can be points, leader boards, competition and reward systems, etc. This is done to increase students' engagement or enjoyment of the session. For example, timed flashcards, enabling students to get points for their behaviour, etc. On the other hand, Trybus (2015) defines game-based learning as the use of certain gaming principles and applying them to real-life settings or situations that engage learners. Whereas digital game-based learning is "learning that happens with the help of digital games" (Becker, 2015, p.12). This means that this type of learning is an experience within a game framework which has some specific learning objectives and challenging goals to motivate the students. Therefore, whereas gamification is introducing certain elements of a game in the classroom to motivate our students, game-based learning is a game where students can learn with specific goals and objectives. In this essay, I will focus on

game-based learning and digital game-based learning since I will do a comparison between analogue and digital activities that can be done in an English classroom.

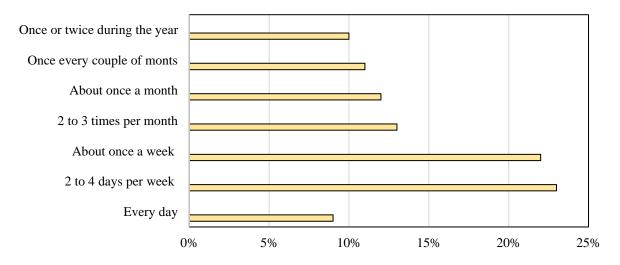
Takeuchi and Vaala (2014) investigate how digital games are now applied within our classrooms showing how American teachers and students use games in class in all grades of schooling. From among all the surveys they carried out, it is pertinent for the purpose of this paper to see how they investigated how frequently students use digital games in the classrooms; how students use digital games during the week; and finally, for what purposes teachers use digital games.

In Figure 2, it can be seen how approximately 55% of students play games at least once a week in their classrooms. However, only 9% of students play games every day, and around 10% use them once or twice during the entire year. Referring to my educational scheme, I propose that at least three times a trimester, that is, once a month, these ICTs are incorporated into the classroom to acquire knowledge through game-based learning. This is an appropriate way to get students to break away from the routine and engage them in something more innovative and motivating.

Figure 2

Use of games in the classroom.

HOW FREQUENTLY DO STUDENTS USE DIGITAL GAMES IN THE CLASSROOM?



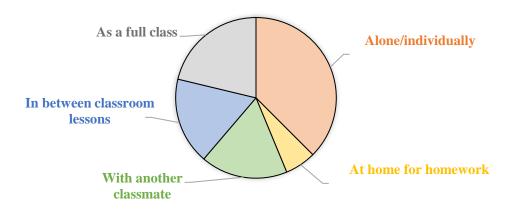
Note. The number of students and the frequency with which they use games in the classroom. (Takeuchi & Vaala, 2014)

Referring now to how students use digital games. In Figure 3, it is appreciated how most of them use them alone or individually maybe with a laptop or tablet, whereas only 20% of them use digital games in groups of 3 to 5 students during the classroom fomenting cooperative learning. This is also something I want to remark on since most of my digital activities are based on using ICTs cooperatively. Students will have to work in small groups to achieve a common goal and all the students in the group should participate and interact with their mobile phones or tablets. So, the objective is that students use ICTs as a whole class or with another classmate to promote that fluency in the foreign language since they will have to discuss to try to reach that goal throughout the activities.

Figure 3

How students use games.

HOW DO YOU USE DIGITAL GAMES IN THE CLASSROOM?



Note. The way students use digital games in the classroom.

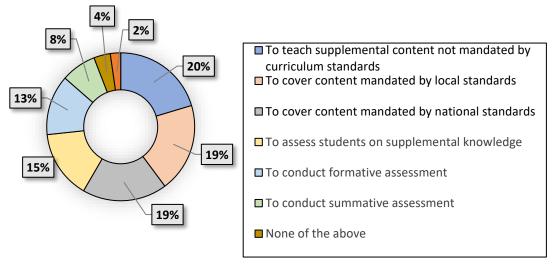
(Takeuchi & Vaala, 2014)

Finally, in figure 4, it can be seen how teachers use digital games to deliver core or supplemental curriculum content. Most American teachers answer that they use digital games to teach supplemental content not mandated by curriculum standards. However, a high number of them answered that they used them to cover content mandated by local or national curriculum standards. The option with the least percentage was to conduct a summative assessment of students' standards-based knowledge or skills. Within my educational proposal, these digital games are designed to teach the curriculum standards; however, they can be used to teach other supplemental content appropriate to the students' level of the foreign language.

Figure 4

Objectives of using digital games.





Note. Objectives and their frequency of using digital games in the classroom for teachers. (Takeuchi & Vaala, 2014)

1.4. Information and communication technologies

Nowadays, we receive a lot of information every day, and it is convenient to highlight the great amount of information to which we are exposed using information and communication technologies (ICTs). Most people have a mobile phone through which they look for news, information, videos, etc. Moreover, as learners of the language, we have been always told that technologies are a good and quick way to acquire a foreign language. As technologies have invaded our personal life, the same has happened in education. Many researchers consider these tools a fantastic way of learning a language in a funnier and more interesting way. Many students, who are not interested in English, may pay attention in class if we use ICTs as teachers.

1.4.1. ICTs as educational tools in the EFL class

Torres and Yépez (2018) claimed in their study that there is an important necessity for innovating in fixed and memory language teaching. The objective is that students develop that communicative competence that will be extremely helpful for our current world. They concluded that a cooperative teaching method together with ICTs transforms completely the traditional pedagogy improving the student's communicative competence. This fusion improved the student's English learning in speaking, listening, writing, and reading, as well as

in the learning of grammar and vocabulary. However, it is important to know how to use ICTs since the teacher, as well as the curriculum and the school, are becoming less important as sources of information and knowledge (Biesta, 2016, p.32). Following this author's idea, schools are seen as a place for learning where the teacher is the one who facilitates the learning, and ICTs are simple tools for supporting and improving learners.

Apart from the importance of the teacher as a facilitator, Barbulet (2013) states that methods are also really important when we are teaching a second language. Methods make the contents easier to comprehend for the students. So, the use of modern teaching methods creates more interest in the students with the help of animations and videos. Research has shown how these visual media help students to understand the contents in a better way. Furthermore, Ramírez (2021) concluded in his study that the use of ICTs in education was a factor in increasing motivation in students, especially when they are used by students themselves and not by teachers. He also gives us some recommendations such as not following routine lessons because this demotivates the learning, or including ICTs in our pedagogical methodologies and in the curriculum to transform traditional English learning into a more motivational one.

Including these modern methods with ICT resources in our lessons is quite difficult. Moreover, Garrido and Ortega (2014) claim that "textbooks are not really ICT oriented as they do not include any sections to develop the basic competences including the digital one" (p.76). As they conclude in their study, it may be a bit difficult knowing how to use them, but nowadays, there are many tutorials available on the internet, and using them in the classroom has many advantages because students could be able to work cooperatively, dynamically and interactively. Furthermore, these digital resources can be used to revise the contents that are more difficult for the students. As they claimed, "ICT by themselves may not have a positive effect on students' academic performance; it is the use that teachers make of them which may have a beneficial effect on students" (p.78).

To sum up this theoretical framework briefly, I think teachers should start to change their traditional methods to some modern ones when focusing language lessons on oral production. We should include ICTs in the activities for improving the motivation and interest of our students. Furthermore, by implementing cooperative learning in the classrooms, students will be able to develop social abilities while they learn how to work with their classmates. It is really important that students feel comfortable in the classroom, so by using game-based learning, we are able to create a positive atmosphere among the students.

2. EDUCATIONAL PROPOSAL

After having developed the theoretical framework that will be useful as background for the research, I will now present an educational and innovative proposal based on improving students' oral production in the classroom. This proposal, "Don't stop speaking", will be focused on improving fluency through cooperative learning and game-based learning. I will present some analogue activities and their alternative using ICTs in the classroom following the same topic. Technology may fail, so, teachers should always have a second plan.

In order to set forth my proposal, I will first deal with its contextualization and justification. Then, I will focus on the objectives, competences, and methodology that will be implemented in the classroom. Finally, I will describe the activities together with their assessment criteria.

2.1. Contextualization

The educational proposal for intervention is inspired by Gómez Pereira high school, located in a village, Medina del Campo, near Valladolid. This is the high school where I conducted my external practices. The proposal has been designed to be implemented in the first course of compulsory secondary education. The group is composed of fifteen students who have four hours of English every week. As my proposal is for developing the speaking part of each unit, I will propose one session per unit from a total of nine units per academic year. This means that I will design one session based on speaking for each unit making a total of nine sessions. However, this does not mean that this aspect cannot be practised in other sessions during the units. Before beginning with the presentation and the description of the activities, it is necessary to contextualize the proposal from a legal point of view, as well as concerning the characteristics of the centre.

2.1.1. Legal framework

This educational proposal is based on the following regulation:

- LEY ORGÁNICA 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. (LOE)
- LEY ORGÁNICA 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, para la Mejora de la Calidad Educativa. (LOMCE)
- LEY ORGÁNICA 3/2020, de 29 de diciembre, por la que se modifica la Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación. (LOMLOE)

• REAL DECRETO 217/2022, de 29 de marzo, por el que se establece la ordenación y las enseñanzas mínimas de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria.

These previous documents regulate the national curriculum. Having into account the changing period that we are currently living in, the regulation for Castilla y León is not yet available. So, with regards to key and specific competences, basic knowledge, and assessment criteria, my proposal will adhere to the latter, the Real Decreto 217/2022, which implements LOMLOE as regards compulsory secondary education. This new regulation includes some elements that were also present before, together with other completely new elements. The ones that I am going to apply in my essay are the following:

Key competences

LOMLOE substitutes the basic competences with the key competences. They are considered essential for the student's learning progress, and they guarantee success in their educational itinerary to face the main challenges that they may encounter. Eight key competences are established:

- 1. Linguistic communication competence.
- 2. Plurilingual competence.
- 3. Mathematical competence and science and technology competence.
- 4. Digital competence.
- 5. Personal, social, and learning to learn competence.
- 6. Citizenship competence.
- 7. Entrepreneurial competence.
- 8. Cultural awareness and expression competence.

• Specific competences

These are the performances that students must be able to display in situations whose approach requires the basic knowledge of each area. These are a connection between the student's exit profile and the basic knowledge of the subjects.

• Basic knowledge

This is the knowledge, skills and attitudes that include the contents of an area whose learning is necessary for the acquisition of specific competences. Basic knowledge is what all students must acquire since it is essential.

• Assessment criteria

These are the benchmarks that indicate the levels of performance of each area expected from students at a given moment in their learning process.

2.1.2. Characteristics of the centre

I have taken as context the high school in which I realized the external practices for the Máster en Profesor de Educación Secundaria y Bachillerato, Formación Profesional y Enseñanza de Idiomas, IES Gómez Pereira, a secondary centre located in Medina del Campo. This public high school has served me as an inspiration for contextualising my educational proposal based on the resources and materials available.

IES Gómez Pereira is a public high school, located in Medina del Campo, 54 km from Valladolid. This town is located on the banks of the Zapardiel River with a population of approximately twenty-one thousand inhabitants. Economic wealth has gone hand in hand with artistic and monumental wealth. During the XV and XVI centuries, most of the buildings of the town were built. Although some important buildings were lost, today, you can see part of that architectural past. In addition, the old town was declared a historic-artistic site in 1978. The IES Gómez Pereira was formerly the Palacio de los Dueñas, one of the most important Renaissance civil buildings of this town. It was built in the 16th century by Luis de Vega for Diego Beltrán. Of its original construction, the facade, the hallway (lobby) with Mudejar coffered ceiling, the cloister, and the cloister staircase can be admired. The main values of this educational centre are freedom, equality, pluralism, and tolerance. One of the plans that are interesting for my proposal is the ICT Plan with the certification of level 3 in digital competence, and the Connected Schools (*Escuelas Conectadas*) program to provide ultra-fast broadband Internet connection, as well as the supply, installation, configuration, commissioning, and guarantee of a wireless network.

This high school provides an educational offer to the students, which comprises all six years of compulsory secondary education and *bachillerato*, with classes in the morning from 9:00 to 14:50. This high school promotes active participation as well as cooperative learning in order to develop students' critical thinking.

Once I have explained the main characteristics of the high school, it is relevant to focus on the EFL classroom in which I will focus my proposal. It will be implemented in the first course of compulsory secondary education in which students have the opportunity to have English lessons four days a week: on Mondays, from 9:55 to 10:45; on Wednesdays, from 13:05 to

13:55; on Thursdays, from 9:55 to 10:45; and on Fridays, from 10:50 to 11:40. As I have explained, I will propose one session for each of the units to devote that lesson specifically to speaking. As we know, students are using the target language during all the sessions, but I think it would be perfect for the students if they could practise this skill more deeply in one session per unit. Moreover, it would be ideal to put into practice this lesson on Fridays since it is a day on which students like to revise the contents and they are not focused enough to learn new things. They prefer to learn through games and cooperation with their classmates.

As regards spatial organization, the desks can be reorganized in groups whenever the teacher wants for cooperative learning activities. The classroom is equipped with a blackboard, a digital board, and a projector. The students follow an English student book together with some extra material provided by the teacher on paper or digitally. More in detail, the classroom is formed of fourteen students who are between 13 and 14 years old. This group is characterized by a heterogeneous level of English proficiency -between A1 and B1-. There is also a high degree of cultural diversity since several students come from different countries in Eastern Europe, and three students repeat the same course.

2.2. Justification

I have chosen to propose these activities since it is essential knowing how to communicate and how to use the language in different contexts when learning a language. This is why I want to develop at least one session in each unit to promote oral production, more especially fluency, in the students. Many researchers, like the ones that I have mentioned before, claim that people learn better if they are performing cooperative and game-based activities. This is why I want to change students' routine into different and funnier lessons. Moreover, students need to learn how to work in groups by taking distinct roles and helping their classmates. One of the objectives of my proposal is that students understand how beneficial can be to develop cooperative work in the classroom.

Furthermore, as ICTs are very present in EFL classrooms, I wanted to propose some analogue activities and their alternative using ICTs since many drawbacks can arise when giving a lesson. Internet may not work, and the teacher has to change his/her lesson plan in one minute; or simply students have been using digital boards, tablets, computers, or mobile phones for the whole morning, and it is necessary to change their routine and leave them to rest from ICTs for, at least, 50 minutes in their day.

Bearing in mind all these, I am conscious that speaking is being developed every day in the English lessons, but I find it useful to dedicate one specific session per unit to improve deeply this skill in the students. It is a key point that students apply the language to simulated real contexts and situations. Therefore, for all the sessions, I will present two alternatives, one analogue session and a digital one, for the teacher to choose depending on the group or number of students, available spaces for the lessons, ICTs in the classroom, etc.

2.3. Objectives

There are four main objectives I want to attain during these sessions:

• Using English as the main language for communication in the classroom.

The foreign language must be used in the classroom. Students will hear the input produced by the teacher, and they will have to be able to produce their own input by talking to their classmates.

- Developing fluency in the students by cooperative work.
- Making students feel comfortable working in groups.

This could be achieved by reproducing real situations through games in the classroom and maintaining a relaxed environment. Furthermore, introducing cooperative work can help to reduce the affective filter in our students.

 Making students master their digital competence by introducing ICTs in the classroom.

It is really important that students develop digital competence for their future, so it would be adequate to introduce these technologies in the classroom so they can see all the possibilities that they offer us in our daily and educational life.

2.4. Competences

As regards the key and specific competences of my educational proposal, I will follow the Real Decreto 217/2022. As I explained before, it is the national curriculum since the regulation for Castilla y León is not yet available. I will deal with the key competences and then, I will discuss the specific competences students will acquire throughout my educational proposal.

2.4.1. Key competences

The main key competence I want students to acquire is **linguistic communication competence** since the main objective is to master oral production in our students using their foreign language. Another key competence that students should acquire is **plurilingual competence** since they will use their foreign language during these sessions. In the sessions in which the teacher includes ICTs, the students would be able to develop and acquire **digital competence** with different programs on their tablets or mobile phones. Finally, the last one is the **personal, social and learning to learn competence** since students will have to work in teams cooperatively and they will have to deal with the problems that may arise when doing an activity with their classmates.

2.4.2. Specific competences

There are six specific competences students should develop during the academic year; however, the three main specific competences that students are going to acquire within these sessions are the following:

Specific competence 1:

1. "Understand and interpret the general meaning and the most relevant details of texts expressed clearly and in the standard language, looking for reliable sources and making use of strategies such as the inference of meanings, in order to respond to specific communicative needs." (p. 41715)

Specific competence 2:

2. "Produce original texts, of medium length, simple and with a clear organization, using strategies such as planning, compensation or self-repair, to creatively, adequately and coherently express relevant messages in a creative, adequate and coherent way and to respond to specific communicative purposes." (p. 41716)

Specific competence 3:

3. "Interact with other people, with increasing autonomy, using cooperative strategies and employing analogical and digital resources, in order to respond to specific communicative purposes in exchanges respectful of the rules of courtesy." (p. 41716)

Therefore, one of the main purposes of these sessions is that students understand and produce simple and clear oral texts to improve fluency as well as interact with their classmates using cooperative strategies.

2.5. Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria are related to the previous explained specific competences. In my educational proposal, for each specific competence, there is one assessment criterion related to it.

Specific competence 1: assessment criterion 1.2.

1.2. "Select, organize and apply, in a guided way, the most appropriate strategies and knowledge in everyday communicative situations to understand the general meaning, the essential information and the most relevant details of texts; to interpret non-verbal elements; and to search for and select information." (p. 41719)

Specific competence 2: assessment criterion 2.1.

2.1. "Express orally short, simple, structured, comprehensible and understandable texts, appropriate to the communicative situation on every day and frequent matters, of relevance for the student, to describe, narrate and inform about specific topics, in different media, using verbal and non-verbal resources in a guided way, as well as strategies for planning and controlling production." (p. 41719)

Specific competence 3: assessment criterion 3.1.

3.1. "Plan and participate in short and simple interactive situations on everyday topics of personal relevance and close to the learner's experience, through a variety of media, relying on resources such as repetition, slow pace or nonverbal language, and showing empathy and respect for linguistic courtesy and digital etiquette, as well as for the different needs, ideas, concerns, initiatives and motivations of the interlocutors." (p. 41719)

2.6. Basic knowledge

As I explained before, basic knowledge is the skills that all students must acquire for the acquisition of specific competences. This section is divided into three groups related to

communication, plurilingualism and interculturality. Within my educational proposal, only the first two and some knowledge within them will be needed for the students.

A. Communication

- 1. "Self-confidence. The error as a tool for improvement and repair proposal." (p. 41720)
- **4.** "Basic communicative functions appropriate to the communicative environment and context: greeting, saying goodbye, introducing and introducing oneself; describing people, objects and places; placing events in time; ..." (p. 41720)
- 7. "Commonly used vocabulary of interest to students related to personal identification, interpersonal relationships, places and environments, leisure and free time, daily life, health and physical activity, housing and home, climate and natural environment, ..." (p. 41720)
- **8**. "Basic sound, accentual, rhythmic and intonation patterns, and the meanings and general communicative intentions associated with those patterns." (p. 41720)
- **13.** "Basic analogue and digital tools for oral, written and multimodal comprehension, production and co-production; and virtual platforms for interaction, cooperation and educational collaboration (...) for learning, communicating and developing projects with speakers or learners of the foreign language." (p. 41721)

B. Plurilingualism

3. "Basic strategies and tools for self-evaluation and co-evaluation, analogue and digital, individual and cooperative." (p. 41721)

2.7. Methodology

The main objective when learning a language is to communicate and develop competence in linguistic communication. Therefore, many methods and approaches can be implemented to acquire that competence.

As I explained in the theoretical framework, I will use the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach for the implementation of my educational proposal. The main objective of this approach is to achieve real communication between speakers and be conscious of the authentic use of the language in different contexts and situations. I want students to get used to using the English language to communicate in the English lessons, as well as, in their future life. This

approach also seeks fluency, which is one of the aspects I want my students to achieve during the whole academic year. During the activities, it is not important to commit mistakes when speaking but to acquire a sufficient level of fluency to produce a speech with which they could be understood in the future.

As referring to the methodology that will be implemented in the classroom, students will be working mostly in pairs or groups most of the time since I want them to put into practice cooperative learning. The activities that they will be carrying on will be purely communicative in which they will have to use the target language to complete the tasks and to talk to their teacher and classmates. Furthermore, most of them will be guided by the teacher. The material I will use for setting up the activities will be mostly created and designed by me, and it is available in the appendixes. However, there is a part of it which is authentic such as some videos.

As regards the evaluation of these sessions, the teacher will give the students some feedback during the activities. The teacher will guide and correct them when they have to work in groups, but always trying that students do not feel overwhelmed by the corrections since the main objective is to improve their fluency in the language. Feedback would be given in their small groups while they are doing the activities. At the end of each session, there will be a proposal of what can be evaluated during that hour. In some cases, the teacher can evaluate their participation, or the answers students will give to some questions whereas, in other cases, the teacher would be able to evaluate some presentations they will have to do. At the end of each trimester, students will have to do a final task, which could be a role-play or a presentation in groups in front of their classmates for five minutes approximately. This will be evaluated by the teacher with the help of a rubric and this grade along with the assessment of each individual session will be part of the speaking of the trimester.

2.8. Description and timing

In order to choose the main topic for the nine sessions of the proposal, I will follow the students' book Mosaic (OUP) which is the book students are using in the first course of compulsory secondary education in the IES Gómez Pereira. It is relevant to present the main topic and the speaking section of each unit before describing the different sessions. As I have explained before, it would be ideal if these sessions were conducted on Friday after all the vocabulary and grammar from the unit had been taught and understood by the students. It is

convenient to explain that only the units and their main topics have been used from the book. All the following sessions and each activity with their materials have been designed by me. As I have explained before, for all the sessions, I will present one activity with two alternatives: an analogue and a digital one for the teacher to decide depending on the students' group, the resources in the classroom, materials, etc.

Figure 5

Main topics and speaking from the units.

UNIT	MAIN TOPIC	SPEAKING	
1	Family	Asking for and giving a	
1	Rooms and homes	personal opinion.	
2	Daily routines	Talking about activities.	
2	Free-time activities	Arranging to meet.	
3	School	Making suggestions.	
3	Sports	Giving opinions.	
4	Adjectives	Asking for travel	
4	Weather	information.	
5	Action verbs	Having a phone	
3	Adventure equipment	conversation.	
6	Food	Ordaring in a rectaurant	
V	At the market	Ordering in a restaurant.	
7	Clothes	Shopping for alothes	
1	Appearance	Shopping for clothes.	
8	Landscape places	Asking for and giving	
O	Places in town	directions.	
9	Computers and technology	Making arrangements for the	
7	Films	weekend.	

Note. Main topic from the nine units along with their corresponding speaking. (Own elaboration)

The first three units would be explained and evaluated during the first trimester. The next three units, 4, 5, and 6, during the second trimester. And finally, the last three sessions, during the third trimester.

General table for the educational proposal "Don't stop speaking"

Educational proposal "Don't stop speaking"		
Place	EFL classroom on IES Gómez Pereira.	
Number of students	Fourteen students (1° ESO).	
Age	Between thirteen and fifteen years old.	
Timing Fifty minutes per session. It would be sessions on Fridays after students previous lessons, the main vocabular unit.		udents have been taught, in
SESSIONS		
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
"What's your name?"	"What do you do on	"Shall we meet for
	Tuesdays?"	cooking?"
Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
"Travelling in your mind"	"Can you repeat, please?"	"How much is it?"
Session 7	Session 8	Session 9
"Let's play with clothes"	"Find the way"	"Being cowboys and
		detectives"

2.8.1. Session 1 "What's your name?"

SESSION 1 "What's your name?" 1st trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: family, rooms and homes: asking for and giving personal information.

Classroom management: small groups.

Resources: questions and answers, and PowerPoint game (*see Appendix A, Session 1*), computer, and projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13
1, 2, 3	В. 3

Assessment criteria

1.2; 2.1; 3.1

Description of the session

Analogue session:

For starting the session and reviewing the vocabulary, the teacher would ask the students to make two big groups in the classroom. He/she should read a definition of a word from the vocabulary, and students should agree in the group and guess what word it is. For each correct word, they will obtain one extra point for the next game.

After that, students will play 'Who wants to get a 10?'. The teacher will write on the board the name of the game and the sum of money students could win. Then, s/he will explain the game. It is a game in which there are several questions ordered from the easiest one to the most difficult one. Each question has four possible answers, so students will have to debate within their group before answering. The teacher will be the one who will read the questions and the possible answers. Each time students answer correctly to a question, they will obtain a sum of money that will be shown on the blackboard. However, if they answer incorrectly, there will be a rebound to the other group. During the game, each group will have the possibility of using three wildcards: using the internet for searching for information, reducing the opportunities to two possible answers, or asking for help from one member of the other group. The team that gets more money will be the winner.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess the participation and the answers from the students.

Digital session:

To start the session, the teacher would ask the students to make two big groups in the classroom. S/he will project some definitions on the screen and students should guess what word from the vocabulary corresponds to that definition. For each correct word, they will obtain one extra point for the next game.

Then, students will play 'Who wants to get a 10?' in groups. It consists of a PowerPoint presentation with a sound that transports students to the famous game. The game instructions are the same as in the analogue session, but the game will be projected on the board. The team that gets more money will be the winner. You can find an example of the game, more specifically, of the first three questions from the game in *Appendix A, Session 1*.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess the participation and the answers from the students.

2.8.2. Session 2 "What do you do on Tuesdays?"

SESSION 2 "What do you do on Tuesdays?" 1st trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: daily routines, free-time activities: talking about activities, arranging to meet.

Classroom management: pairs or small groups.

Resources: digital dice and table with different options (see Appendix A, Session 2), computer, projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13
1, 2, 3	B. 3

Assessment criteria

1.2; 2.1; 3.1

Description of the session

Analogue session:

For revising the vocabulary of the unit, students will form two groups in the classroom, and one of each group should take a chalk and go to the board. They will play 'What are you drawing?'. The teacher will provide one daily routine or activity to the students on the board. They should draw the word and their classmates have to guess. The first team that guesses five words will be the winner.

After that, the lesson will start with students creating ten questions to ask their classmates about their daily routines or free-time activities that they do during the week to play 'Be quick asking'. Then, they will have to stand up and ask their classmates the questions and write the answers. The first student that obtains ten answers from different classmates will be the winner of the game.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can guide their students in the process and listen to them while they are asking and answering.

Digital session:

The lesson would start by making groups in the class to play 'Roll it nice'. For this, a table would be projected on the digital board with some characters, daily activities and hours. In

turns, groups will roll a digital dice and depending on the number that is shown, they will have some characters, daily activities and hours. Then, they should create a story including those characters, activities and hours that they have randomly obtained. Finally, they will have to read the story in front of the class or represent it as if it were a theatre.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess their performance during the oral presentation.

2.8.3. Session 3 "Shall we meet for cooking?"

SESSION 3 "Shall we meet for cooking?" 1st trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: school, sports: making suggestions and giving opinions.

Classroom management: big group/pairs or small groups.

Resources: flashcards for the activities, images of the activities related to vocabulary, video (see Appendix A, Session 3), computer, projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13
1, 2, 3	B. 3

Assessment criteria

1.2; 2.1; 3.1

Description of the session

Analogue session:

For starting the lesson and to revise the vocabulary from the unit related to school and sports, the students will be grouped in pairs. Then, students will play **'Explain it better'**. Each student will have three cards, each one containing the name of the activity, a picture and three other words that the student must not use. S/he has to describe to his/her classmate the activity s/he has without saying it and without saying the other words that appear in the flashcard. Some examples could be seen in *Appendix A, Session 3*. Each of the students will have to describe three activities and guess the other three. Then, all the vocabulary will be put in common making emphasis on the most difficult words.

Then, once the vocabulary has been remembered, the pairs will be changed. Students will play 'Run and complete'. The teacher will provide the students with some cards with a dialogue without being complete. Each student of the pair will receive a different one. The students should complete and reproduce the dialogue with the vocabulary they have seen in

the previous activity. It would be a race, so the first pair in completing the dialogue will be the winner.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can guide their students in the process and listen to them while they are asking and answering.

Digital session:

This session will start with a game in a big group called 'The Hot Seat'. One volunteer will sit in front of their classmates without looking at the digital board. The teacher will project an image of the vocabulary on the screen. All the students should give clues to the student that is sitting in front of them, and s/he has to guess which word is. Then, another volunteer will sit on the chair.

For the second part of the session, a video will be played about a dialogue on making suggestions and giving opinions. Then, they will play 'Who's the best actor?' in which students should create their own dialogue and reproduce it in pairs. After that, students should vote for their favourite representation.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess their creativity when creating the dialogue and their performance on it.

2.8.4. Session 4 "Travelling in your mind"

SESSION 4 "Travelling in your mind" 2nd trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: adjectives and weather: asking for travel information.

Classroom management: small groups.

Resources: questions and answers, link to the game in genially (*see Appendix A, Session 4*), computer, projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge			
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13			
1, 2, 3	В. 3			
Assessment criteria				
1.2; 2.1; 3.1				

Description of the session

Analogue session:

The teacher will start the session by doing a brief brainstorming in the classroom to remember the main vocabulary of this unit. Then, students will be divided into two big groups to play **'Be the captain of your ship'**. The teacher will draw on the blackboard two squares students will have to copy on their notebooks. One for their team and one for the enemy. Then, the teacher will explain the game. Each group should collocate eight ships on their square. The objective of this game is to sink all the enemy's ships. In the squares, each column corresponds to a letter, and each line corresponds to a number. An example of the squares can be seen in the digital session from Appendix A, Session 4. Once the two groups have collocated their eight ships, taking turns, students will say a combination of a letter and a number, for example, A6, and each combination will correspond to a question. An example of a possible question would be: 'how would you ask about the weather of a country?' or 'how would you say in English: 'cuánto cuesta un viaje de ida y vuelta'?'. If the group answers correctly, they will have the opportunity of seeing if they have sunk a ship or not. However, if they answer incorrectly, the other team will get a rebound and they will see if they can sink one enemy's boat at that same combination (A6) or not. All the students should have registered the combinations they have said in their notebooks as well as their team's location of the eight ships. The first team in sinking all the enemy's ships will be the winner. To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess students' participation and answers.

Digital session:

As in the analogue activity, the teacher will start the lesson by brainstorming to remember the vocabulary of this session. Then, the teacher will divide the students into two big groups in the classroom to play 'Be the captain of your ship'. The game includes some music which immerses the students in a ship sailing in the sea. Students will need their tablets to play this game, at least one per group. The game is the same as in the analogue session but in a digital form. The objective is to sink all the enemy's ships. On their tablets, students will be able to have their own ships' location and a registration of all the combinations they have said. An example can be seen in *Appendix A*, *Session 4*.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess students' participation and answers.

2.8.5. Session 5 "Can you repeat, please?"

SESSION 5 "Can you repeat, please?" 2nd trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: action verbs and adventure equipment: having a phone conversation.

Classroom management: pairs or small groups.

Resources: dialogues, sentences for 'Repeat, plese', videos (see Appendix A, Session 5), computer, projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge	
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13 B. 3	

Assessment criteria

1.2; 2.1; 3.1

Description of the session

Analogue session:

The teacher will start the session by remembering the vocabulary and making a brief brainstorming. Then, the warm-up game will be called 'The Vanishing Call' in which students will be divided into two big groups. The teacher will copy a dialogue on the board and students will have to read it several times and memorize it. Then, the teacher starts erasing some words and one member of each group each time should repeat the entire dialogue. The teacher will continue erasing some sentences until the students memorize all the dialogue.

To continue with the class, in those two big groups, students will choose one director and one secretary. They will play 'Repeat, please'. The teacher will say one sentence to the director, and s/he should memorize it. The rest of the class must not hear it. Then, the director will say the sentence to another classmate of their group, and s/he to another classmate, until the secretary is told that sentence. Then, the secretary will say the sentence aloud, and if it is correct, they will get a point. The director and the secretary should change the next sentences. In the end, the group that gets more points will be the winner.

For the last game of this session. Students will be grouped in pairs and each member of the pair should receive one different card for playing 'Who's calling?'. They will have to sit on the chairs with their backs to their partner. Then, without looking they should represent the dialogue that they have on their cards. With all the students making their dialogues and sitting with their backs to their partners, they will not be able to hear properly, so a phone call will

be simulated in the class. They will have to put into practice some sentences to ask for clarification.

To evaluate this session, the teacher will have into account the participation of the students in class.

Digital session:

For this session using ICTs, the teacher will do a brief brainstorming as in the analogue session. Then, 'The Vanishing Call' game will be done but projecting the dialogue on the digital board and erasing the sentences we want.

For the next game 'Guess the calling', students will be divided into small groups of four or five people. A series of videos with some dialogues on phone calls will be reproduced on the screen. These videos will be stopped at some part of the conversation and students will have to guess what is going to happen. They will have to talk with the members of the groups and reach an answer. Then, they will do a brief representation of the dialogue that may happen. The group that gets closer to the original dialogue gets a point.

To evaluate this session, the teacher will take into account the participation of the students in class.

2.8.6. Session 6 "How much is it?"

SESSION 6 "How much is it?" 2nd trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: food, at the market: ordering in a restaurant.

Classroom management: individual.

Resources: fictional money, menus, flashcards with the dishes, link to the google word document (*see Appendix A, Session 6*), computer, projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge			
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13			
1, 2, 3	В. 3			
Assessment criteria				
1.2; 2.1; 3.1				

Description of the session

Analogue session:

The teacher will start the session by doing a brief brainstorming of the main vocabulary of the unit as well as how to order in a restaurant. Then, s/he will explain the game that they are going to play in the classroom, 'A Shopper's Nightmare'. The teacher will designate five students for being the waiters of the restaurants, and the rest of the class will be the clients. Therefore, the class will be divided into five zones in which the waiters will be. The waiters now will have the opportunity to choose their menus according to the type of food they want to serve in their restaurant. The teacher will give some flashcards to the waiters with the dishes they have on their menus, and s/he will give some fictional money to the clients to buy those dishes. The clients will move around the class visiting the different restaurants and asking for dishes, and the waiters should give them the flashcards with the dish they have asked for. The objective is to be the waiter who has sold the most and the client who has eaten the most. However, every time the teacher says 'stop' and calls out the name of one of the dishes, the students with that dish should put all their dishes on a table in front of the classroom and they should begin again from scratch. The remaining students can continue shopping in the restaurants. It would be ideal if they could change roles.

To evaluate this activity, the teacher can assess their participation and their oral production.

Digital session:

This session with ICTs will begin like the analogue one, doing a brief summary of the vocabulary and reviewing how to order in a restaurant. This session will consist also of the game 'A Shopper's Nightmare'. The game will be the same as in the analogue session but with some changes. Students will be also divided into waiters and clients. The menus will be projected on the screen, and there will be a collaborative word document in which the teacher and all the students should write their dishes and the money they are earning through their mobile phones or tablets. When the teacher says 'stop' and the name of a dish, all the students that had that dish, should delete all the dishes they have collected. It is an effective way to use technology in the classroom and everyone can see how their other classmates are progressing in the game.

To evaluate this activity, the teacher can assess their participation and their oral production.

2.8.7. Session 7 "Let's play with clothes"

SESSION 7 "Let's play with clothes" 3rd trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: clothes, appearance: shopping for clothes.

Classroom management: two big groups.

Resources: Kaboom materials, questions for the kaboom, digital board game (*see Appendix A, Session 7*), computer and projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge	
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13	
1, 2, 3	B. 3	

Assessment criteria

1.2; 2.1; 3.1

Description of the session

Analogue session:

The teacher will start this session by doing a brief brainstorming of the topic and vocabulary of this unit. Then, s/he will do an explanation of the activities that are planned for the session. The main activity is the one called 'Kaboom!'. It is a game in which the main goal is to get a higher number of sticks. Students will be divided into two groups, and they will have to choose a name for their group. Then, the game will start. One member of the first group should take a stick and see the number that is written on it. Each number corresponds to a question that the teacher will have prepared previously. If the group answer the question correctly, they have the stick, but if they fail, there will be a rebound for the other group. If the stick they take does not have a number, but the word *kaboom*, they lose all the sticks and they have to put them again in the centre. The first group in getting six sticks will be the winner. Students will use the oral expression for answering and they will have to talk in English with their classmates. There are some photos from the game available in *Appendix A. Session 7*.

To evaluate this activity, the teacher can evaluate the oral answers the students give as well as the participation.

Digital session:

Firstly, the teacher will introduce the topic and they will do a brief brainstorming about the vocabulary and the grammar. Then, s/he will do an explanation of the activities that are

planned for the session. The main activity will be a **digital board game** on the web 'Genially'. Students will be divided into two groups, and they will have to choose a name for their team. Then, they will have to play the board game answering orally and talking in English in their groups. The first group in reaching the end of the board game will be the winner.

To evaluate this activity, the teacher can evaluate the oral answers the students give as well as the participation.

2.8.8. Session 8 "Find the way"

SESSION 8 "Find the way" 3rd trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: landscape places, places in town: asking for and giving directions.

Classroom management: small groups,

Resources: clues and questions, physical map, QR codes, digital map (see Appendix A, Session 8), computer and projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge	
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13	
1, 2, 3	B. 3	

Assessment criteria

1.2; 2.1; 3.1

Description of the session

Analogue session:

The teacher will start the session by explaining that they will play a more physical game. The first thing that they will have to do is to create groups of four people and choose a name for their team. Then, the teacher should explain the **gymkhana** which consists of finding some clues around the high school based on asking for and giving directions. In case the gymkhana could not be distributed throughout the high school, the different clues could be hidden in the classroom, or the game could be placed in the high school's gym. Each group will also receive a physical map of the high school to situate where the clues are located. So, first, they will have to find a clue. Then, they will have to answer the question, and if they have answered it correctly, they will have to situate it on the physical map. In this case, each time they find a clue, they will go to the classroom to tell the teacher the answer to the question. If they have

answered correctly, they can continue with the other clue. If not, students will have to try again. There are some examples in *Appendix A, Session 8*

To evaluate this activity, students' participation and answers can be assessed.

Digital session:

The teacher will start the session like the analogue session by explaining that they will play a more physical game. The first thing that they will have to do is to create groups of four people and choose a name for their team. Then, the teacher should explain the **digital gymkhana**, which consists of finding around the high school some QR codes based on asking for and giving directions that they will have to scan. In case the gymkhana could not be distributed throughout the high school, the different QR codes could be hidden in the classroom or the high school's gym. Each group will also receive a digital map of the high school on their tablets -through Teams App- to situate where the QR codes are located. So, first, they will have to find a QR code and scan it. It leads them to Google Forms. Then, they will have to answer the question in that Google Form, and if they have answered it correctly, they will have to scan it and answer the question in Google Forms. The teacher will receive all the answers from the groups immediately. There is an example in *Appendix A*, *Session 8*. **To evaluate this activity**, the teacher can evaluate students' participation and answers.

2.8.9. Session 9 "Being cowboys and detectives"

SESSION 9 "Being cowboys and detectives" 3rd trimester (50 minutes)

Topic: computers and technology, films: making arrangements for the weekend.

Classroom management: small groups.

Resources: pictures from the vocabulary, and secret codes (see Appendix A, Session 9), computer and projector.

Specific competences	Basic knowledge			
1, 2, 3	A. 1, 4, 7, 8, 13			
1, 2, 3	В. 3			
Assessment criteria				
1.2; 2.1; 3.1				

Description of the session

Analogue session:

The teacher will introduce this last session with a game 'Take your gun'. The teacher will divide students into two big groups. They are going to become cowboys for this game, and they will participate in a duel that will take place in the classroom. One student from each group will come to the front and they have to pretend to have their guns. The teacher would ask 'how do you say... in English?' The first student in answering and then pretending to shoot his/her opponent will be the winner of the duel, and their team gets a point. Students will receive one point per correct answer and five extra points if they achieve to 'kill' four opponents in a row. Once students have reviewed the vocabulary, they will play 'Decode the secret message' in the same groups. It is a game in which students will have to decode several secret messages that contain some tasks. These secret codes will be given to the students on paper. So, they will have to talk in English to decode the message cooperatively. The first group in decoding the secret messages and doing all the tasks will be the winner. There are some examples of secret codes in *Appendix A, Session 9*.

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess the presentation or representation of the story.

Digital session:

The teacher will introduce this last session by playing the game 'Take your gun'. This is the same game as in the analogue session but with a change. In this case, once the students are divided into groups, and two of them are in the front, the teacher will say 'How do you say...?' and s/he will show a picture that corresponds to a word from the vocabulary of the unit on the screen. The objective is the same, to get the highest number of points. Students will receive one point per correct answer and five extra points if they achieve to 'kill' four opponents in a row. Once students have reviewed the vocabulary, they will play 'Decode the secret message'. In this case, the objective of the game is the same, but the secret codes will be projected on the screen, so the two groups are able to see the codes on the screen. To introduce ICTs, some tasks can be related to students using mobile phones or tablets. There are some examples of secret codes in *Appendix A*, *Session 9*

To evaluate this session, the teacher can assess the presentation or representation of the story.

2.9. Evaluation criteria and assessment

In each of the activities, I give some suggestions on how to evaluate these sessions individually. However, the main objective is to do a final project for each trimester to evaluate the fluency students have acquired during the three months. So, for the evaluation of these previous sessions, students should do a roleplay or a performance in small groups about one of the topics that they have studied during each trimester. This performance should last up to five minutes. In that way, students will have three final grades at the end of the academic year from these speaking sessions. Therefore, for example, during the first trimester, students would choose between doing a role-play in a hotel or a performance about a story or free-time activities making suggestions and giving opinions. The election of the topic could be free since there is the option of mixing the three topics. It would be pertinent to give them some time during the lessons or to devote one whole lesson to prepare this presentation. In that way, they could ask some questions to the teacher, and they will have to use the English language to prepare their role-play or performance. In this case, speaking will be worth 15% of the final grade of the students during the first and second trimesters, and 20% during the last trimester since they will have to acquire fluency by the end of the course.

"Don't stop speaking" sessions evaluation				
1° trimester 2° trimester 3° trimester				
15%	15%	20%		

For the final role-play and performance evaluation the teacher will do, s/he will follow a rubric for evaluating the students. The evaluation and the grade of this final task will be in groups. That means that all the students from the group will obtain the same grade, so students will have to work cooperatively to get a good grade. In these performances, the teacher can evaluate the use of the vocabulary related to the topic the students choose, the use of grammar, the general representation that should be adequate to the topic, the use of non-verbal communication to ease communication and solve misunderstandings, the creativity and, finally, the length of the presentation. It would be pertinent to tell the students how they are going to be evaluated and provide them with this same rubric. This rubric can be found in *Appendix B*.

Furthermore, it would be relevant if students do a peer evaluation of their classmates' role-plays and performances in the class and a self-evaluation as a group about their own performance in which they will have to write their opinion and reflect on the role-plays and performances. These two evaluation models can be also found in *Appendix B*.

CONCLUSIONS

In the world of communication that we are living in now, communicative competence is becoming increasingly important. When we take this competence to language learning, we see that this competence becomes an objective and that, therefore, communication takes on an essential role. Especially, in the case of English since it is one of the most important languages today. In EFL, one of the most used methodologies is CLT, which emerged around the 1970s, and its main objective is to achieve this communicative competence in the students of a foreign language. With this methodology, the role of the learner is active, something that leads us to want to introduce cooperative learning in the classroom, that is, learning that allows students to work together in small groups on a given task to achieve a common goal. With this learning, we get students to be responsible for their own learning. Therefore, to make all this work, I wanted to introduce game-based learning in my educational proposal, that is, to introduce games in the classroom where students can learn by achieving certain objectives. Introducing games in the classroom is an ideal way to motivate students and get them out of their daily routine in high school. Another way to achieve that interest in the subject and lower the affective filter is to introduce ICTs into the classroom. These technologies are already part of our daily life and introducing them in the classroom is a great way to develop digital competence. However, these ICTs do not always work or may fail, that is why in my proposal I present two alternative sessions, one analogue and one digital.

Therefore, the main purpose of this MA Thesis is to suggest a whole-year educational proposal "Don't stop speaking" for improving oral production, more specifically fluency, in the students using a game-based learning methodology. This proposal has been designed to be implemented in a high school, in the first course of compulsory secondary education. It is a whole academic year proposal that consists of nine sessions. Each session corresponds to a unit and those sessions focus deeply on oral production, although the language and the speaking skill are developed in the classroom each day. As I explained before, the methodology implemented in this proposal is game-based learning and cooperative work. Furthermore, this proposal gives two alternatives for the same session, an analogue and a digital one. It is particularly important nowadays to master digital competence in the students, but due to some inconveniences or problems that may arise in the classroom, ICTs cannot be always used. Moreover, within this proposal, some types of evaluation have been presented.

When designing and planning this educational proposal, some problems have arisen. In some cases, it is difficult to think about the alternative of an analogue session when you already have the digital one. This is something that can happen in the classroom easily, and teachers have to have enough capacity for improvisation to solve that problem. This is one of the reasons why I wanted to do that proposal. When teachers implement this educational proposal in their classrooms, they will have an alternative when ICTs do not work. It would be so interesting to implement this proposal to evaluate its success, the strengths and weaknesses of the design, and to see if it is really effective in the students. However, many factors can affect the development of the proposal. That is why some changes may be applied to it as regards activities or evaluation to suit the student's interests.

What seems clear is that nowadays new techniques and methodologies for EFL are emerging, and we must be aware of this as teachers. Students should come to class motivated and eager to learn and, above all, feel comfortable in the classroom so that their learning is as effective as possible. This proposal is just one example of the infinite number of cooperative activities and games that could be conducted, with or without ICTs, in a foreign language classroom.

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APPENDIXES

I. APPENDIX A

SESSION 1

- Analogue session.

Example of one possible question and its answers for 'Who wants to get a 10?':

- 1. How would you ask for someone's name?
 - a. What's your first name?
 - b. What's your second name?
 - c. What's your address?
 - d. What are your first name?
- Digital session.

Link to the power-point game 'Who wants to get a 10?': Who wants to get a 10.pptx

SESSION 2

- Digital session.

Digital dice for 'Roll it nice': Virtual Dice & Coin Flip (freeonlinedice.com)

Table with characters, daily activities, and hours for 'Roll it nice':

Characters	aracters Daily routines		Problems	
I. student	I. clean the room	I. 5:20 am	I. can't meet on Tuesday	
2. princess	2. go to school	2. 10:00 pm	2. doesn't like water	
3. doctor	3. have a	3. 6:45 pm	3. doesn't like school	
4. nanny	bath 4. go for a	4. 7:00 am	4. can't meet in the	
5. teacher	walk 5. make the	5. 8:00 pm	morning 5. doesn't like	
6. fireman	bed 6. get up	6. 3:15 pm	6. doesn't like	
7. police	early 7. watch TU	7. 2:30 am	walking 7. can't meet on Sunday	

Link to the table:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAE_jjYkUTA/cmjLft3C4Kx8NPknV_cyJA/view?utm_cont ent=DAE_jjYkUTA&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishs harelink

SESSION 3

- Analogue session.

Flashcards for 'Explain it better':



Dialogue cards:



Link to the flashcards and dialogue cards:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAE_i0-7T3I/JkurQsLaJkBQFjM71H-

D6g/view?utm_content=DAE_i0-

7T3I&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink

- Digital session.

The pictures for 'The Hot Seat' would be the same that the ones from the first activity of the analogue activity.

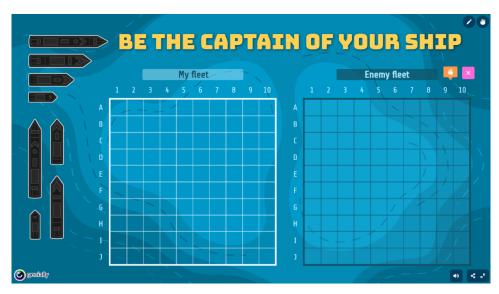
Link to the video: Making Plans | Beginner English | Everyday English - YouTube

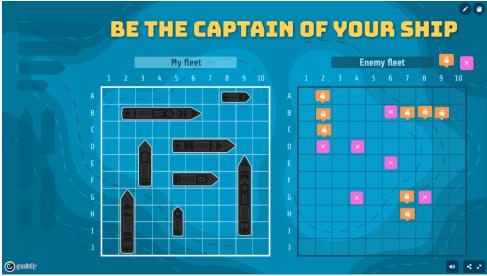
SESSION 4

- Analogue session and digital session.

Link to the genially to play 'Be the captain of your ship':

 $\underline{https://view.genial.ly/62961a59911a730018cbf4cb/interactive-content-be-the-captain-of-your-ship}$





SESSION 5

- Analogue session.

Dialogue for 'The Vanishing Call':

- **A:** Hi. Can I speak to John?
- **B:** Who's calling?
- A: It's Ellen.
- **B:** Oh, hi Ellen. This is her aunt. He isn't here right now. He is playing tennis.
- A: Oh, OK.
- **B:** Do you want to leave a message?
- A: Yes, please. Can you ask him to call me back at home, please?
- B: Sure!
- A: Oh... and please tell him it's important.
- **B**: OK, bye!
- **A:** Thanks, bye!

Sentences for 'Repeat, please':

- Can I speak to Oscar?
- Who's calling?
- Do you want to leave a message?
- Please tell her that it's important.
- Can you ask him to call me later?
- She isn't here at the moment. She's visiting a friend.

Dialogue for 'Who's calling?':



A: ...

B: Ask who is on the phone

Student B

A: ...

B: Say hello and who you are. Say that Mary isn't here. Say where she is.

A: ..

B: Ask if he/She wants to leave a message.

A: ..

B: Agree. Farewell.

Link to the cards:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFAMWJXKD8/TvgWF3yEu5fB2fSR3zHf2w/view?utm_c ontent=DAFAMWJXKD8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source= sharebutton

- Digital session.

Video for 'Guess the calling':

[Telephone Conversations] May I speak to Kate? I'll call back later. - Easy Dialogue for Kids - YouTube

English Phone Conversation - Formal and Informal Situations | Easy Dialogues - YouTube

SESSION 6

- Analogue session.

Fictional money for playing 'A Shopper's Nightmare':



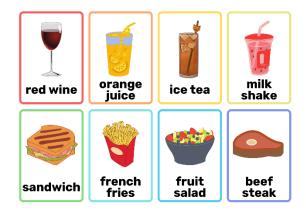
Example of a menu for playing 'A Shopper's Nightmare':



https://www.canva.com/design/DAFAMWUPcuI/IDXbE5xCLYI5m-

OCzW4yVA/view?utm_content=DAFAMWUPcuI&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

Flashcards with the dishes for playing 'A Shopper's Nightmare':



https://www.canva.com/design/DAFCXhT9MnM/-

<u>fiki31NdyiNSip_uQ5Qtg/view?utm_content=DAFCXhT9MnM&utm_campaign=designshare</u> &utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton

- Digital session:

Link to google word document to play 'A Shopper's Nightmare':

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14xeOzvAqrATaznPw7Y4ynexh5nZ6y_FVnAXE08v03 4g/edit?usp=sharing

A SHOPPER'S NIGHTMARE

WAITERS' EARNINGS				
Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5

CLIENTS' DISHES					
Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	
Student 6	Student 7	Student 8	Student 9	Student 10	

SESSION 7

- Analogue session.

Kaboom!:





- Digital session.

Digital boardgame (as examples, only the first five questions are included):





Link to the genially:

https://view.genial.ly/6279320c028a300018834a0f/interactive-content-juego-de-mesa

SESSION 8

- Analogue session.

Example of one of the gymkhana hints:

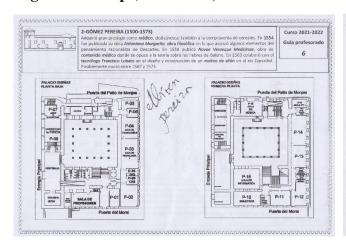
1

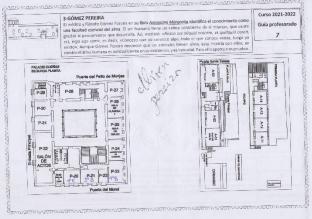
This is the first clue of our gymkhana. For obtaining the next clue, you should solve this question and tell the answer to the teacher:

How would you ask someone where is the cinema politely?

Once the teacher says that you have answered correctly, you should look for the next clue. You have to stay at the door of the classroom. Then, you have to go five metres straight, turn right, go straight on and take the first left. At the end of the hall, you have the second clue on the wall.

High school map (in this case, from IES Gómez Pereira):





- Digital session.

Gymkhana QR codes that lead the students to the Google Forms to answer:



Link to the Google Forms: https://forms.gle/EVShwg3ikvWKc41u6

SESSION 9

- Analogue session.

Secret codes for the analogue session will be printed and given to the students. An example:



The solution would be: 'You should create a sentence for inviting a friend to play video games this weekend.'

- Digital session.

Secret codes will be projected on the screen. An example:



The solution would be: 'Search on the internet how to say: '¿estás libre?''.

 $\frac{https://www.canva.com/design/DAFCX0n7xqk/QpyEdwh5YwZlcKnLm1dr0w/view?utm_co}{ntent=DAFCX0n7xqk\&utm_campaign=designshare\&utm_medium=link2\&utm_source=share}$ ebutton

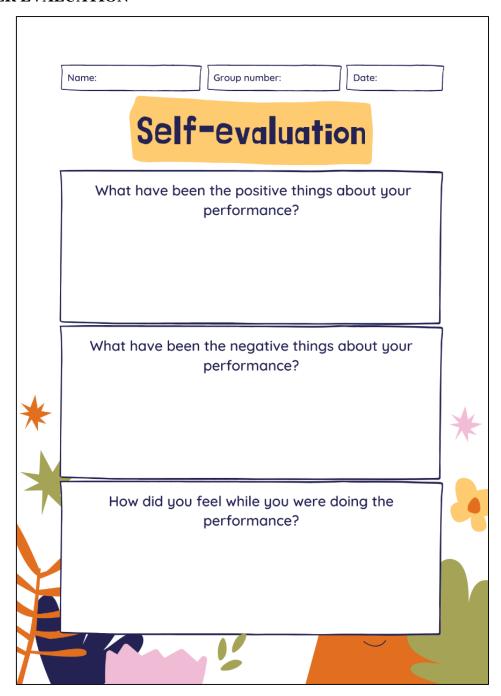
II. APPENDIX B

TEACHER EVALUATION

Rubric for the group presentations and performances evaluation:

	4	3	2	1	0
	Excellent	High	Sufficient	Inadequate	NP
Adequate use of vocabulary.	Use 6 or more words from the vocabulary of the unit.	Use 5 words from the vocabulary of the unit.	Use 4 words from the vocabulary of the unit.	Use 3 or fewer words from the vocabulary of the unit.	The students have not performed the presentation.
Adequate use of grammar.	Use 6 or more correct grammatical structures from the unit.	Use 5 correct grammatical structures from the unit.	Use 4 correct grammatical structures from the unit.	Use 3 or fewer correct grammatical structures from the unit.	The students have not performed the presentation.
The representation is adequate to the topic.	All the sentences are adequate for the topic.	More than half of the sentences are adequate for the topic.	Less than half of the sentences are adequate for the topic.	Hardly any sentence is adequate for the topic.	The students have not performed the presentation.
Uses adequate non-verbal language to ease communication.	Use gestures, facial expressions, or body position.	-	-	Do not use gestures, facial expressions, or body position.	The students have not performed the presentation.
Students' creativity when performing the presentation.	Use at least 3 creative elements during the presentation.	Use 2 creative elements during the presentation.	Use 1 creative element during the presentation.	Do not use creative elements during the presentation.	The students have not performed the presentation.
Length of the presentation.	It lasts 5 minutes.	It lasts between 4 and 5 minutes.	It lasts between 3 and 4 minutes.	It lasts less than 3 minutes.	The students have not performed the presentation.

PEER EVALUATION

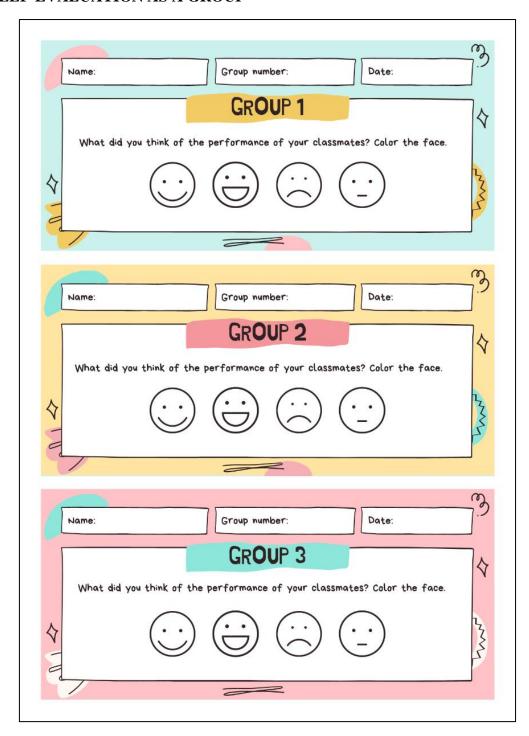


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SELF-EVALUATION AS A GROUP



Link to the document:

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