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Improving speaking skills in EFL classrooms through collaborative activities with a2

level students

Trabajo de titulación para optar al título de:

Magíster en Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés como Lengua Extranjera.

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DEDICATORIA

To my beloved family for their support and courage that motivates me to find my best version ever in the storms, especially for my babies: Yedit, my princess, whom I want to motivate to become in an empower, intelligent and strong woman, do not forget nena all is possible, if it is in your mind and heart, it will be in your life. Finally, to Gabito, my eternal angel in heaven, because you are my rainbow in my rainy days. Both of you will always be the reason.

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Yesenia Cecilia Merino Uquillas

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RESUMEN

Este trabajo se centra en determinar estrategias colaborativas y métodos de evaluación eficaces para mejorar las habilidades orales dentro del aula en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) entre estudiantes del nivel A2. El objetivo es identificar estrategias colaborativas y métodos de evaluación efectivos para mejorar las habilidades orales de un grupo de estudiantes nivel A2 entre 19 y 28 años de edad.

Es importante recalcar que participaron 29 estudiante los cuales tenías distinto niveles de competencia en el idioma inglés según el MCER como lo fueron nivel A1 y nivel A2(elemental) todos ellos provenientes de una academia de idiomas privada en la ciudad de Riobamba. Considerando su competencia lingüística los participantes deben comunicarse pese aún a su vocabulario es limitado, errores en gramática, dificultades de pronunciación y falta de confianza durante actividades colaborativas durante 120 horas pedagógicas. El estudio emplea tanto métodos cuantitativos como cualitativos. Los métodos cuantitativos incluyeron pruebas diagnósticas y finales, así como rúbricas. Los instrumentos cualitativos fueron diarios de aprendizaje. En cuanto a las pruebas orales previas y posteriores, los participantes mejoraron significativamente sus habilidades orales mediante actividades colaborativas, con un tamaño del efecto (d de Cohen) de 0.73, lo que indica un efecto grande. Se concluye que la estrategia de resumen mejora las habilidades orales en inglés. Este estudio esta dirigido a docentes de inglés como lengua extranjera de otras instituciones que deseen mejorar las habilidades orales en sus estudiantes.

Palabras clave: actividades colaborativas, habilidades orales, aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera , competencia comunicativa, evaluación

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on identifying effective collaborative strategies and assessment methods to enhance speaking skills in EFL classrooms among A2-level students. To determine effective collaborative strategies and assessment methods for enhancing speaking skills in EFL classrooms among A2 level students between 19 and 28 years old. It involved 30 students with varying English proficiency levels, ranging from A1 to A2 according to the CEF. Among the participants, according to a pre-test, 23% of students are at level A1 (beginners) and 77% are at level A2 (elementary) from a private Language Academy in Riobamba. Considering the participants' English proficiency, they must speak due to their limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, pronunciation difficulties, and lack of confidence in collaborative activities during 120 pedagogical hours. The study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. Therefore, the quantitative methods will be pre- and post-tests, and rubrics. The qualitative instruments were learning logs. Regarding the pre- and post-reading test, participants significantly improved their speaking skills through collaborative activities from pre-test to post-test, with an effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.73, indicating a large effect. It is concluded that a summarization strategy improves English-speaking skills. This study is aimed at the teachers of English as a foreign language from other institutions who wish to enhance their students' speaking skills

Keywords: Collaborative Activities, Speaking skills, EFL Classrooms, Communicative Competence, Assessment.

CHAPTER I

1.   **Referential Framework**

1.1.   **Introduction**

Soon English will still be a lingua franca, or a language spoken or written by people who do not have the same native language, but the way it is presented to the individual and enforced in policy will shift. Over the next ten years, the number of learners will be stable or increase. These range from better access to education and employment to technology and global mobility. The demand for English language education is coming from employers, from parents, from the learners themselves. It is treated as a condition for success in life, learning and (most) employment (Patel, 2023). According to the author, there has been an exponential increase in students of different ages around the world who decide to improve their linguistic skills.

Therefore, private academies seek to offer effective results in short preparation times. Due to the challenge, this research seeks to find the most effective strategies to guarantee this pedagogical process. On the other hand, collaborative learning environments encourage students to engage actively with the language, leading to better retention and understanding. When students work together, they utilize various speaking sub-skills such as asking questions, responding to suggestions, and seeking clarification. These interactions are crucial for developing the ability to maintain and negotiate conversations, which are essential components of effective communication (Wagstaff, 2022). Therefore, it is a fact that collaborative activities enhanced language proficiency and the subskills that involves.

According to Ironsi (2023) Collaborative activities foster a comfortable, supportive atmosphere where EFL learners can communicate freely, thus reducing the anxiety often associated with speaking in a foreign language. A major barrier to effective speaking is the

high level of anxiety that learners feel about making mistakes or being judged, which is particularly common among introverted learners.

This research paper investigates the potential collaborative strategies and assessment tools which work to improve speaking in relation to the A1-A2 level of EFL classrooms. So, this is divided over some chapters as follows.

Chapter 1: This chapter sets up the theoretical framework by examining the issue or topic from a broad perspective. Afterwards, there is a bibliographic review, the research problem is contextualized and justified, and its objectives are outlined.

Chapter 2: A literature review in which we also introduce a theoretical framework that sets out to provide some initial analytical tools for the analysis of the state of the field as it is. The reflection analyses fundamental elements and theories of the active methodology, and reading comprehension, which support the structure of the intervention proposed.

Chapter 3: This chapter outlines the methodological framework, proposing a quantitative research method that includes both descriptive and quasi-experimental designs.

Chapter 4: This chapter focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the research results.

Chapter 5: This final chapter draws conclusions based on the entire research process and provides recommendations for future studies in line with the research objectives. Additionally, the learning through interdisciplinary projects guide tool is added, in which different learning situations are proposed for applying collaborative work.

1.2. Problem Contextualization

Now more than ever, speaking skills are a necessity for the English language in global society. Global connections, cross-cultural learning, career, and personal development are benefits to fluency in the English language. Most EFL (English as a Foreign Language)

students consider speaking the hardest and yet the most important part of learning a foreign language.

English skill has been gaining recognition among the Latin American countries. Proficiency in the English language can facilitate global connections, promote cross-cultural learning, and foster individual and career development. It is common for students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) to view speaking as the most challenging but essential aspect of language learning (Spence, 2022).

The value of English proficiency is becoming more widely acknowledged in Latin America. Given that English is necessary for participation in the global economy, many nations in the region have included it to varying degrees in their educational systems. Research highlights that English proficiency can significantly impact employability and access to better educational and economic opportunities in Latin America (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017).

However, with these initiatives, the area still has a long way to go until English competence is widely achieved. According to the EF English Proficiency Index, many Latin American countries fall into the low proficiency bands, highlighting a pressing need for effective English language education strategies (EF, 2022)

In Ecuador, the situation reflects the broader regional struggles but with unique local challenges. English education in Ecuadorian schools often encounters several obstacles, such as limited resources, large class sizes, and a lack of adequately trained teachers (Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador, 2016). These factors can impede the development of speaking skills among students. Additionally, Ecuadorian classrooms are largely teacher-centered, so teaching practices favor memorization and precision at the expense of the ability to communicate. In doing this we go for a quantity over quality approach, meaning more

students are hearing English, but probably not very useful for getting students ready to speak in real-world situations using English.

This was particularly challenging for teachers in Ecuador who had to work to cultivate an environment that supported the active use of English against these odds. Additionally, the A2 level students, who are typically at a beginner or elementary proficiency level, need targeted and effective interventions to help them gain confidence and competence in speaking English.

This research aims to address these challenges by exploring the potential of collaborative activities to improve speaking skills in EFL classrooms at a private language academy in the city of Riobamba. In light of the emerging need of the local citizenry to master speaking linguistic skills, according to students' and their parents' opinions; many of them attending this academy come with a background of having received negligent training from their former English teachers. Such structured paradigms need to be unlearned and replaced with effective techniques and strategies that ensure that students feel comfortable and confident in their abilities

Introducing collaborative activities, such as role-plays, group discussions, and peer exchanges, into the EFL curriculum can significantly enhance student speaking practice. These activities create an engaging and encouraging environment, promoting regular and authentic use of English, and alleviating the anxiety associated with speaking in a foreign language.(Hoai & Nguyen, 2024)

1.3. Problem Statement

What are the efficient pedagogical strategies or resources for the development of Speaking Skills in students with level A2 in collaborative environments?

1.4. Reasearch Questions

What are students' difficulties to speak in English?

Which collaborative strategies or methods do students prefer for speaking?

What extent do collaborative activities improve speaking skills?

1.5. Justification

This research is based on the imperative need to find methods, approaches, strategies, and activities that complement each other in the field of English language education for EFL students. Therefore, it is based on the following reasons:

This research seeks to strengthen and promote the development of the speaking language skills of students from a private academy who have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as they seek to improve their language skills to obtain an international Cambridge certificate. Much research has been done in the field of public education. However, studies in private language institutes have yet to be considered of common interest, even when it is evident that many students in the locality opt for a course that guarantees that they will obtain knowledge and an enabling document that certifies their mastery of the language. Finding the appropriate strategies, methods, and activities for a motivated group is the challenge of this research. Understanding that not all student groups are the same, this research seeks to choose functional strategies for improving speaking skills. The information obtained in this research will be replicated through a swarm project in other centers to prepare for international exams.

The feasibility and significance of this research are evident since, when applied to a population of students at level A1-A2 according to the Common European Framework, it allows us to establish bases that help us strengthen the learning and teaching process. Moreover, to see how students evolve and jointly develop at the B1 level. When trying to develop their communication skills in a new language, most Spanish speakers encounter different problems that prevent them from moving to the next level. Diagnosing these factors is crucial to establishing the correct strategies.

This research is feasible because the teaching authorities, students, and parents actively collaborate to seek results that guarantee the learning process so that students with levels one to two, according to the Common European Framework, can move to level B1. However, the feasibility principle lies not only in the personnel that has allowed this research to be possible but also in factors such as the infrastructure, materials, and technological resources the institution investigates. Much is said today about the importance of technology in education, but more needs to be synthesized. Preparing authentic activities that guarantee student progress is the main challenge of this research. The selection and development of strategies will allow this research to be transcendent since it has no precedents within the community.

Starting from the principle that cooperative work and collaborative work are not the same, it is established that the fundamental focus of this research is the student's perspective on applying strategies that help improve their linguistic abilities. Collaborative work involves leadership, organization, systematization, and autonomy in work teams that seek to create safe environments to exchange ideas through plenary sessions, role-playing games, and projects.

The significance of this study is further underscored by its alignment with the line of research proposed by the esteemed Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo. This line of research, which focuses on the Educational Sciences and professional/non-professional training line of research, provides a robust academic framework for our study, enhancing its credibility and relevance.

1.6. Objectives

1.6.1. General Objective

- To determine effective collaborative strategies and assessment methods for enhancing speaking skills in EFL classrooms with A2 level students.

1.6.2. *Specific Objective*

- Identify the difficulties faced by A2-level students when attempting to improve their speaking skills in collaborative activities

- Develop collaborative activities to A2 level that promote the practice and improvement of their speaking skills.

- Analyze the results obtained from the implementation of collaborative activities and their impact on improving the speaking skills in A2-level students.

CHAPTER II

2.   Theoretical Framework

2.1. Collaborative Learning

In collaborative learning environments, students cooperate to accomplish shared objectives, resolve issues, or produce projects. These exercises are essential for developing critical thinking abilities, a deeper comprehension of the material, and improved communication abilities. The responsibilities that teachers and students play are crucial to the success of collaborative learning (Spence, 2022).

2.2. Teacher's role

2.2.1. Facilitator of Learning

Serving as a facilitator is one of the teacher's main responsibilities during group projects. Instead of taking center stage and delivering information, the instructor helps and supports the class while they work in groups. According to Gillies (2006), teachers facilitate by providing clear instructions, setting goals, and offering resources and support as needed. This approach encourages students to take ownership of their learning and develop independent thinking skills

2.2.2. Designer of Collaborative Tasks

Teachers are also responsible for designing meaningful collaborative tasks that are aligned with learning objectives. Effective collaborative activities should be structured to require students to interact, discuss, and solve problems together (Johnson & Johnson, 1999) emphasize that well-designed tasks should promote positive interdependence, where students perceive that their success is linked to the success of their group members . This design element ensures that students are motivated to work collaboratively.

2.2.3. Monitor and Assessor

One further crucial responsibility of the teacher is to oversee and evaluate group activities. Teachers must monitor group interactions, offer comments, and step in when needed to keep students on task. Formative evaluation strategies assist teachers in assessing students' development and the success of the group project. Examples of these strategies include watching group discussions and evaluating draft deliverables. Black & Wiliam (1998) highlight the importance of ongoing assessment to inform instructional decisions and support student learning.

2.2.4. Encourager of Reflection

Promoting introspection is essential to assisting students in comprehending the lessons they have gained from group projects. When students reflect on their group processes and results, teachers should encourage them to talk about what went well and what could have been done better. Students can better absorb and apply insights learnt through reflection to future group projects. Schön (1983) describes reflection as a crucial component of experiential learning, where students learn from their experiences through thoughtful consideration.

2.3. Student's role

2.3.1. Active Participant

Students actively participate in group projects by giving their all to the work at hand and their classmates. They must listen to others, share their thoughts, and participate in debates and decision-making. Theory of social constructivism suggests that learning occurs through social interaction, and students must actively engage in these interactions to construct knowledge collaboratively (Vygotsky, 1978).

2.3.2. Co-Creator of Knowledge

Students who participate in collaborative learning co-create knowledge and collaborate to investigate ideas, find solutions to issues and generate fresh thoughts. They must challenge each other's ideas, build on their contributions, and share their understanding. This process emphasizes in the co-construction of knowledge, through panel discussion where students articulate their thoughts and negotiate meaning through dialogue (Mercer, 1995).

2.3.3. Supporter and Encourager

Students also play the role of supporters and encouragers within their groups. They must foster a supportive environment by being considerate of others' viewpoints, offering helpful criticism, and extending assistance when required. Positive group interactions are crucial for creating a secure, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment where all students feel appreciated and inspired to participate. Webb (2009) highlights that supportive peer interactions enhance learning outcomes by promoting deeper understanding and retention of information.

2.3.4. Self-Regulator

Students must learn self-regulation to collaborate effectively. This includes controlling their emotions, time, and responsibilities while working in groups. They also have to maintain their concentration, adhere to deadlines, and settle disputes amicably. Zimmerman (2000) describes self-regulation as a key factor in academic success, where students take control of their learning through goal setting, self-monitoring, and self-reflection .

2.4. Principles of Collaborative Learning

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, collaborative exercises are crucial to developing students' communication abilities, cultural sensitivity, and sense of

collaboration. These activities must be carefully planned to match the language proficiency of A2 learners while encouraging active involvement and engagement. The following are essential guidelines for implementing productive group projects with A2 students in EFL classes.

2.4.1. Clear Objectives and Instructions

Research shows that clear instructions and defined objectives significantly enhance student engagement and task completion in language learning activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In other words, establish clear, achievable objectives for each collaborative activity and provide explicit instructions to ensure students understand the task.

2.4.2. Balanced Group Composition

Balanced group composition is crucial for effective collaborative learning, as it promotes equal participation and peer-assisted learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Therefore, forming groups that balance language proficiency, personality types, and learning styles can maximize peer learning and participation.

2.4.3. Interactive and Engaging Activities

Design interactive, engaging, and relevant activities to students' interests to maintain motivation and enthusiasm. As the author said engaging and relevant activities have been shown to increase student motivation and retention of language skills (Dörnyei, 2001).

2.4.4. Supportive Learning Environment

A supportive learning environment where mistakes are embraced as part of the learning process encourages students to take linguistic risks and improves overall language proficiency (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Therefore, create a classroom atmosphere that encourages risk-taking and values effort over accuracy, promoting a supportive environment for language practice.

2.4.5. *Teacher Facilitation and Monitoring*

Effective teacher facilitation and monitoring are essential for maintaining student engagement and ensuring that collaborative activities remain productive (Gillies, 2006). Therefore, actively facilitate and monitor collaborative activities to ensure all students are engaged and on task.

2.4.6. *Reflection and Feedback*

Reflection and feedback are critical components of the learning process, helping students internalize their experiences and improve future performance (Schön, 1983). In other words. Incorporate feedback sessions and reflection to assist students in assessing their performance and drawing lessons from their experiences.

2.5. Collaborative and Cooperative Learning Differences

Cooperative and collaborative learning are two different methods in educational pedagogies that are sometimes confused because of their shared goals of encouraging student interaction and developing a deeper comprehension of the subject matter. The ways in which these approaches are implemented, their functions, and their pedagogical approaches vary greatly, though.

2.5.1. *Cooperative Learning: Structured Teamwork*

In cooperative learning, students cooperate in small groups to accomplish a shared academic objective under an organized approach to group work. The approach is quite structured, with each group member having a straightforward job, responsibility, and stated objectives. Key components of cooperative learning include the following:

Teacher-Centered Planning: The teacher designs the tasks and provides specific instructions on how the groups should function. This includes assigning roles such as the leader, recorder, timekeeper, and presenter to ensure that every student contributes to the task (Kagan, 1994).

Positive Interdependence: Students rely on each other to achieve the group's goals. The success of one student helps others to succeed, fostering a sense of responsibility and accountability among group members (Johnson et al., 1998).

Individual Accountability: Each student is assessed individually based on their contribution to the group's work. This ensures that all members are actively participating and learning (Slavin, 1995).

Group Processing: Groups regularly reflect on their functioning and seek ways to improve their collaboration. This includes discussing what worked well and what can be improved in future tasks (Johnson et al., 1998).

Interpersonal Skills Development: Emphasis is placed on developing students' social skills, such as communication, conflict resolution, and leadership (Kagan, 1994).

2.5.2. *Collaborative Learning: Shared Authority and Responsibility*

Compared to cooperative learning, collaborative learning is less regimented and more flexible, although sharing a similar group-based methodology. It places a strong emphasis on joint authority and knowledge construction. The following are some traits that set collaborative learning apart:

Student-Centered Planning: In collaborative learning, students have more control over the planning and execution of tasks. The teacher acts as a facilitator rather than a director, providing guidance and support as needed (Panitz, 1999).

Shared Goals and Decision-Making: Students work together to define their goals and make decisions about how to achieve them. This approach encourages active participation and equal contribution from all members (Smith & MacGregor, 1992).

Mutual Engagement: All students are equally responsible for the learning process and outcomes. There is a strong focus on dialogue, negotiation, and collective problem-solving (Dooly, 2008).

Emphasis on Process: The learning process is valued as much as the end result. Students are encouraged to explore different perspectives, question assumptions, and develop critical thinking skills (Panitz, 1999).

Community Building: Collaborative learning fosters a sense of community and belonging. Students build relationships based on mutual respect and shared intellectual pursuits (Smith & MacGregor, 1992).

2.6. Collaborative Activities

It is imperative that students at the A2-B1 level who are moving from primary to intermediate proficiency practice speaking in a second language. Learners at these levels require planned, entertaining activities that foster confidence, fluency, and interaction. Collaborative activities offer a great way to accomplish these objectives by creating a safe space where students can practice speaking in authentic situations. This article examines several productive group exercises that help students at the A2-B1 level develop their speaking abilities.

2.6.1. Role plays

Role-playing involves students acting out scenarios that simulate real-life situations. This activity encourages the spontaneous use of language and helps students practice conversational phrases and vocabulary (Harmer, 2007). With role-playing activities and improvisation games, students can work on language skills like active listening and presenting. Below there is a way to apply:

Pair or group students and assign roles that mirror everyday situations (e.g., shopping, ordering food, asking for directions). This practical approach ensures that students can apply their language skills in real-life contexts. Provide role cards with specific information and objectives. These cards should include details about the character the student is playing, their background, and the specific language they need to use. The

objectives should outline what the student needs to achieve in the role-play, such as successfully ordering a meal or asking for directions. Allow preparation time and then have students perform the role-play in front of the class or small groups.

2.6.2. *Project-Based Learning (PBL)*

Project-based learning, a collaborative approach, involves students working together on a project that culminates in a presentation, report, or product (Harmer, 2007). Below there is an example of the application of this activity:

Define a project related to the curriculum, such as creating a travel brochure that incorporates geography and writing skills, conducting a survey that involves data analysis and interpretation, or organizing an event that requires teamwork and leadership. Group students and outline the project stages (planning, research, creation, presentation). Provide guidance and checkpoints to ensure progress. There are some benefits like:

- Integrates multiple language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening).
- Encourages long-term collaboration.
- Develops research and presentation skills.

2.6.3. *Team building activities*

Team building activities are an opportunity for students to develop their collaborative learning skills. They also help students build rapport with one another and have fun at the same time!

One effective activity is to use your classroom furniture to create an obstacle course for your students to navigate:

When the class begins, split students into pairs. Try to avoid pairing students who are already friends, as they don't need help building their relationships.

Hand out blindfolds. One student in each pair can put on a blindfold.

Their partner must guide them through the obstacle course by giving directions to let them know which way to go.

Once each pair has had a turn, get the students to help you rearrange the furniture and then the guider can become the guided.

This activity gets students moving and practicing their communication skills. It's a strong follow-up class after a lesson focused on body parts or giving directions. It will allow students to use their new vocabulary in context, work on their pronunciation and ask and answer questions (Spence, 2022).

Using these types of activities, such as games and movement dynamics, not only ensures that students are motivated to improve their language skills but also allows them to build their confidence. Moreover, it reinforces any doubts among peers. Trusting that many times, the best teachers that students can find are their classmates allows them to have a safe space for interaction between classmates and teachers. One of the biggest challenges to overcome when learning a foreign language is the fear of making a fool. However, that can only be overcome when students are confident that the group understands that making mistakes is also crucial to learning.

2.7. Assessment

The practical implications of integrating assessment into speaking activities are significant. Educators with a high level of Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) can use test results to align their instruction with the needs revealed by such evaluation (Heydarnejad et al., 2022). For instance, they can adapt their teaching strategies based on the assessment results, indicating areas where many learners did not attain a certain skill. Moreover, positive attitudes towards these evaluations as tools for learning can enhance the success of oral communication tasks when adopted by instructors. This is supported by a study published in

Black & Wiliam (1998) which found that students who received regular feedback on their speaking performance showed significant improvement over time.

2.7.1. *Language Assessment Literacy (LAL):*

According to Farhady & Tavassoli (2021) the effectiveness of assessments in speaking activities is closely linked to teachers' language assessment literacy. For instance, teachers with Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) are more likely to design valid and reliable tests. This means they understand how different types of questions can measure students' speaking skills. Moreover, they can create grading criteria based on specific features such as fluency, pronunciation, or grammar accuracy. Research highlights the need for professional development programs to enhance teachers' LAL because this will improve assessment quality and student outcomes (Sultana, 2019).

2.7.2. *Performance-Based Assessments (PBA):*

EFL learners' speaking abilities can be significantly improved through performance-based assessments. These kinds of tests demand that learners perform tasks in real-life situations, which can increase their motivation while decreasing anxiety towards using the target language. According to Heydarnejad et al. (2022) self-efficacy also improves when students are required to do authentic assessment tasks. The theoretical foundations for PBA draw on social-constructivist theories that emphasize social interaction and the practical application of knowledge during learning .

2.7.3. *Formative Assessments:*

In any speaking activity, formative evaluation is key because it provides continuous feedback to the learners. This feedback is crucial in helping students identify their areas of strength and weakness, thus creating room for improvement. This, in turn, makes them feel more supported during the learning process. Farhady & Tavassoli (2021) argues that

effective formative assessments should make learners participate actively and confidently in oral communication tasks.

2.8. Communicative Competence

Communicative competence refers to the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in various contexts. It is not only about knowing grammar and vocabulary but also about understanding social norms, cultural expectations, and the subtleties of effective communication (Hymes, 2020). In our globalized world, developing communicative competence has become extremely important for success—both personally and professionally. One of the best ways to improve this ability is to get students to work together without being told what to do. When we work together, we practice language and essential communication strategies that help us deal with challenging situations.

The theory that looks at speaking and listening's skills. Communicative competence was first introduced in the 1960s by sociolinguist Dell Hymes. Hymes (2020) concluded that a person must know how to create sentences, but also how and when to use them. In other words, we can say that it is not sufficient to only use grammatically correct sentences. Hymes' view of communicative competence contains several components.

Collaborative activities refer to learning-oriented tasks in which learners work together for a common aim. These practices like information gap necessitate communication which makes it ideal for developing communicative competence. They necessarily involve real communication and social interaction and negotiation of meaning (Swain, 1993). By being involved in them students improve all four components of communicative competence.

Social interaction through collaborative activities is important for the development of communicative competence learners of English as foreign language. When teachers give learners real-world tasks, they have a chance to negotiate meanings, get feedback

immediately and build confidence. These activities help develop useful language skills other than grammar and vocabulary. When people learn together, they can learn English in real life. By using English collaboratively, one can grasp similar ideas and use English in different contexts. As language classes evolve in features and scenarios, it is important that it incorporates collaborative interactive practices to equip learners with the communicative skills useful in the globalizing world.

2.9. What makes Speaking Difficult

Many learners, particularly those studying English as a foreign language (EFL), grapple with the complexities of speaking. The challenges they face, such as anxiety and stress, self-efficacy and confidence, cultural differences, technological interventions, and the influence of social media and online learning, are not to be underestimated. Recent studies have underscored these factors as significant contributors to the arduous journey of speaking for EFL learners.

2.9.1. Anxiety and Stress

For introverted learners, the EFL context can be a daunting space. The fear of judgment and making mistakes often leads to silence, denying these learners the opportunity to practice speaking and hindering their improvement. This is a challenge that needs to be addressed in language education (Mishu et al., 2022).

2.9.2. Self-Efficacy and Confidence

Self-efficacy, a key factor in speaking among EFL students, is the belief in one's capability to perform specific tasks successfully. For learners who harbor doubts about their abilities, speaking can be a nerve-wracking experience. However, the potential of positive reinforcement to elevate self-efficacy levels and foster confidence should not be overlooked. This can transform hesitant learners into willing participants during speaking engagements, empowering them in their language-learning journey (Wang et al., 2022).

The struggles of EFL learners in developing their speaking ability necessitate a comprehensive solution that encompasses psychological, cultural, and technological factors. This solution entails the creation of a supportive environment where students feel safe to express their thoughts and feelings, irrespective of their backgrounds or belief systems. It also involves leveraging available resources, such as computers, to instill confidence among the learners, thereby making the journey of EFL more manageable for them.

2.10. Principles for Designing Techniques

Effective speaking techniques are crucial for language teachers aiming to enhance their students' verbal communication skills. Designing these techniques involves combining theoretical knowledge and practical application, ensuring students grasp and utilize the target language in real-world contexts. Here are fundamental principles to consider:

2.10.1. Authenticity

Authenticity in speaking activities not only mirrors real-life situations but also empowers students by immersing them in language contexts they would encounter outside the classroom. This approach fosters a sense of real-world readiness, making students feel confident and prepared. Examples include role-plays, simulations, and discussions on current events (Richards, 2006).

2.10.2. Interactive and Communicative

According to Brown (2001) speaking activities, when designed to be interactive and communicative, promote a sense of collaboration among students. This approach encourages them to communicate meaningfully with one another, fostering a sense of shared learning and understanding. This can be achieved through pair or group work, discussions, and interactive games that require students to share information, ask questions, and respond to others.

2.10.3. Task-Based Learning

Task-based learning, when implemented effectively, focuses on completing specific tasks using the target language (Ellis, 2003) . This approach helps students focus on using the language to achieve a goal, which can be a source of great satisfaction and motivation. It's about more than just practicing isolated language forms; it's about applying the language in a meaningful way.

2.10.4. Focus on Fluency and Accuracy

Balancing fluency and accuracy is essential in speaking activities. Fluency activities help students speak smoothly and naturally, while accuracy activities focus on correct language use. Both are necessary for effective communication (Nation, 2009).

2.10.5. Scaffolded Learning

Scaffolding involves providing students with support at the beginning of their learning process and gradually removing it as they become more proficient (Wood et al., 1976).

This can include language prompts, visual aids, or structured frameworks for speaking activities.

2.10.6. Feedback and Assessment

Timely and constructive feedback helps students to understand their strengths and areas for improvement (Ur, 1996) . Both peer and teacher feedback are valuable. Assessments should be aligned with learning objectives and provide insights into students' progress.

2.10.7. Motivation and Engagement

Engaging students in exciting and enjoyable activities increases their motivation to participate. When motivated, students are more likely to take risks and practice speaking more frequently (Dörnyei, 2001).

2.11. The role of interdisciplinary projects in Education

Interdisciplinary projects combine concepts from diverse disciplines, allowing students to approach problems in innovative, multifaceted ways. For example, a project that merges science and art may require students to explain scientific data in a visually creative format, engaging both analytical and expressive skills. Such projects encourage students to communicate across fields, adapting their language to meet the needs of a broader audience (Lattuca et al., 2004). This interaction enhances their active listening skills, adjusts communication to various perspectives, and sharpens their speaking abilities with greater nuance.

According to Beers and Nagy (2009), interdisciplinary learning also helps students appreciate the connections between different domains, facilitating a richer understanding of the material and its practical applications. This interaction enhances their active listening skills, adjusts communication to various perspectives, and sharpens their speaking abilities with greater nuance

CHAPTER III

3. Metholodogy

This section explains the research methodology utilized in the present study. A quantitative approach was initially selected due to the nature of the data collected, which was numerical. The research adhered to the scientific method, incorporating systematic and experimental steps that allowed for hypothesis testing through controlled, repeatable, and accurate procedures (Smith, & Jones, 2018). The study applied the Deductive Hypothetical method, starting with an initial hypothesis that was experimentally tested to conclude (Taylor, 2020). Additionally, qualitative research was employed to meet the objective of determining effective collaborative strategies and assessment methods for enhancing speaking skills, among A2 level students from a private Language Academy in Riobamba.

3.1. Research Design

This study followed a quasi-experimental design, which does not involve randomly assigning students to groups. Instead, two intact classes of A2-level learners were chosen. One class was designated as the experimental group and participated in a series of collaborative learning activities designed to enhance speaking skills, while the other class served as the comparison group and continued with their regular lessons. To understand the effect of the intervention, both groups completed speaking assessments before and after the implementation.

The research was guided by a clear purpose: to explore which collaborative strategies and assessment methods are most effective in supporting A2 learners in an EFL classroom at a private language academy in Riobamba. To address this, the process began with a review of the literature to identify strategies that have proven useful for developing speaking skills. Based on these findings, a proposal was created and applied in the experimental group. The students' performance was then evaluated through pre- and post-tests, which made it possible

to identify both the progress achieved and the difficulties learners faced when working collaboratively (Cohen et al., 2007). Finally, the results were analyzed statistically to draw conclusions about the intervention's impact.

3.2. Population and Sample

This study involved 30 participants, aged between 19 and 28 years old. All the participants were enrolled at a private language academy in Riobamba. The students had different levels of English proficiency, ranging from A1 to A2 according to the Common European Framework (CEF). Based on a pre-test, 23% of the students were at the A1 (beginner) level, while 77% were at the A2 (elementary) level.

Therefore, it was noted that the target group had a generally low level of English proficiency.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

Data collection included a Speaking English test with a questionnaire.

Technique: Questionnaire: The questionnaire was taken from the international PET exam by Cambridge University Press & Assessment, 2025 (See Annex 1). For the pre- and post-tests, speaking skills were considered exclusively, and the rubric provided by this international assessment was used to assess the student. This technique was appropriate for measuring English language proficiency and, in turn, determining the impact on speaking skills by comparing the results before and after the research. This international assessment is governed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

For the appropriate review of this questionnaire, a rubric (Annex 2) is included in which the following evaluation criteria are considered: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.

The instrument: Pre and post-test: To achieve goals, students took two exams. First, the pre-test at the beginning of the process. Then the post-test at the end of the classroom intervention. Moreover, the researcher directed observed the research object. Observation let know reality through the perception. Scientific observation as a method consists of the direct perception of the object of research. Investigative observation is the universal instrument of the scientist. Observation lets us know reality through the direct perception of objects and phenomena.

Teaching technique: Observation

To achieve the objectives of this research, it was crucial to consider student performance. The students developed interdisciplinary projects, and for each project, they completed a Learning Log narrating their experiences during the project. Therefore, the researcher conducted direct observation, analyzing the different perceptions. Observation is the way that helps synthesize shared information from very personal experiences.

The Instrument: The Learning Log (See Annex 3) is a chart consisting of self-reflection questions to be completed individually by team members adapted and created by the researcher. After the presentation of the Learning Logs, a plenary session is held to reflect and discuss the aspects to be improved as a team for the next project.

3.4. Procedure Techniques for Analysis

The data analysis procedure aligns with the study's purpose and objectives. The primary method used was a pre-test and post-test design to assess the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning strategies in improving students' speaking skills. The researcher developed a speaking test that was administered to the population—

Initially, the group took the pre-test to establish a baseline for their speaking skills. Following this, the researcher proposed applying Collaborative Learning strategies to

enhance English speaking abilities. This proposal included detailed lesson plans tailored explicitly for the experimental group.

The classroom intervention took place over 120 pedagogical hours, during which 30 students in the experimental group were taught using the Collaborative Learning approach, supplemented with materials provided by Cambridge University Press according to the syllabus of the Language center.

Seeking a way to combine the current Syllabus and propose strategies to improve speaking skills in collaborative activities, the researcher designed a guide that includes six interdisciplinary projects. The interdisciplinary project aim to improve students' language social and multilingual skills. These areas will be measured with a detailed rubric (See annex 49), which covers the specific subskills within each area. Meanwhile the control group of 30 students continued with their usual textbook-based classes.

After the intervention both groups took a post test to assess the treatment effects. The results were compared to check if there were a difference in speaking performance between the experimental and control groups.

To gather numerical data, a rubric was used to assess key, criteria including grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation and interaction. The rubric contains five performance levels with a maximum possible score of 15.

Descriptive statistics were use in SPSS to compare the group´s average scores before and after the intervention.

Ethical considerations were also taken into account throughout this study. According to Creswell (2014), research ethics ensure that scientific practices are carried out in ways that advance knowledge improve human understanding, and benefic society. This research adhered to these ethical standards by ensuring its value aiming to improve English Language

proficiency and its scientific validity maintaining methodological rigor to ensure that the research was beneficial and meaningful for participants.

CHAPTER IV

4. Analysis and Interpretation of results

After collecting the pre-test and post-test results, the data were compiled and analyzed. This section presents the findings in the order they were obtained.

4.1. Pre-post and post results

The results were gathered from quasi-experimental research combine qualitative and quantitative data and the three research questions were answered.

First research question, to what are students' difficulties to speak English? Is answered in Table 1. A comparison of the pre-test and post-test results shows a clear improvement in students' oral language performance across most of the evaluated areas. On average, scores increased from 8.19 to 9.17, indicating a positive impact of the instructional intervention on their speaking skills.

When we look at each area, we notice clear progress. Grammar and Vocabulary scores dropped a bit from 2.5 to 2.4. This small change does not mean students lost skill. It could mean they began taking more risks with language or tried using more complex structures after the intervention.

Discourse Management showed the largest improvement, rising from 1.85 to 2.47. This means students got better at organizing their ideas, speaking clearly, and staying on topic. Pronunciation also improved, going from 1.59 to 2.0, likely because of more speaking practice and better awareness of word sounds. Interactive Communication went up a little, from 2.25 to 2.3, showing students became more effective at having conversations, taking turns, and working together on speaking tasks.

Another good sign is that the standard deviation decreased from 1.66 to 0.90, indicating that students' scores became more consistent and fewer outliers occurred. The

lowest score went up from 5.0 to 7.75, showing real progress for students who had struggled before. The highest score stayed at 10, so top students kept doing well.

All in all, these results suggest that the teaching strategies employed were successful in developing key speaking skills, particularly fluency, coherence, and pronunciation. To ensure balanced language development, it may be helpful to place a bit more emphasis on grammar and vocabulary in future lessons.

Furthermore, to support the quantitative data, participants shared their perspectives through learning logs (Annex 3), which allowed us to gain a more holistic view of their opinions. Through these reflections, we saw how students initially expressed difficulty in using language appropriately, as these barriers often stem from their prior knowledge of Spanish, and they sought to translate these ideas literally into English. Among the most common opinions in the reflections, the researcher saw that students argued that one way to use appropriate language in the right situations is through practice, which is easier to develop when developed in environments of trust, security, and friendship. In the sub-skill titled "engage and support others," students perceive that shared ideas for the development of their projects are heard and considered. Sometimes these ideas are adopted with input from other teammates.

Students interact not only during class time in the classroom but also from their homes using various technologies and media. Within the sub-skill is the following one titled "Connect and interact with others using appropriate technology." In their reflections within this sub-skill, interaction does not always occur in English (the target language). Therefore, motivation is always a priority, and students are constantly aware that this is an aspect that needs to be improved to become more fluent in English, both in oral and written skills. The use of appropriate discourse depends on several factors: whether the language context is

formal or informal, whether it is structured, the age of the participants, their level of maturity and decision-making.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics between Pre-Test and Post Test

Pre-test		Post Test	
Grammar and Vocabulary	2.5	Grammar and Vocabulary	2.4
Discourse management	1.85	Discourse management	2.47
Pronunciation	1.59	Pronunciation	2.0
Interactive Communication	2.25	Interactive Communication	2.3
Mean	8.19	Mean	9.17
Min	5		7.75
Max	10		10
Std. Derivation	1.66		0.90

Table 2. Levene's Test for equality of variances

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for equality of variances		t- test equality of means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.2	Mean Difference	Std. Error difference	95% Confidence interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pre-Test	Equal variances assumed	3.48	0.073	0.358	41	0.702	0.265	0.77	1.25	1.83
	Equal variances not assumed			0.359	35.24	0.7	0.265	0.763	1.245	1.83
Post Test	Equal variances assumed	3.91	0.05	4.31	44	0.00	-2.538	0.577	3.70	1.35
	Equal variances not assumed			4.38	35.61	0.00	-2.538	0.564	3.69	1.35

In table 2, before comparing the groups' results, Levene's Test was used to check whether the assumption of equal variances held true—an important step before running the independent samples t-test. For the pre-test, the test produced an F-value of 3.48 with a p-value of 0.073. Since this value is higher than the typical threshold of 0.05, we can assume that the variances between the groups are not significantly different. Based on this, the t-test

assuming equal variances was used, resulting in t(41) = 0.358, p = 0.702. This indicates that there was no significant difference in the groups' average scores at the pre-test stage.

In the case of the post-test, Levene's Test yielded an F-value of 3.91 and a p-value of exactly 0.05. While this result is on the edge of significance, both versions of the t-test (assuming equal or unequal variances) produced strong evidence of a difference, with p-values well below 0.001. Using the equal variances assumption, the t-test yielded a value of t(44) = 4.31, p = 0.000, with a mean difference of -2.538 between the groups.

In simpler terms, the post-test results show a statistically significant improvement for one group over the other, regardless of whether the group variances were perfectly equal. These findings suggest that the instructional intervention had a clear and meaningful impact on learning outcomes

4.2. Discussion

This research work focuses on determining effective collaborative strategies and assessment methods for enhance speaking skills in EFL classrooms among A2 level students from a private Language Academy in Riobamba.

There were positive results after the intervention which were evidenced in the post-test. Students from the experimental group obtained better results that their partners who participated in the control group. These results are like a number of previous studies like those performed by Supraba (2018) and Lascano (2021) who concluded that the application of Think-pair-share as a Cooperative learning strategy was beneficial for students' speaking skills improvement.

During the intervention, students developed micro-curricular projects in which they put their collaborative skills into practice. Similar results have been found with Lattuca et al. (2004) who argue that interdisciplinary projects combine concepts from diverse disciplines, allowing students to approach problems in innovative, multifaceted ways. For

example, a project that merges science and art may require students to explain scientific data in a visually creative format, engaging both analytical and expressive skills. Such projects encourage students to communicate across fields, adapting their language to meet the needs of a broader audience This interaction enhances their active listening skills, adjusts communication to various perspectives, and sharpens their speaking abilities with greater nuance.

According to Spelt et al.(2009) interdisciplinary learning also helps students appreciate the connections between different domains, facilitating a richer understanding of the material and its practical applications. This interaction enhances their active listening skills, adjusts communication to various perspectives, and sharpens their speaking abilities with greater nuance.

CHAPTER V

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1.Conclusions

The implementation of collaborative strategies and assessment methods has proven effective in enhancing the speaking skills A2-level students in an EFL classroom. The following conclusions can be drawn from the achievement of the project's results:

Through careful observation and analysis, the study identified several key challenges faced by A2-level students when attempting to improve their speaking skills during collaborative activities.

The main challenges were limited vocabulary, low speaking confidence, and trouble with pronunciation. Identifying these issues enabled us to plan activities that addressed them directly.

The study successfully developed a series of interdisciplinary collaborative activities designed to promote speaking practice and skill improvement among A2-level students. These projects incorporated peer interaction, group discussions, role-playing, and other communicative tasks, encouraging students to engage in more dynamic speaking practices. These projects were tailored to meet the specific needs of A2 learners, enabling them to build confidence and fluency in real-life speaking situations.

Comparing pre- and post-test results showed that students in the experimental group improved their speaking skills. They made clear progress in grammar, vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.

This progress was especially evident in how students participated in conversations and shared their ideas more clearly and with greater confidence.

In conclusion, collaborative strategies, coupled with appropriate assessment methods, proved to be an effective approach to enhancing the speaking skills A2 A2-level

EFL students. The findings suggest that such strategies can be widely applied in similar contexts to help language learners overcome speaking challenges and achieve greater communicative competence.

5.2. Recommendations

It is recommended that educators conduct regular diagnostic assessments and needs analyses to identify specific linguistic and affective barriers that hinder speaking development. Tailored support, such as vocabulary-building exercises, pronunciation drills, and confidence-boosting speaking tasks, should be systematically integrated into lesson planning to address these challenges effectively.

Educators and curriculum designers should continue to design and implement interdisciplinary collaborative tasks that reflect real-life communication scenarios. Activities such as role-plays, simulations, and structured group discussions should be adapted to learners' proficiency levels and integrated consistently to encourage meaningful language use and progressive skill development.

It is recommended that similar collaborative activity models be adopted and adapted in other EFL classrooms aiming to improve speaking skills. Additionally, implementing pre- and post-assessment tools should become standard practice to monitor learner progress, evaluate instructional impact, and refine teaching strategies accordingly.

Teachers should prioritize communicative competence by creating a classroom culture that values student voice and encourages risk-taking in speaking. Incorporating regular speaking opportunities, feedback sessions, and peer interaction can further enhance students' active participation and self-expression.

Language programs should consider adopting collaborative teaching and assessment frameworks as a core component of their methodology. Providing teacher training on the

design and facilitation of collaborative learning and on formative assessment practices can

help ensure the sustained effectiveness of such approaches in diverse EFL settings.

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6. Annexes

ANNEX 1

PRELIMINARY SPEAKING

Sample Test 2018

Examiner booklet

Confidential

Contents

Part 1

General questions

Part 2

1A Learning a language
1B At a party

Parts 3 and 4

1 Work and relaxation

Part 1 (2–3 minutes)

Phase 1
Interlocutor

To both candidates	Good morning/afternoon/evening. Can I have your mark sheets, please? *Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.* I'm ………… and this is …………. .
To Candidate A	What's your name? Where do you live? Thank you.
To Candidate B	And what's your name? Where do you live? Thank you.

	Back-up prompts
B, do you work or are you a student?	Do you have a job? Do you study?
What do you do/study?	What job do you do? What subject do you study?
Thank you.	
And **A**, do you work or are you a student?	Do you have a job? Do you study?
What do you do/study?	What job do you do? What subject do you study?
Thank you.	

Phase 2
Interlocutor

Select one or more questions from the list to ask each candidate.
Ask Candidate A first.

	Back-up prompts
How do you get to work/school/university every day?	Do you usually travel by car? (Why/Why not?)
What did you do yesterday evening/last weekend?	Did you do anything yesterday evening/last weekend? What?
Do you think that English will be useful for you in the future? (Why/Why not?)	Will you use English in the future? (Why?/Why not?)
Tell us about the people you live with.	Do you live with friends/your family?
Thank you.	

1A Learning a language

Interlocutor	Now I'd like each of you to talk on your own about something. I'm going to give each of you a photograph and I'd like you to talk about it. **A,** here is your photograph. It shows **people learning a language.** *Place **Part 2** booklet, open at **Task 1A**, in front of candidate.* **B**, you just listen. **A**, please tell us what you can see in the photograph.
Candidate A 🕐 *approx. 1 minute*	…………………………………………… **Back-up prompts** • Talk about the people/person. • Talk about the place. • Talk about other things in the photograph.
Interlocutor	Thank you. (Can I have the booklet please?) *Retrieve **Part 2** booklet.*

1B At a party

Interlocutor	**B**, here is your photograph. It shows **people at a party.** *Place **Part 2** booklet, open at **Task 1B**, in front of candidate.* **A**, you just listen. **B**, please tell us what you can see in the photograph.
Candidate B 🕐 *approx. 1 minute*	…………………………………………… **Back-up prompts** • Talk about the people/person. • Talk about the place. • Talk about other things in the photograph.
Interlocutor	Thank you. (Can I have the booklet please?) *Retrieve **Part 2** booklet.*

1A

1B

Parts 3 and 4 (6 minutes)

Part 3

Interlocutor	Now, in this part of the test you're going to talk about something together for about two minutes. I'm going to describe a situation to you.
	*Place **Part 3** booklet, open at **Task 1**, in front of the candidates.*
	A young man works very hard, and has only one free day a week. He wants to find an activity to help him relax.
	Here are some activities that could help him relax.
	Talk together about the different activities he could do, and say which would be most relaxing.
	All right? Now, talk together.
Candidates ⏲ *approx. 2–3 minutes*	………….…………….…………….………
Interlocutor	Thank you. (Can I have the booklet please?) *Retrieve **Part 3** booklet.*

Part 4

Interlocutor

Use the following questions, as appropriate:

- **What do you do when you want to relax? (Why?)**

- **Do you prefer to relax with friends or alone? (Why?)**

- **Is it important to do exercise in your free time? (Why?/Why not?)**

- **Is it useful to learn new skills in your free time? (Why?/Why not?)**

- **Do you think people spend too much time working/studying these days? (Why?/Why not?)**

> *Select any of the following prompts, as appropriate:*
>
> - **How/what about you?**
> - **Do you agree?**
> - **What do you think?**

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

Activities to help the man relax

Paper 4

Paper 4:

Speaking tasks

10–12 minutes (for pairs) **15–17 minutes** (for groups of 3 students)

PART	TIMING	INTERACTION	TASK TYPES	WHAT DO CANDIDATES HAVE TO DO?
1	2 minutes	Interlocutor ↓ Candidate	Interlocutor asks questions to each candidate in turn	**Respond to questions**, giving factual or personal information.
2	3 minutes	Candidate extended turn	Extended turn	**Describe one colour photograph**, talking for about 1 minute.
3	4 minutes	Candidate ↕ Candidate	Discussion task with visual stimulus	**Make and respond to suggestions**, discuss alternatives and negotiate agreement.
4	3 minutes	Candidate ↕ Candidate	General conversation	**Discuss** likes, dislikes, experiences, opinions, habits, etc.

Assessment

Examiners and marking

The quality assurance of Speaking Examiners (SEs) is managed by Team Leaders (TLs). TLs ensure all examiners successfully complete examiner training and regular certification of procedure and assessment before they examine. TLs are in turn responsible to a Professional Support Leader (PSL) who is the professional representative of Cambridge Assessment English for the Speaking tests in a given country or region.

Annual examiner certification involves attendance at a face-to-face meeting to focus on and discuss assessment and procedure, followed by the marking of sample Speaking tests in an online environment. Examiners must complete standardisation of assessment for all relevant levels each year and are regularly monitored during live testing sessions.

Assessment scales

Throughout the test candidates are assessed on their own individual performance and not in relation to each other. They are awarded marks by two examiners: the assessor and the interlocutor. The assessor awards marks by applying performance descriptors from the analytical assessment scales for the following criteria:

- Grammar and Vocabulary
- Discourse Management
- Pronunciation
- Interactive Communication.

The interlocutor awards a mark for global achievement using the global achievement scale.

B1	GLOBAL ACHIEVEMENT
5	Handles communication on familiar topics, despite some hesitation. Organises extended discourse but occasionally produces utterances that lack coherence, and some inaccuracies and inappropriate usage occur.
4	*Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.*
3	Handles communication in everyday situations, despite hesitation. Constructs longer utterances but is not able to use complex language except in well-rehearsed utterances.
2	*Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.*
1	Conveys basic meaning in very familiar everyday situations. Produces utterances which tend to be very short – words or phrases – with frequent hesitation and pauses.
0	*Performance below Band 1.*

Assessment for B1 Preliminary is based on performance across all parts of the test, and is achieved by applying the relevant descriptors in the assessment scales. The assessment scales for B1 Preliminary (shown on the next page) are extracted from the overall Speaking scales on page 64.

B1 Preliminary Speaking Examiners use a more detailed version of the following assessment scales, extracted from the overall Speaking scales on page 64.

B1	GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION
5	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar topics.	Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are relevant despite some repetition. Uses a range of cohesive devices.	Is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
4	*Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.*			
3	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.	Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	Initiates and responds appropriately. Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
2	*Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.*			
1	Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary to talk about familiar topics.	Produces responses which are characterised by short phrases and frequent hesitation. Repeats information or digresses from the topic.	Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. Requires prompting and support.
0	*Performance below Band 1.*			

Overall Speaking scales

CEFR LEVEL	GRAMMATICAL RESOURCE	LEXICAL RESOURCE	DISCOURSE MANAGEMENT	PRONUNCIATION	INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION
	Maintains control of a wide range of grammatical forms and uses them with flexibility.	Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary with flexibility to give and exchange views on unfamiliar and abstract topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with flexibility and ease and very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant, coherent, varied and detailed. Makes full and effective use of a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Phonological features are used effectively to convey and enhance meaning.	Interacts with ease by skilfully interweaving his/her contributions into the conversation. Widens the scope of the interaction and develops it fully and effectively towards a negotiated outcome.
C2	Maintains control of a wide range of grammatical forms.	Uses a wide range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on unfamiliar and abstract topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with ease and with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant, coherent and varied. Uses a wide range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Intonation is appropriate. Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	Interacts with ease, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Widens the scope of the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
C1	Shows a good degree of control of a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms.	Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on familiar and unfamiliar topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is a clear organisation of ideas. Uses a range of cohesive devices and discourse markers.	Is intelligible. Intonation is appropriate. Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
	GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY				
B2	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. Uses appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views, on a range of familiar topics.		Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is very little repetition. Uses a range of cohesive devices.	Is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
B1	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about familiar topics.		Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, but there may be some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	Initiates and responds appropriately. Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
A2	Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. Uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations.			Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. Requires prompting and support.
A1	Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.			Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible.	Has considerable difficulty maintaining simple exchanges. Requires additional prompting and support.

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ANNEX 3

Learning Log for Students

Name: **Date:**   **Units**

SUB- SKILL	THINK: Do I use this sub-skill in my life?How/When do I use it?	REFLECT: How did I use this sub-skill in this unit? What went well? What did not go well?	NEXT STEPS: How will I use this sub-skill next time? What can I do to improve?
Use language appropriate for the situation			
Connect and interact with others using appropriate technology (e.g. email, apps, chats, forums, blogs)			
Structure spoken and written texts effectively			
Identify, gather and organise relevant information			
Engage and support others			

ANNEXE 4

Sub-skill evaluation rubric

Name:

Units:

Date:

COMPETENCE	SUB-SKILL	ASSESSMENT: 1 excellent 2 on track 3 improvement needed	OVERALL COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT: 1 excellent 2 on track 3 improvement needed
COMPETENCE IN LINGUISTIC COMMUNICATION	**Sub-skill 1** use language appropriate for the situation		
	Sub-skill 2 connect and interact with others using appropriate technology (e.g. email, apps, chats, forums, blogs)		
	Sub-skill 3 structure spoken and written texts effectively		
	Sub-skill 4 identify, gather and organise relevant information		
MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE	**Sub-skill 1** understand and convey the main points of a text or conversation by using mediation strategies such as summarising, translating, clarifying		
	Sub-skill 2 show respect and empathy for other people and their situations		
	Sub-skill 3 reflect on the diversity of the world and have an awareness of cultural and linguistic differences		
	Sub-skill 4 explain an idea or concept by adapting language and/or simplifying the information (mediation)		
	Sub-skill 5 evaluate a text neutrally and critically (mediation)		
PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND LEARNING TO LEARN	**Sub-skill 1** monitor and reflect on own emotions		
	Sub-skill 2 consider multiple perspectives		
	Sub-skill 3 listen and respond respectfully		
	Sub-skill 4 use feedback to improve learning		
	Sub-skill 5 keep track of progress		