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**DEGREE PAPER**

**SYSTEM OF ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP ORAL COMMUNICATION  
STRATEGIES IN STARTER STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MATANZAS**

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## **DEDICATED TO**

My parents, whom I owe everything; they are the beat of my heart, the pulse on my veins and the energy of my soul.

My family and my sister, Isabel Martínez Obregón; you have been the best friend and sister God ever made.

## **ABSTRACT**

The training of highly qualified professionals demands the fulfillment of certain requirements like the communicative competence in English language. To fulfill that objective, the Cuban System of Higher Education gives great importance to the mastery of English language in different majors. In this context, oral communication strategies are highly valued in the English Language Teaching literature due to its usefulness to make oral interactional communication more effective and possible, even for speakers with low levels of linguistic competence development. However, students finish their studies without using them in their communication, a fact that limits their success in learning the English language. To solve this problem, the present degree paper's aim is to elaborate a system of activities to develop oral communication strategies in starter students at the University of Matanzas. It encompasses some general aspects of oral communication strategies in order to understand this matter. A system of activities was included as well as oral and written model texts analysis, in which students are encouraged to identify the relationship between oral communication strategies and their language forms. The research proposes the bases, and practical fundamentals to the application of the scientific result. It is guided by the materialist-dialectical method as the general methodology of the scientific cognition process, which allowed the application of different methods from the educational sphere related to the theoretical and empirical levels in order to characterize the object of study and arrive to the necessary conclusions about the importance of oral communication strategies in language learning.

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## INTRODUCTION

Due to the current conditions of the scientific and technical development and the neoliberal globalization, education must play a guiding role on the integral preparation of citizens. In this way, the educational process can cope successfully with a contemporary society that calls for the development of individuals' potential so it is necessary to prepare them for capable of reasoning, communicating properly and for understanding the world in which they live.

Nowadays, the training of highly qualified professionals demands the fulfillment of certain requirements. One of them is the communicative competence in English language that allows the individual successful performance in academic interchanges and the ability to consult the bibliography in the language. This can be explained by the remarkable importance that English language has gained as the international language of the new technologies, the different sources of information that are related to the most novel of science, businesses, aviation, the entertainment industry and diplomacy.

Based on this idea, Enríquez, O. I. (2016) states that the last goal of English language education in Cuba has been renewed to contribute to the general and comprehensive culture of the Cuban people, which in language learning means being able to communicate.

The Cuban System of Higher Education gives a great value to the mastery of English in different majors. The focus is the purposeful use of English to achieve real-life tasks, get information, share ideas, and enhance culture and to reinforce the knowledge acquired and the skills developed in other school subjects. Following this, graduate students should be trained to comprehend what they read or listen; they should speak correctly and write properly, which is relevant for one of the main roles of professionals: the educational research labor.

Future professionals may have the opportunity to participate in academic interchanges with people from overseas and the mastering of languages could be a barrier so the development of oral communication strategies becomes an imperative need.

The ways in which an individual speaker manages to compensate for the gap between what it wishes to communicate and its immediately available linguistic resources are

known as communication strategies. They are very useful to make oral interactional communication more effective and possible even for speakers with low levels of development of their linguistic competence.

The importance of communication strategies is considered indispensable for the proper development of the teaching-learning process of English. Particularly the oral communication strategies are highly valued in the English Teaching literature. Authors like, Acosta Padrón Rodolfo (2017); Gabrielatos (1993); Larsen Freeman (2000); Mijares Nuñez Luis y Mijares Martínez Zenaida (2009), have investigated the current topic of research emphasizing in the importance of teaching the oral communication strategies.

Considering the elements previously stated, and noticing that the English subject offers excellent opportunities for students' development of communicative skills, the authoress recognized a conflict between the desirable objective stated in the Syllabus and the still poor development of communicative strategies. This is so explicitly in the students of the Major Programs in Chemical Engineering at the University of Matanzas, where the efforts to graduate an engineer, not only with functional language proficiency, but also with the ability to construct and reconstruct new knowledge contrast with a limited progress made by the students in relation to the communicative competence.

According to the authoress teaching experience, this is more worrisome in second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring, as they were not able to communicate with an acceptable fluency in English. Students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking, and it is an impediment to develop the necessary skills to master the language. Moreover, English is not considered as important to the students' immediate needs, other than to pass exams. On the other hand, though the current program used to teach students is suitable, it does not include the explicit teaching of oral communication strategies, a fact that affects the development of oral expression in interactional communication.

Based on the considerations previously stated, the following **scientific problem** has been formulated: How to contribute to the development of the process of formation of oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering

Majoring at the University of Matanzas? Taking into account the previous, it is declared as the **object of study** the English teaching-learning process of oral communication in Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas; and as **field of action**, the development of the process of formation of oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas. The **objective** of the diploma paper is to elaborate a system of activities for the development of the process of formation of oral communication strategies in Second-year students of the Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

To accomplish this objective the following **scientific questions** are set forward:

1. What are the theoretical and methodological foundations to sustain the development of the process of formation of oral communication strategies?
2. Which is the current state of the process of formation of the oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas?
3. What aspects should be taken into consideration to elaborate a system of activities to develop the process of formation of the oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas?

In order to answer the above questions these **investigative tasks** are to be proposed:

1. Determination of the theoretical and methodological foundations needed to develop the process of formation of the oral communication strategies.
2. Diagnosis of the current state of the process of formation of the oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.
3. Elaboration of the system of activities to develop the process of formation of the oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

During the investigative process the **population** was composed by ninety-eight starter students at the University of Matanzas and thirteen English starter professors, from the Department of foreign languages at the Language Faculty, and the **sample** were fourteen Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring and six starter



professors, from the Department of Foreign Languages, at the Language Faculty from the University of Matanzas; which represents the 18.1% of the population, all intentionally selected.

During the process of investigation the authoress applied the general philosophical **dialectic-materialistic method**, as general methodology of the scientific knowledge, which allowed the systematization and comprehension of the scientific results obtained through the application of the theoretical, empirical and statistics methods.

**Methods of the theoretical level:**

- **The historical-logical** was applied for studying and determining the tendencies and development of the process of formation of oral communication strategies.

- **The inductive-deductive and the analytic-synthetic methods** helped to make generalizations about the process of formation of the oral communication strategies in the second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas. It also helped to arrive at conclusions through the study, exploration, deepening of the bibliography, methodological documents on the subject, and to summarize the information obtained.

- **Modeling:** it permitted the elaboration of the scientific result already proposed and the basis for its further application.

**Methods of the Empirical level:**

- The **study of documents** permitted the analysis of the different curricular documents of Chemical Engineering Majoring, such as the English language syllabus and the methodological normative to teach the subject matter in Second-year. It also offered the necessary information to determine the importance attached to the process of formation of oral communication strategies.

- **Interview to English professors:** allowed the authoress to know the opinions of the English professors concerning the process of formation of the oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

- **Participant Observation:** It allowed to check the behavior of the oral communication in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

- The **percentage calculation** from the **mathematical method:** This method permitted to process all the data gathered of the applied investigative instruments, using tables and charts to describe the information collected during the diagnostic stage in the second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

- **Investigative tools:** In the diagnostic stage there were used the observation guide and the interview guide as main investigative tools.

The present work is intended to obtain better results in the English language teaching-learning process, it especially lies in a didactic system of activities aimed at increasing the conscious training of the formation of oral communication strategies. The result can be used by students while communicating in interactional oral communication situations, permitting a more natural interaction which facilitates their success to communicate orally.

The present degree paper is divided into two chapters. Chapter I encompasses the theoretical and methodological foundations of the process of formation of oral communication strategies, general aspects of the process of formation of oral communication strategies, an approach to the process of communication, and important definitions are also presented. In addition, a general analysis of theoretical aspects of the process of oral communication strategies, and the methodological implications for the planning of appropriate activities to encourage communication strategies were considered. Chapter II refers to the current state of the process of formation of the oral communication strategies, as well as the aspects that should be taken into consideration to elaborate the activities and the system proposed.

Due to the situation that is facing our country, methodological indications for the implementation of the system of activities, to develop oral communication strategies, are developed. This degree paper contains conclusions, recommendations, bibliography, and annexes.



## **CHAPTER I. Theoretical and methodological foundations of the process of formation of oral communication strategies**

The present chapter encompasses the theoretical and methodological foundations of the process of formation of oral communication strategies, general aspects of the process of formation of oral communication strategies and an approach to the process of communication. Also the methodological implications for the planning of appropriate activities to encourage communication strategies.

### **1.1 Important definitions for the process of formation of oral communication strategies**

English teachers all around the world have attained the teaching-learning process of verbal and non-verbal communication in different ways and educative levels, but, in the authoress point of view, its main goal has rarely being attached in the non-philological majors.

In communication, the verbal activity plays an important role. The authoress considers verbal activity "a language system that activates mediates and orients man's exchange with reality, a process of transmission and reception of information conditioned by a communicative situation" (Zimnaya, I. A. 2003, p.13). This underlines the importance of verbal activity in the Historical-cultural approach as man is seen in interconnection with the reality s/he interacts.

About this, according to Zimnaya, I. A., the verbal activity "in the historical-cultural approach is considered a form of relationship among men, a process in which man uses language to convey and assimilate the socio-historical experience" (Zimnaya, I. A. 2003, p.13)

In the authoress opinion, the idea expressed is relevant when teaching a foreign language as the teacher should place the students as the center of the whole process, in which the main role of the professor should be as a facilitator and mediator of the knowledge.

In both references of communication, context is a very important component and the social norms become part of the content to be taught. This means that content and form constitute a dialectical unit. Thus, in the teaching-learning process of speaking

English it is a must to teach linguistic forms together with meaning and function in context, which need to ponder different learning strategies, understood as "specific actions, behaviors, and procedures involved in the process of learning" (Faucette, P. 2001, p.1).

Ellis recognizes the relationship between two types of strategies present in the process of formation of oral communication strategies: learning strategies and communication strategies. To this author, communication strategies are the short-term solution to a problem, and learning strategies the long-term answer. In other words, speakers in the act of communication use oral communication strategies, while learning strategies are used to learn how to communicate.

"Since the early 1970's, researches have been conducted on communication strategies, which have been regarded as the means used to overcome some difficulty in expressing an intended meaning" (Faucette, P. 2001, p.5)

According to Faucette, P (2001) it seems evident that no individual's linguistic repertoire or control of language is perfect. Both non-native and native speakers of a given language sometimes struggle to find the appropriate expression or grammatical construction when attempting to communicate their meaning.

With reference to communication strategies, the authoress recognizes that are the ways in which an individual speaker manages to compensate for the gap between what it wishes to communicate and what its immediately available linguistic resources are. This is important to language teaching because help learners to communicate properly even if they do not have the abilities to maintain a conversation.

Although researchers are not in complete agreement, one widely accepted definition of communication strategies is: "communication strategies are potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (Færch, Kasper. 1938, p.20). If considering their importance, it could be said that "Communication strategies would serve as an excellent mean for less proficient learners that do not have the abilities to maintain a conversation" (Færch, Kasper. 1938, p.20)

The following are some effective communication strategies, proposed by Faucette, Priscilla. (2001), that might be useful for learners to overcome potential communication problems while learning to communicate.

1. Paraphrasing or substituting: The speaker uses alternative expressions with similar meanings to replace those that it does not know, or cannot think of what to say or how to say it.
2. Circumlocution: The speaker offers a definition or description of the target item. Additionally it can use the negation of a phrase of converse meaning.
3. Restructuring or rephrasing: The speaker realizes that cannot finish its idea and goes back and rephrases it, this time using more manageable means.
4. Using self-repetition: The speaker repeats what just has said, to gain time to think of what to say or how to say it.
5. Using fillers: The speaker uses empty words such as: well, actually, you know, etc. to gain time to think of what to say or how to say it.
6. Using self-correction: The speaker hears itself making a mistake in pronunciation, grammar, choice of words etc. and immediately corrects it.
7. Asking for repetition: The speaker asks the interlocutor to repeat what just has said to facilitate comprehension.
8. Asking for clarification: The speaker asks the interlocutor to clarify the meaning of what just has said to facilitate comprehension.
9. Asking for confirmation: The speaker asks the interlocutor to confirm the meaning of what just has said to facilitate comprehension.

The authoress considers that these communication strategies are important to help students to learn how to communicate when they do not have the ability of communicating properly. However, there is some experience of teaching oral communication strategies as reactions to problems while communicating. To provide the interpersonal communication act, with an appropriated character and a mechanism of conscious self-development of the personality, the following communication strategies are proposed by Mijares Nuñez, Luis y Mijares Martínez, Zenaida (2009):

1. Affective reaction: The speaker shows its emotions and feelings publicly. (Eg: Wow, I'm sorry to hear that, what a nice room!)
2. Interest showing: The speaker shows interest in the listened information, and asks questions related to the matter.
3. Positive attitude: The speaker shows itself respectful and polite using a positive feedback stimulating its interlocutor verbally and nonverbally, strengthening its esteem.

The authoress considers that communication is the exchange of ideas, information, etc. between two or more people. In the act of communication there is usually at least one speaker and one sender, a message which is transmitted, and a person or people for whom this message is intended.

The analysis of the previous concepts permitted the study of a new concept, **Communicative Language Teaching**. The goal of most methods is to make students capable of communicating in the target language. It had been observed that generally students are able to write and read the sentences in target language correctly. But when it came to communicate they failed to do so.

It is clear to the authoress that to make students able to communicate in the target language requires more than mastering only the linguistic structures. It had been accepted by the educators that to capable of communicating in the target language, communicative competence is required along with linguistic competence.

"Communicative Language Teaching is an approach to teach foreign or second language which emphasizes on communicative competence" (Richards, Rodgers. 1986. P.71) "It also emphasizes on interaction as a means to teach language. It replaced the Situation Language Teaching which had been used to teach English as a second or foreign language. It had been considered as the major British approach. The focus of Situation Language Teaching approach was focused on teaching the basic structures of language. But educators realized that language taught on the basis of situational learning would have been of no use. Because to teach the meaning, carried out from the utterances was more required as it expressed the intentions of the speaker or writer" (Richards, Rodgers. 1986. P.71)

The authoress now sees it as an approach that aim to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and develop procedures to teach the interdependence of language and communication.

This epigraph is about oral expression, explained through the analysis of different concepts, which also permitted the study of the approach to the process of communication and communicative competence.

### **1.2 An approach to the process of communication and communicative competence**

The ever-growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for English teaching around the world. Millions of people today want to improve their command of English or to ensure a good one. And opportunities to learn English are provided in many different ways such as through formal instruction as well as through the media and the internet.

The communication process involves the concepts of language and speech which play their role in verbal activity, that is, communication. Speech includes the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, while language uses the language components: vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and pronunciation. Language includes the components and speech the skills.

According to Richard and Platt, "language is often described as having three main functions: descriptive, expressive and social. The descriptive function is to convey factual information; the expressive function is to supply information about the speaker, its feelings, preferences, prejudices, and past experiences, while the social function serves to establish and maintain social relations between people". In the authoress opinion, this is a valuable and important criterion about the role of communication and communicative competence as it clarifies the functions of the language, essential to establish both, social and affective communication between individuals.

The authoress own view is that language is the system of human communication which consists of the structured arrangement of sounds or their written representation into larger units that is morphemes, words, sentences and



utterances. In this process, speech is the communication or expression of thoughts in spoken words, exchange of spoken words: conversation, something that is spoken: utterance; an individual manner or style of speaking; the power of expressing or communicating thoughts through speaking.

Speech is the actual realization of language. That is why it is individual, concrete, and real in each speaker and listener. Besides listening and speaking, reading and writing are also considered speech skills because they are the graphic representation of speech.

The authoress understands the importance of teaching the language in the development of the communication, because the language teaching process would not be the simple learning of its structures.

All the knowledge acquired about the importance of communication for teaching language was the reason why the British linguist D. Wilkins proposed a functional or communicative definition of the language. This new vision was quickly embraced, settling the communicative approach of language, which by the middle of 1970's spread out.

According to Richards, R. (1986), several texts that contain mechanical and drill activities to learn grammar or vocabulary in English are abundant in old and recent publications. Vocabulary is an item, of the grammatical dimension, use to develop speaking skills using new and old vocabulary items in a real and a fantasy context. A well-known classification of activities coming from East Europe about 30 years ago placed them into linguistic and speech activities. The drill and mechanical activities fall into the category of linguistic, because it focuses on a language component: vocabulary, while the others fall into speech category since it aims at developing the skills of listening and speaking.

The authoress considers that teaching the mother tongue not implies teaching only the linguistic or grammatical competence. Students do not just need to learn the code and acquire the other competences in the daily communication outside school. Students should learn how to use the mother tongue better and better just as they do with grammar. It happens that when a mistake is made by a student, teachers

generally hurt the listener's identity or sensibility with inappropriateness. Awareness on the topic is needed to get a better use of the mother tongue every day and in every way. Grammar is bad, harmful for English learning, when traditional and structural grammar is taught out of context and communication.

According to Richards, R. (1986), most teachers tell students to memorize grammar rules and then students spend years doing so. The students can learn the grammar rules using the inductive methods. Reflecting and interacting with the language is a good way to learn it.

The authoress considers that most of language learning should be subconscious. That is the natural way to learn languages. Learning is a conscious and social process and as such, it should happen.

In short, error analysis allows the investigator to focus the energy and attention on just those areas that are proven to be difficult: whether to teach the communication strategies or not; and in case of choosing to teach them how to design tasks to facilitate such interaction.

### **Communicative Approach**

Real communication and interaction is not only the objective in learning, but also the means through which it takes place. This approach started in the 70s and became prominent to be an alternative to the Audio-lingual method. It means that instead of focusing on the acquisition of grammar and vocabulary, the Communicative Approach is aimed at developing the learner's competence to communicate in the target language, with an enhanced focus on real-life situations.

"The Communicative Approach is a teaching approach that highlights the importance of real communication for learning" (Zakime, A. 2018, p.15).

This change has had a huge impact on classroom materials, course books, teaching techniques and the teacher's role in the classroom, and still influences English language teaching and learning up to this day.

"Communicating meaning is the main goal in Communicative Approach, and language is seen as a tool for learners to reach this aim. For this reason, the Communicative Approach objective is to help students practice and develop their

linguistic competence, rather than their grammatical competence, so that learners get focus on the function of language and practice it in a realistic setting" (Zakime, A. 2018, p.28).

Besides that, it might also include work on the four skills: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking; as their development is vital for students to perform real-life goals. The skills are many times worked with simultaneously in what is known as integrated-skills approach.

The authoress believes that is desirable when adopting the Communicative Approach because it seems more realistic: in genuine communication, skills are seldom employed in isolation, and an integrated-skills approach simulates what happens in real life. In the Communicative Approach, learners are at the center of instruction. The teacher is now seen as a facilitator in the learning process.

In order to help learners improve their communicative competence, it is important to provide a range of practice activities. Although the ultimate aim is genuine communication, there is room for activities that ensure students practice language in a more controlled manner, focusing on the development of accuracy. These should not, however, be the only source of language practice. Activities that focus on the development of fluency are a vital part of a Communicative Approach lesson, as they give learners the opportunity to communicate meaning.

The authoress considers that as the teacher is not the center of instruction anymore, activities in the Communicative Approach should usually favor student-student interaction and maximize learners' opportunities to speak.

### **1.3 General analysis of theoretical aspects of the communication strategies**

Studies made by the authoress in the previous epigraphs show that language learning was view as a process of mechanical habit formation. Good habits were formed by having students produce correct sentences not through making mistakes. This has changed considerably in the last 30 years.

Investigating about the oral communication strategies, the authoress realized that there are two clear pedagogical approaches about the topic of research: the Pros, or proponents of teaching the oral communication strategies explicitly, like Dörnyei,

Thurrell, Tarone, and Gabrielatos. These authors consider, teaching the oral communication strategies, as benefit for learner. On the other hand, the Cons or conservative, who are against of teaching the oral communication strategies; authors like Bialystok and Kellerman affirm that the communication use, is evident in the mother tongue, implying strategic transfer: if students have the linguistic means, the transfer will happen automatically.

Studies conducted through an observation guide of an English lesson, made by the authoress, with second-foreign language students, indicate that learning strategy instruction may help students achieve success in language learning, because students need to be consciously taught the linguistic resources that make possible to transfer their mother tongue oral communication strategies, into a second language communication, or that transfer will not happen.

To the authoress communication strategies are excellent means for less proficient learners that do not have the required knowledge to maintain the conversation, as a result they would have the opportunity to receive more language input and improve their language ability.

Also oral communication strategies can become features of the model of communication that society hopes learners to learn and use, as a way to encourage their development. In the scientific community, it seems to be an agreement, about activities being focused on the genuine communicative needs of the students in a communicative course.

Recently learning has been viewed differently. Errors are allowed in lessons, this way students become more confident when speaking and not afraid of doing so. To accomplish that, teachers should be aware of the methodological implications of activities types for oral communication.

To the authoress, it is essential for language teachers to master the **characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching** to develop the process of formation of oral communication strategies; according to Richards, R. (1986) it can be sum up as follows:

- It aims to make learners to attain communicative competence so that learners can use language accurately and appropriately.
- The teacher is just the facilitator, is the person who manages the environment and helps learners to become autonomous.
- It emphasizes the functional use of language relying on the authentic materials and the tasks which are assigned to the learners have purposes and meanings related to improve oral communication.
- Communicative activities enable the learners to attain communicative objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in communication, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction.

When making reference to the **Principles of Communicative Language Teaching**, the authoress follows Larsen and Richard's ideas as they go over the main points of communication.

- The main focus of the approach is to make the learners able to understand the intention and expression of the writers and speakers (Larsen, F. 2000, p.125)

According to Larsen, in this approach, it is believed that communicative functions are more important rather than linguistic structures.

- The target language is a vehicle for class to allow communication, not just the object of, because if learners continue using their native language, they won't be able to communicate in the target language (Larsen, F. 2000, p.125)

In this idea, Larsen emphasized the appropriate use of language rather than accuracy, which comes at the later stage. The authoress believes that when learners, learn to use the language appropriately, accuracy comes automatically.

- Language cannot be learnt through rote memorization. It cannot be learnt in isolation. It should be learnt through social interaction" (Richards, R. 1986, p.67)

The authoress considers that this can be used in today's English classes as part of particular items or situations being the basis for lower level teaching, but constructing meaning must be measured as a significant issue.

- There is no need to struggle with language to communicate in the target language. In methods like Communicative Approach or Communicative language Teaching (CLT), the focus is on learning to communicate through interaction. To achieve this in language teaching, lessons need to be based on general rules or principles to be followed by teachers, which allow them to take the proper decisions to proceed in the teaching process and get the students to achieve the planned communicative purposes.

- Errors should be tolerated by the teacher and should not be corrected during the activities in which students are using target language. When the activity is completed, then the teacher can correct these errors. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), and Robinson and Selman (1986), as cited by Font Milián, Sergio (2016) there is a list of principles which may be useful when planning and implementing language lessons (See Annex. I). Due to the importance of error treatment in language learning, the authoress makes reference to Principle number 4, as it is considered that most errors must be corrected during controlled and semi-controlled practice activities, while correction must be made during communicative practice, just if the errors cause breakdowns in communication.

- It encourages teacher-student and student-student interaction. Communicative Language Teaching approach provides the opportunities to communicate in the target language to the learners. It helps to encourage the cooperative relationship among students (Richards, Rodgers. 1986, p.67). ...

- The teacher should create situations which help to promote communication. The teacher should teach them how language should be used in a social context.

To the authoress, interaction and the use of activities based on real life situations or social context are relevant in language teaching as teachers should give activities such as role play to help learners to learn the language in social context. -- Language teaching techniques should be designed in a way that learners can be motivated to use the target language. Functional aspects of language should be given importance and dramas, role plays, games should be used in class to promote the real communication. (Ankitaben, A. 2015, p.352)

- Students should be given opportunities to listen to language as it is used in authentic communication. They may be coached on strategies to improve their comprehension (Larsen, F. 2000, p.128)

The epigraph widens the main issues about CLT of the oral expression through the analysis of different concepts, which also permitted the study of the methodological implications of activities types for oral communication strategies training.

#### **1.4 Methodological implications of activities types for oral communication strategies training**

The importance of the methodological indications to address the English teaching-learning process has been studied by many authors. Authors, that recognize the possibility of achieving a genuine communicative interaction using activities, like Breen and Candlin (1980). They define the essential features of an activity-based syllabus as follow.

1. Content is focused on a linguistic knowledge which is personally meaningful to the students.
2. Staging is not linear.
3. The content does not use linguistic structure as reference to get organized, but activities are used instead.
4. Systematization is enhanced through activities and themes.
5. There is not a predetermined linguistic content; instead lessons content and staging depend on students learning needs.

Additionally Brown and Freeman (1980), agree that communication probably takes place when interaction in pairs and in small groups takes place, and also when authentic real life materials are used as model texts and genuine use of the language is stimulated; as activities resembled real life situations outside the classroom.

To the authoress communication strategies' aim is to help learners develop their communicative competence, is now a term that encompasses two approaches: to teach and learn; and real life situations activities are excellent to do so.

The many **characteristics of activities** coincide in three features. Kuramavadivelu, C. and Rubdy R. (1993), characterize the activities as follow:

1. Are results or specific goals.
2. Have an input to stimulate interaction.
3. Imply the use of one or more activities related to them.

To the authoress the activities can be negotiated and imply comprehension, and should exist interaction between students to be, the activities, solved; it should resemble real life activities.

In addition, Ellis, G. and Sinclair, B. (1989) sum up the following particularities of an activity:

1. The topics match students' interests.
2. The activities resembled real life activities.
3. They are part of a major project that is not isolated.
4. They demand process and outcome evaluation.

This is possible and recommended in the Cuban context; this teaching style requires a lot of creativity and independence that many teachers of English have. Zakime, A. (2018), proposes the following activities that can be used when teaching oral communication strategies in a lesson:

- In role-plays, learners are given an imaginary situation and are asked to perform a different role or act as themselves in a particular scenario. Role-plays enable learners to imagine themselves in realistic situations and “rehearse” before they need to use English in real life.
- Information-gap activities require learners to talk to each other and find out missing information they need to perform a certain task. The information missing might include words, numbers and even drawings. The main point is to get students to talk and work collaboratively to share all information they need.
- Jigsaw activities involve learners reading, listening or performing different tasks at the same time and later sharing what they have done with their peers. For example, half of the students can be asked to watch a video on a certain topic and the other half can be asked to watch a different video, with a different viewpoint. After learners watch the videos and complete tasks for comprehension, they are asked to share what they had found out with their peers.



- Debates and discussions can be a useful tool for fluency practice. They enable learners to share their own views on topics and use their communicative resource to convey ideas, make points, and agree and disagree with others. Debates are usually engaging and provide a rich resource for teachers to assess their learners' communicative competence. However, preparation for debates should be done thoroughly to help students succeed.

The authoress understands that the proposed activities constitute a system, and make possible the conscious use of the language to negotiate meaning, making possible a natural and genuine interaction resembling real-life situations. Those activities should be contextualized, and meaningful to the students so the use of communication strategies become an essential tool to face the students' linguistic limitations, where the use of levels of help that answer to the students' learning needs.

Gabrielatos (1993) proposes "to train oral communication strategies using awareness and practice activities as part of an inductive or deductive training in which students first identify the communication strategies and learn the linguistic resources necessary to use them".

To Gabrielatos (1993) practice activities include defining or describing the meaning of words given, for example as a part of a game. Rephrasing a sentence substituting the underlined word in it, using fillers while delaying the answer to personal questions and word-building, are other activities. The authoress considers that, in these activities, students need to use the strategies learned.

To the authoress the activities organized into awareness and practice activities, make students aware of the shortcomings of native spontaneous oral production and the use of the oral communication strategies as the most common processes of word-formation in English.

According to Gabrielatos (1993) the objective is to facilitate the use of the speakers' immediate linguistic resources, to increase the speakers' confidence in risk-taking. To the authoress, speakers unwillingly do not use a second language for spontaneous interaction in the classroom, and when they find a problem they tend

to abandon their efforts to communicate, they speak in their mother tongue or do not speak at all.

To the authoress it is important to say that these activities and procedures, suggested by Gabrielatos (1993), are part of the standard activities used in a communicative syllabus; they are not supplementary and can be easily integrated into any teaching of speaking.

Mijares, N. L and Mijares, M. Z. suggest "the training of achievement strategies and those related to facilitate the interlocutor or the speaker's own comprehension". Idea shared by the authoress along with "the consistent training of students with the socialist and sociocultural norms of values" (Mijares, N. L and Mijares, M. Z. 2009) According to Gabrielatos (1993) the awareness activities should include reflection in the dialog's discourse structure, expanding and enriching the dialogs. Both are used after students have understood the gist and details of any dialog. Additionally and as part of the control of any speaking activity, they propose peer and self-evaluation to use the communication strategies as part of the criteria for success, in order to facilitate their regulation processes. Practice activities directly will train one or more communication strategies. These include: keep on the alert, ask-ask, answer, report, echo, affective repetition, communicative substitution, say it differently, what would you say if ...?, let's get to know each other better, ask-answer-ask-answer, say it nonverbally, and what would you do if ...?

The authoress shares Gabrielatos' proposal and considers that it can be used any productive communicative activities and that students should get aware of the use of the strategies as indicators of the quality of their oral production, so that they can regulate their speech consciously and include these strategies previously learned.

Partial Conclusions of Chapter I:

The chapter presents the theoretical foundations for the development of the oral communication strategies including the analysis of essential elements, such as: Communicative Language Teaching, including its main characteristics and principles; communicative competence, communication strategies, the general definition of communication and the particular definition of learning strategies. It has

also pointed out the way in which the development, of the oral communication strategies, is conceived in the teaching-learning process. All the elements presented are vital for the effective elaboration of the system of activities to contribute to the development of the oral communication strategies in starter students at the University of Matanzas.

## **CHAPTER II. Didactic system of activities aimed at developing oral communication strategies in starter students of Chemical Engineering Majoring**

The chapter presents an exploratory study of the current state of second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring. It describes the results obtained after applying instruments as part of the initial diagnostic. The systematization and determination of the theoretical foundations of the system of activities and the structural elements, including the methodological suggestions to apply it.

### **2.1 Current state of the development of oral communication strategies in the second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring**

The analysis of the current state of oral communication strategies in Second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas, was carried out through the use of methods that provided the authoress with the needed information to fulfill the objective. The methods were the following:

- Revision of legal documents with the objective of analyzing and valuing the treatment given to oral communication strategies in second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.
- An interview with the objective of getting the English teacher's appraised criteria and suggestions concerning starter students' oral communication development at the University of Matanzas (see Annex. II).
- An observation guide with the objective of getting the necessary information in relation to the indicators of the process of formation of communication strategies taken into consideration in the lessons, and to evaluate the ways teachers achieve it (see Annex. III).

- The percentage calculation from the mathematical method allowing to process all the data gathered of the applied investigative instruments, using tables and charts to describe the information collected during the diagnostic stage.

### **Revision and analysis of documents**

As it has been declared before, the authoress of the degree paper made a revision and an analysis of the syllabus used to teach the English language to starter students at the University of Matanzas. As a result, the material the following ideas are presented:

The general analysis, of Face2Face Starter as the material that comprises A1 level, is presented in the following section:

Face2Face has made use of the Cambridge English Corpus (CEC) which is a database of contemporary spoken and written English that comprises over one billion words including British English, American English and other varieties of English. It also includes the Cambridge Learner Corpus.

In correspondence with the communicative approach the main focus is on listening and speaking in situations students can face in real life. Also vocabulary and grammar are given equal importance. It is aimed at the functional and social language students need for day-to-day life.

**Listening:** Face2Face provides students with particular listening practice activities that help students' understanding the essence of a material, and then ask about specific details.

**Speaking:** Most of the activities focus on accuracy and fluently activities. There are sections like "Get ready..." and "Get it right!", where students have time to formulate their ideas.

**Reading and Writing:** There are some reading texts from a variety of genres that are used to present new language and to provide reading practice.

**Vocabulary:** Each unit includes at least one, Help with Vocabulary, section.

**Grammar:** The new grammar structures are introduced in context in a listening or reading text. All new grammar forms are practiced in recorded pronunciation drills, communicative speaking activities and consolidated in written practice.

**Pronunciation:** There is a Help with Sounds section, at the end of each unit, where the problematic sounds for students are presented and practiced.

Most of the time it is necessary to consult bibliography that it is written in English but comprehending and summarizing the information are required skills that need be to achieve once students have finished the subject. These professionals may have the opportunity to participate in academic interchanges with people from overseas and the language could be a barrier. After a semester teaching second-year students of Chemical Engineering the authoress of this could verify that most students were not able to communicate with an acceptable fluency in English in a way they can become the kind of professionals the contemporary society needs.

The authoress considers that at this level of education the greatest responsibility is not only for professors but for students. It is necessary to prepare independent professionals that are eager of acquiring knowledge that may know how to self-guide themselves and self-manage their learning process. Although the syllabus is accurate for teaching students at this level, it does not train consciously students to develop oral communication strategies.

### **Interview outcomes**

The authoress of this degree paper interviewed six starter professors, from the Department of foreign languages which constitutes the 46.1% of the population, with the objective of knowing their opinions about the students' abilities of communication. They stated that in general, students were not able to communicate with fluency, and only a few know the language. Students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking, and it is an impediment to develop the necessary skills to master the language.

30% of the teachers considered irrelevant the development of oral communication strategies in lessons; they believe suitable the implementation of the new program. Because students are trained in the four skills which are: Speaking, Listening, Reading-Comprehension and Writing; and students are taught General English.

While the 70% expressed how important would be the development of communicative competence in starter students. They also said that teachers should take into consideration teach oral communication strategies in their lessons.

Although, the 100% of teachers confirmed that oral communication strategies are not taught in their lessons.

The following table shows de results of the interview (see Annex. II), to thirteen English professors from the Department of foreign languages at the Language Faculty at the University of Matanzas.

**Table 1:** Interview outcomes

Questions	Answers					
1. Which is the ability, where your students, more difficulties have?	Listening	Writing	Oral Expression		Pronunciation	
	<b>43 S (42.1%)</b>	<b>21 S (20.5%)</b>	<b>82 S (80.3%)</b>		<b>76 S (74.4%)</b>	
2. Do they communicate fluently during the lessons?	<b>P. #1</b>	<b>P. #2</b>	<b>P. #3</b>	<b>P. #4</b>	<b>P. #5</b>	<b>P. #6</b>
	<b>3 S (2.9%)</b>	<b>1 S (0.9%)</b>	<b>5 S (4.9%)</b>	<b>2 S (1.9%)</b>	<b>1 S (0.9%)</b>	<b>0 S</b>
2.1. Do you consider that the awareness and the practice activities to train students are rarely used?	<b>Yes</b>			<b>No</b>		
	<b>4 P (69.5%)</b>			<b>2 P (28.3%)</b>		
3. Do you consider important the development of oral communication strategies in lessons?	<b>5 P (76.9%)</b>			<b>1 P (9.8%)</b>		
	<b>0 P</b>			<b>6 P (100%)</b>		
4. Do you use oral communication strategies in lessons, to develop	<b>0 P</b>			<b>6 P (100%)</b>		

communicative competence in your students?		
5. Do you think is important to teach communication strategies or not?	<b>4 P (69.9%)</b>	<b>2 P (28.3%)</b>

**Legend:** **S:** students. **P:** teachers.

English is not considered as important to the students' immediate needs, other than to pass exams. On the other hand, though the current program use to teach students is suitable, it does not include the explicit teaching of oral communication strategies, a fact that affects the development of oral expression in interactional communication.

#### **Observation guide outcomes**

The observation guide (see Annex. III), was applied to an intentionally selected sample of fourteen second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring from the University of Matanzas which constitutes the 14.2% of the population.

To develop the study, three investigative indicators were determine into the diagnostic stage, which are also used:

- 1- Use of activities to train students in noticing and/or using linguistic resources to maintain the conversation.
- 2- Use of activities to train students in noticing and/or using strategies to maintain the conversation.
- 3- Use of activities to train students in noticing and/or using strategies that allow the interpersonal communication act to have an educational character.

These indicators were evaluated taking into account the following evaluative markers:

**Usually:** The speaking lesson activities include oral and written model texts analysis in which students are encouraged to identify the relationship between oral communication strategies and their corresponding language forms. Students receive frequently use the linguistic resources related to word building, sentence structuring,

and paraphrasing, while doing controlled, guided and free communicative activities to achieve both conversational maintenance and a democratic-constructive conversational style.

**Sometimes:** Either only conversational maintenance strategies, of oral communication strategies, are present in the speaking lesson activities, or a democratic-constructive conversational style enhancing strategies.

**Rarely:** Only some activities help to learn the linguistic resources necessary for oral communication strategies, but are not explicitly related to maintain a conversation.

**Never:** None of the speaking lesson activities consciously help to identify and practice the language forms.

The authoress through the observation guide, of a speaking lesson, with the objective of evaluating the indicators, had as outcomes the following:

The students are **sometimes** trained in noticing and using the linguistic resources necessary to maintain the conversation.

The students **sometimes** use oral communication strategies for conversational maintenance, while participating in everyday communicative interactions.

The students **rarely** use oral communication strategies to build a democratic-constructive conversational style, while participating in everyday communicative interactions.

**Table 2:** Observation guide outcomes of an English lesson

Indicators	Activities of the lesson						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Use of activities to train students in noticing and/or using linguistic resources to maintain the conversation.	1 S (8.4%)	13 S (90.4%)	4 S (27.6%)	2 S (18.8%)	11 S (86.7%)	4 S (27.6%)	10 S (80.9%)
Use of activities to train students in noticing and/or using strategies to maintain the conversation.	14 S (100%)	5 S (32.9%)	2 S (18.8%)	12 S (18.8%)	8 S (62.2%)	4 S (27.6%)	9 S (73.6%)



Use of activities to train students in noticing and/or using strategies that allow the interpersonal communication act to have an educational character.	<b>6 S</b> (46.2%)	<b>3 S</b> (16.4%)	<b>5 S</b> (32.9%)	<b>1 S</b> (8.4%)	<b>1 S</b> (8.4%)	<b>12 S</b> (18.8%)	<b>1 S</b> (8.4%)
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**Legend: S:** students.

## 2.2 Philosophical, sociological, psychological and linguo-didactic foundations of the scientific result

The philosophical foundations reside in the dialectical and historical materialism. Learning a foreign language implies to socialize and to negotiate meaning, in an oral social interaction; that is why cooperative learning is one of the most important sociological foundations of this paper. That means that the activities should facilitate interaction in pairs and small groups, because teaching how to interact, is the goal of these activities.

The psychological foundations, of this system of activities, reside in the historical cultural perspective, where the social environment is not a simple condition that favors or limits the individual development, but an intrinsic part of the process. This is the formation of the higher psychic functions through the law of the double formation and the concepts of Zone of Proximal Development, mediation and the active character of the individual. Precisely, in these activities, context is always referred explicitly because what to do depends on it. It includes the speakers, their linguistic limitations and the necessary references to the ethics of the socialist society.

The law of the double formation explains that learning occurs when the external stimulus in the context of learning, interpsychologically triggers internal mechanisms of learning like transfer, or generalization, which act on that stimulus acquiring information in the form of creative reproduction of knowledge, skills and habits. This means that learning does happen as a result of the direct influence and of the internal processing of that external stimulus. When learning communicating strategies to

enhance speaking, speakers should be aware, paying attention and listening what the other interlocutor is saying. And the activities should facilitate through explicit and conscious training the gradual assimilation of the linguistic resources that make possible to keep the conversation going, also incorporating the values and norms of the socialist society to their verbal behavior.

The concept of Zone of Proximal Development, refers to what the students can do as a result of the interaction and collaboration with the teacher or other students, that means that the activities should include the use of texts as models of the interaction intended and levels of help provided by the teacher or other leaders when trying to solve the activities, and the demand of using what is trained in productive communicative activities which demand speakers to integrate what they gradually learned in complex communicative activities. This means that social interaction in this system of activities is not only a characteristic of communicative teaching, but a condition to facilitate learning. At this level communication strategies and the collaborative activities are called mediation.

In reference to linguo-didactic foundations, the theory of communicative competence and developing didactics are basic elements to consider.

"Teaching English to starter students must contribute to the development of the students' communicative competence, a concept that implies the students' production, interpretation and negotiation of meanings in the interaction between two or more people, should be trained consciously in this proposal, directly related to the strategic dimension of communicative competence" (Tarone, E. 1981, p.285)

This means that teaching English in this level does not only imply the acquisition of linguistic forms, but especially the ability to construct and reconstruct new knowledge, which is the ability to communicate in a foreign language. It is primordial and important to teach students to interact orally using the linguistic resources that they have to strategically and creatively use to keep the conversation going, and also, interact accordingly with our socialist values and norms.

"...a developing didactics should recognize the unity between instruction-education, the importance of the integral diagnosis, the role of communication, the activity and

the socialization and the unit among the cognitive-affective components" (Mijares, 2008)

Developing didactics "is the systemic process of transmission of the culture in the school in function of the social responsibility, that is organized according to the levels of the current development and the students' potential, and lead to the on-going improvement towards higher levels of development, with the purpose of forming an integral personality, able to transform himself and to transform his reality in a concrete historical context." (Castellanos, 2002)

For those authors, the developing didactics uses as its main foundation the theory of the developing learning. This promotes a developing appropriation, active, self-regulating, significant, affective character and cooperative.

The conception of developing learning is indispensable for teachers, because it provides the main theoretical foundations to be able to plan the communicative tasks. The activities will be designed taking into account the students' diagnosis and the socio-cultural context in which the learning takes place, the inherent characteristic of a linguistic system, seen as parts of a whole: communication, and the available resources, such as lessons, workbooks, etc.

Developing learning "is the result of the dialect interaction between three basic dimensions: the activation-regulation and the motivation to learn." (Castellanos, 2002)

The activation-regulation refers to the active and self-regulated nature of the intellectual processes and mechanisms that support it. When teaching English, it refers to the need that students deal with communicative tasks, where the self-regulating processes are stimulated, mainly through the analysis of the main referential points of the activity, that includes the analysis of the success criteria of the tasks, previously designed by teachers and elicited from students during the orientation. Being used by students as indicators to control the quality of the result and as referential points for the reflection to be carried out when evaluating others or themselves.

The outcome of teaching communication strategies is properly the communicative competence development, achieved by students.

It can be concluded that, the systematization of the rationale in this investigation allowed the authoress to identify the theoretical foundations of the teaching learning process of the oral communication in English language to broaden the necessary strategies to communicate. This can be recognized in:

- The Cuban educational philosophy as the theoretical guideness to teach and learn a foreign language with the bases in the dialectic-materialism and historic;
- The Cuban educational sociology, because it constitutes the representation in the social environment of the Cuban educational philosophy and the scientific methods that were used in the investigation, expressed in the interrelation among society-education-language;
- The historic-cultural approach of L. S. Vigotsky and co-workers as integrated theory that involves all the theoretical bases of the Cuban educational philosophy, which allows the transmission of the historic-cultural heritage;
- The linguo-didactic conceptions of the English language in which the students are involve and perform the communication in a communicative situation;
- The communicative competence that sustains the communicative approach and the teaching-learning based on a task approach to fulfill the communication.

### **2.3 Description of the system of activities. Its foundations**

Taking into account the objective of the present investigation, the authoress made a deep analysis related to the term system and its main elements. Some researchers' positions were taking into consideration because their contributions have helped to develop some investigations on the educational field.

Authors such as Adinne Fernández and others consider that system is "a group of elements related and connected among them, creating a certain integrity, united with a purpose". A system is a whole, a configuration of elements that are integrated reciprocally throughout time and space, to achieve a common purpose, aim and result.

In the analysis of the system of activities as a scientific result, after consulting diverse materials, the authoress of this degree paper assumes, that the system of activities can be defined as a scientific result, when comprises a group of related activities in a way that they represent a unit, that contributes to the achievement of a general objective as a solution of a scientific problem previously determined. It is a representation of the object of investigation that from different points of view contributes to new knowledge regarding their characteristics, properties and essential functional relationships.

The system has an analytic character and it shows the object in its structural dimension. The diversity of systems depends on the principle or the principles assumed for its construction.

#### **Qualities of the system of activities**

In a system, a quality is identified as the "natural or acquired characteristic that distinguishes people or things." Starting from the theoretical-methodological elements, the system of activities should be an expression of the following qualities:

**Objectivity:** Because it responds to a real problem situation at the University of Matanzas related to oral communication strategies in the second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring. It has been evidenced in the results obtained in an observation guide and an interview.

**Entirety:** The system is not just a group. It is a group of interconnected elements that represents a new quality.

**Complexity:** Complexity is an inherent quality of the own concept of system. That is why it is the quality that determines its existence or not. It indicates the distribution criterion and interior organization of both the elements and the relationships among them. The elements that are organized in a system are known as Components of the System.

**Organization into a hierarchy:** The activities were structured taking into consideration the specific necessities of each unit, according to the syllabus (mainly grammar, vocabulary and communicative functions); in a way they can be inserted

in a coherent way from an integrative perspective without changing their logical order.

**Adaptability:** Property that the system has to modify its states, processes or characteristics according to the modifications that the context may suffer.

**Integration:** The system contributes to the formation of a creative thinking and a comprehensive knowledge that develop the potentialities of the professor who teaches, the student that learns and the possibility of both to become active and autonomous intellectuals of knowledge.

**Purpose:** This quality indicates that the system is aimed at increasing oral communication strategies to improve the English language learning in the second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring.

**Flexibility:** It is related to the possibility of using alternatives in the structuring and application of the system. This allows adjustments and rectifications to the initially conceived one. All activities are flexible to the changes that may take place in the context as a result of its application.

**Systemic approach:** It is determined by the relationships between the activities, organization according to the different levels of assimilation and contents.

#### **Objectives of the system of activities**

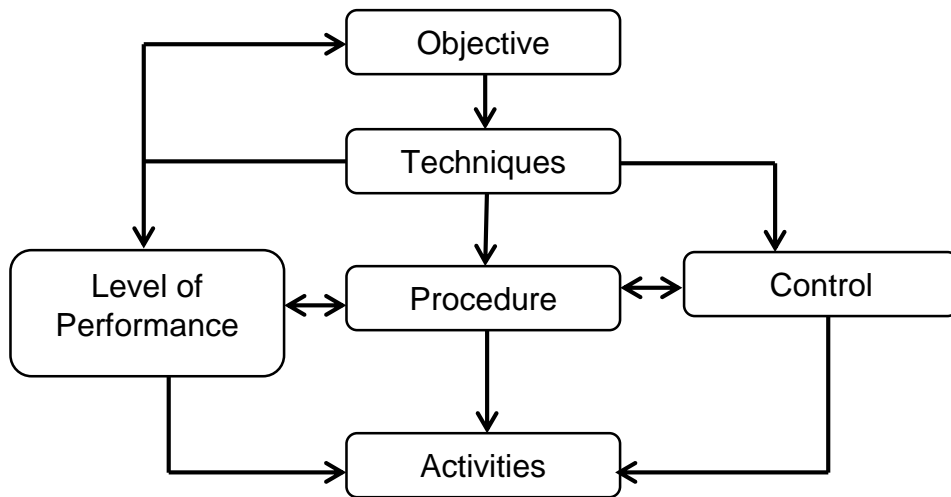
- To provide students a group of activities where they can practice the contents in real life situations in which they can be involved.
- To help professors with some extra activities, which go beyond the syllabus in order to enrich the teaching-learning process.
- To increase oral communication in students through communicative activities achieving a democratic-constructive conversational style.

#### **System of activities**

The first activities should help students notice the relationship between the linguistic resources used in the model dialogs and the communication strategy selected to be introduced (awareness rising). The practice activities should train students consciously in oral communication strategies.

These activities do not include all the possible strategies, only the most useful to maintain a conversation and build a democratic-constructive conversational style consistent with the socialist sociocultural norms and values.

The scientific result is structured as follow: (See Annex. V)



**2.4 Methodological indications for the implementation of the system of activities to develop oral communication strategies**

Due to the complex pandemic situation that is facing our country the authoress wasn't able to apply the necessary system of techniques to evaluate the information. That is why, answering to the orientations given by the Language Faculty Scientific Commission, methodological indications for the implementation of the system of activities, to develop oral communication strategies, are presented.

The following investigation presents the main methodological procedures to the further implementation of the scientific result already proposed. The pedagogical test will allow to compare and analyze the initial and final measurements. The qualitative evaluation which consists in an interview to professionals will allow to know their opinions about the system of activities to develop oral communication strategies (see Annex.IV)

**Pedagogical test**

To evaluate the impact of the system of activities to improve oral communication, the authoress initially would apply a pedagogical test and then four interactive tasks in one lesson of 90 minutes. Finally, a final measurement would be applied to compare the results and evaluate them.

The students to select would be the fourteen, second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas. This sample is made by students from 19 to 20 years old. Ten of them female and four are male. They tend to be humble, friendly, generous, and hardworking. There are good interpersonal relationships among them and their teachers.

**Objective:** To analyze students' democratic-constructive conversational style enhancing strategies while participating in an everyday communicative oral interaction.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Procedure:** The teacher tries to match students who are friendly with each other and are similar in ability. To each pair of students selected, would be explained the objective of the test above, emphasizing that their interaction should be natural and include the information requested. Each student receives a card, with a different set of questions to look at, in order to interact with each other in pairs. The cards contain a communicative situation and a list of different questions and hints, which represent the content to be known for starters students.

After no more than 5 minutes, they should begin to interact. Meanwhile the teacher assess them if case of be needed in order to help their communication. Teachers may need to give instructions and keep the interaction going, or even to interrupt the discussion in order to encourage a less talkative student to say more or discourage an over talkative student from dominating the conversation. Their role is that of a facilitator in the conversation. The interaction should last for at least three minutes, in order to notice students' ability to use both oral communication strategies and a democratic-constructive conversational style enhancing these strategies. The evaluation key would be regulated taking into account the dimensions 2 and 3.



## Cards

### Card A

**Communicative situation:** You meet a girl/boy at a party and you want to know everything about him/her.

Instruction: Socialize and use these hints.

1. Favorite things (sport/subject/movie).
2. Things she/he did last vacation.
3. Places he/she can visit in town.
4. Physical description of family members.
5. Daily routines at home.

### Card B

**Communicative situation:** You are new in town/school. A friend invited you to a party. There you meet a girl/boy and you want to know everything about him/her.

Instruction: Socialize and use these hints.

1. Favorite things (color/food/music).
2. Things she/he is going to do next weekend.
3. Invitation to go to any place in town.
4. Moral description of her/his favorite teacher.
5. Daily routines at school.

## Evaluation scales

**High development:** Speakers do not use Spanish or silence facing problems, instead they keep the conversation going by using synonyms, antonyms, definition, the negation of an item/phrase of converse meaning, word-coinages, self-repetition, time-fillers, restructuring, paraphrasing, asking for repletion, clarification, and

confirmation. They also use self-correction when necessary, and they react affectively, use follow-up questions to help negotiation of meaning, and show themselves risk-taking, self-confident, respectful, polite, solidaristic, truthful and empathize with their interlocutors, using a positive feedback, not judging others.

**Average development:** Speakers do not use Spanish or silence facing problems. They also use self-correction when necessary, but they do not react affectively, do not use follow-up questions to help negotiation of meaning, and do not show themselves risk-taking and self-confident. They show respect and politeness for their interlocutors.

**Low development:** The speakers use Spanish or silence facing problems. They hardly use self-correction, do not react affectively or use follow-up questions to help negotiation of meaning; they do not show themselves risk-taking or self-confident. They may show respect and politeness for their interlocutors.

Differences between the initial measurement and the final measurement would appear, it could increase the number of students that now can keep their conversation going, it could be improved the democratic-constructive conversational style of their oral interaction. The awareness and practice activities applied could be in deed effective. And it could provide to starter students, new tools to maintain a conversation. Students could show themselves now more risk-taking, self-confident, respectful, polite, solidaristic, truthful, using a positive feedback, strengthening their relationships not judging others.

#### **Qualitative evaluation (See Annex. IV)**

In order to know the professionals opinion about the system of activities to develop oral communication strategies, an interview was created by the authoress. It would be implemented to the thirteen English starter professors, from the Department of foreign languages at the Language Faculty, which represents the 100% of the teacher's population.

If the outcome of this interview was as expected and was considered that students do not use consciously communication strategies affecting the fluency and collaborative character of their oral interaction. That the system of activities

presented contains useful strategies to keep a conversation going. That the awareness and practice activities are rarely used because teachers limit the teaching content to what is presented in the syllabus. Taking into account the recommendations to improve the system of activities and that it could be applied to starter students the following instrument could be applied, the pedagogical test.

The pedagogical test will permit the evaluation of the results of the implementation of the system of activities to develop oral communication strategies in starters students at the University of Matanzas.

The test would be carried out to the fourteen, second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

The activities below can be used to provide learners with practice of the language, and the level of support given might vary depending on the stage of the lesson, the lesson aim, and the students' level of ability. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that preparing students to perform tasks is a vital step for the successful completion of activities and the development of their communicative competence. These are examples of interrelated activities aimed at developing the oral communication strategies. (See Annex. V)

**Strategy:**

**Paraphrasing or substituting:** The speaker uses alternative expressions with similar meanings to replace those that he/she does not know or cannot think of 'what to say' or 'how to say it'.

**Awareness activities**

1. Listen to the following short dialog between students and say what the topic is.

TOM: Peter, could you help me to answer this seminar's question?

What can I do to help the environment?

PETER: You shouldn't buy a car. It is very expensive, besides it is not healthy at all.

TOM: Expensive?

PETER: Yes, a car costs thousands of dollars, buy a bike, it is cheap and you do not affect the environment.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the dialog.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher will ask for students' attention, aimed at the recording; it will be played again if necessary. The teacher should be certain that students understood the dialog, and notice the relationship between the communication strategies and the linguistic resources.

**1.a** Listen to the dialog again and answer these questions:

- What was Peter's intention in his second speech?

Answer: To explain what expensive meant.

- How did he explain its meaning?

Answer: He used an example: A car costs thousands of dollars.

- What's the relationship between expensive and cheap?

Answer: These adjectives are antonyms.

**Procedure:** The teacher should ask further questions to help students understand how to paraphrase using examples of synonyms and antonyms.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

-Use English during the activity.

-Show interest and curiosity.

-Take risks and initiative.

-Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.

-Behave correctly during the activity.

**2.** Read the following dialog between Mary and June. What are they talking about?

JUNE: Mary, could you help me to decide what to wear?

Which blouse is prettier?

MARY: You shouldn't wear the casual blouse. We are going to a meeting.

JUNE: The red blouse is so serious.

MARY: That's the point; an elegant outfit says you are a professional.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the dialog.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher asks students to read the dialog. The teacher should be certain that students understood the dialog, and notice the relationship between the communication strategies and the linguistic resources.

**2.a** Read the dialog again and answer these questions:

- What was Mary's intention in her second speech?

Answer: To explain why to wear an elegant outfit.

- How did she explain it?

Answer: She used an example: An elegant outfit says you are a professional.

- What's the relationship between elegant and casual?

Answer: These adjectives are antonyms.

**Procedure:** The teacher should ask further questions to help students understand how to paraphrase using examples of synonyms and antonyms.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

-Use English during the activity.

-Show interest and curiosity.

-Take risks and initiative.

-Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.

-Behave correctly during the activity.

### **Practice activities**

**3.** Imagine you want to say these sentences, but you don't remember the words underlined, or your interlocutor does not understand them. What would you say instead?

1. Be careful. This is a dangerous neighborhood. (not safe, much crime)

2. That guy is very funny. (makes everybody laugh)

3. I need to chat with you. (a word, talk)

4. Salvador Wood is a famous actor. (popular, well-known)

5. Did your family stand by your side? (support, take care)

6. My father is a bad-tempered man. (violent, aggressive)

7. Mary is jealous of Tom. (does not trust)

**Objective:** Students should be able to practice paraphrasing using synonyms and antonyms.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher models an example and then asks two students to solve it in pairs. The teacher uses the linguistic resources provided in parenthesis as help in case students cannot do it. The teacher controls oral and written answers on the board to allow slow learners understanding it.

**Recommendation:** In further lessons the teacher should provide examples of synonyms and antonyms whenever a new word is introduced.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Strategy:**

**Restructuring or rephrasing:** The speaker realizes that cannot finish an idea and goes back and rephrases it, this time using more manageable means.

**Awareness activities:**

4. Listen to the following questions and answers and reorganize the dialog.

3 ANNE: Is it large enough for the six of you?

1 JANE: Tell me about the new house you bought.

5 ANNE: Wow! That's a big house.

2 ANNE: It is quite a nice place. It has a comfortable kitchen and a balcony facing the garden.

6 JANE: You bet it is. I love it.

4 JANE: Yeah, it has four big bedrooms.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of this dialog.

**Techniques:** Individual

### Working pairs

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher writes the dialog on the board in order to complete the activity. Students should work first individually and then check answers between them. The teacher asks students to translate each sentence, and notice similarities and differences between Spanish and English language, particularly word order.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

### Partial Conclusions of Chapter II:

After the analysis of the system of activities as well as the initial and final measurements, it should be considered the persistence of difficulties concerning the oral communication strategies. These difficulties can be solved through a truly comprehensive teaching-learning process that enables the students' self-transformation.

The indicators used, allowed the diagnosis of the current stage of the problem under research associated to the oral communication strategies in second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas.

The main objective was to contribute to the development of the oral communication strategies through a system of activities to starter students. To achieve this objective a series of requirements were established to sustain the activities.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The theoretical and methodological references to develop the process of formation of the oral communication strategies, relate to important concepts from the communicative and the historical cultural approach, like communication, context, linguistic forms, communicative functions, learning strategies, and tasks.

The theory of communicative competence and developing didactics are basic elements to consider. The awareness and practice activities applied might be effective to help students to keep a conversation and a democratic-constructive conversational style. Students might show themselves more risk-taking, self-



confident, respectful, polite, solidaristic, truthful and empathize with their interlocutors during the oral interaction.

The state of the process of formation of the oral communication strategies, in second-year students of Chemical Engineering Majoring at the University of Matanzas, shows that speaking lesson activities do not encourage the identification of the relationship between oral communication strategies and their corresponding language forms. Students do not receive enough training in using these linguistic resources, particularly those related to word building, sentence structuring, and paraphrasing. It is an impediment to students to achieve both, conversational maintenance and a democratic-constructive conversational style.

The system of activities include explicit conscious training of communication strategies, using awareness and practice activities, which allow students to interact with their classmates working in pairs or in small groups. Its main theoretical foundations reside in the dialectical and historical materialism.

The investigation is an introductory mean to train students using linguistic resources, particularly those related to word building, sentence structuring, and paraphrasing, in order to achieve both, conversational maintenance and a democratic-constructive conversational style. The theoretical validation process indicates that the system of activities designed could be valid and practical.

## **RECOMENDATIONS**

The authoress of the present research recommends, taking into account the previous conclusions, to apply the proposed system of activities in starters students lessons in order to exploit all the potentialities they offer not only for the development of students' oral communication skills, but also for their future, so that they could become great professionals.

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## **ANNEXES**

### **ANNEX. I**

List of principles adapted from the work of Larsen-Freeman (2000), and Robinson and Selman (1986), cited by Milián Font, Sergio. In the left -hand column are the principles to be followed, while in the right-hand column are suggestions about how to apply these principles given by Font.

Principle	Suggestions for application
1. Authentic materials are used.	Teacher uses newspaper columns, job advertisements, weather reports, menus, catalogues, etc. In the context of Cuban secondary schools, teachers may also use brochures, short fragments of films, as well as video materials with native speakers of English.
2. One function can have many different forms.	Students can communicate for a specific purpose in many ways. This means that the same communicative purpose may be achieved by means of different language forms. Students should be provided with several forms for one single function. For instance, to invite someone (communicative purpose) you may use a variety of forms that may include: <i>Let's go to...</i> , <i>Why don't we...</i> , <i>How about...</i> , <i>Would you like to come...</i> , <i>I'd like to invite you to...</i> , among others. Teachers should not forget to explain that the choice will generally depend on the social relationships between the participants in the conversation.
3. Students need to learn cohesion and coherence.	Teacher uses activities such as scrambled sentences and others. This principle is connected mainly with discourse competence as explained above. Make your students aware of the importance of constructing cohesive and coherent texts.

<p>4. Errors are tolerated to a certain extent.</p>	<p>The form of error correction depends on what stage of the learning cycle is underway. Most errors must be corrected during controlled and guided (semi-controlled) practice, while correction should be made during communicative practice only when the errors cause breakdowns in communication.</p>
<p>5. Cooperative relationships among students are crucial.</p>	<p>Cooperation is very important in communicative language teaching. Students are expected to work in pairs and small groups, in which they must generally use the foreign language to communicate. Pair and group composition may depend on many factors. At times you may want to have advanced learners working with slow learners. Some other times it is advisable to reshuffle the groups to allow advanced learners to work together and learn from one another, while the teacher takes care of other groups composed of slow learners who have been given a less demanding task. The teacher may use strip stories, for instance, for the students to work together to predict the next picture.</p>
<p>6. The social context is essential.</p>	<p>Design controlled and guided activities in which the social context is taken into consideration. Make your students aware of the influence of the social context in the choice of language forms to fulfill a certain communicative purpose. If you do so from</p>

	<p>the early stages of the cycle, you will ensure that your students will bear these social relationships in mind when they are given more communicative tasks at the end of the cycle.</p>
<p>7. Language items include form, meaning and use.</p>	<p>This principle was already explained in the description of linguistic competence earlier in this chapter.</p>
<p>8. The teacher acts as advisor/facilitator. Lessons are learner-centered.</p>	<p>The teacher moves from group to group, offering advice and answering questions; and collaborates with students to select goals, content and processes. Plan your lessons in such a way that your students do most of the talking. Do not make yourself the center of the lesson, and do not try to speak more than necessary. The amount of teacher talk will, of course, vary according to the type of lesson (stage of the learning cycle), but learner talk must be intentionally favored in English lessons at all times.</p>
<p>9. Students should be given opportunities to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers.</p>	<p>Ask your students to watch films in English and try to understand a few words, write them down and bring them to class. Use idioms and sayings. They are very motivating.</p>

## **ANNEX. II**

### **Interview**

**Objective:** To know the professors' opinions about the students' abilities of communication.

To starter professors: In order to accomplish a study on starter students' abilities of communication at the University of Matanzas, I need your cooperation. Thanks!

1. Which is the ability, where your students, more difficulties have?



2. Do they communicate fluently during the lessons? If no:
  - 2.1. Do you believe that students not being able to communicate, is an impediment to master the language?
3. Do you consider important the development of oral communication strategies in lessons?
4. Do you use oral communication strategies in lessons, to develop communicative competence in your students?
5. Do you think is important to teach communication strategies or not?

### **ANNEX. III**

#### **Observation guide of a speaking lesson**

**Objective:** To obtain the necessary information to evaluate the indicators of the process of formation of communication strategies.

1. How often do the speaking lesson activities allow students to notice and use the linguistic resources necessary to maintain a conversation?

2. How often do the speaking lesson activities allow students to use oral communication strategies for conversational maintenance, while participating in everyday communicative interactions?

3. How often do the speaking lesson activities allow students to use oral communication strategies for building a democratic-constructive conversational style, while participating in everyday communicative interactions?

### **Evaluation scale**

**Usually:** The speaking lesson activities include oral and written model texts analysis in which students are encouraged to identify the relationship between oral communication strategies and their corresponding language forms. Students receive frequently use the linguistic resources related to word building, sentence structuring, and paraphrasing, while doing controlled, guided and free communicative activities to achieve both conversational maintenance and a democratic-constructive conversational style.

**Sometimes:** Either only conversational maintenance strategies, of oral communication strategies, are present in the speaking lesson activities, or the democratic-constructive conversational style enhancing strategies.

**Rarely:** Only some activities help to learn the linguistic resources necessary for oral communication strategies, but are not explicitly related to maintain a conversation.

**Never:** None of the speaking lesson activities consciously help to identify and practice the language forms.

## **ANNEX. IV**

### **Interview to professionals**

**Objective:** To know the professionals opinion about the system of activities to develop oral communication strategies.

- 1- Are you aware that most students do not use consciously communication strategies and this affects the fluency and collaborative character of their oral interaction?
- 2- What do you think about the system of activities presented?
  - 2.1- Do you consider that the awareness and the practice activities to train students are rarely used?
- 3- Which are, in your opinion, the weak points of the system of activities that need yet to be improved?
- 4- Do you believe this system of activities can be applied to starter students?

## **ANNEX. V**

### **System of activities**

**Strategy:**

**Paraphrasing or substituting:** The speaker uses alternative expressions with similar meanings to replace those that he/she does not know or cannot think of 'what to say' or 'how to say it'.

**Awareness activities**

1. Listen to the following short dialog between students and say what the topic is.

TOM: Peter, could you help me to answer this seminar's question?

What can I do to help the environment?

PETER: You shouldn't buy a car. It is very expensive, besides it is not healthy at all.

TOM: Expensive?

PETER: Yes, a car costs thousands of dollars, buy a bike, it is cheap and you do not affect the environment.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the dialog.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher will ask for students' attention, aimed at the recording; it will be played again if necessary. The teacher should be certain that students understood the dialog, and notice the relationship between the communication strategies and the linguistic resources.

1.a Listen to the dialog again and answer these questions:

- What was Peter's intention in his second speech?

Answer: To explain what expensive meant.

- How did he explain its meaning?

Answer: He used an example: A car costs thousands of dollars.

- What's the relationship between expensive and cheap?

Answer: These adjectives are antonyms.

**Procedure:** The teacher should ask further questions to help students understand how to paraphrase using examples of synonyms and antonyms.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

-Use English during the activity.

-Show interest and curiosity.

- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

2. Read the following dialog between Mary and June. What are they talking about?

JUNE: Mary, could you help me to decide what to wear?

Which blouse is prettier?

MARY: You shouldn't wear the casual blouse. We are going to a meeting.

JUNE: The red blouse is so serious.

MARY: That's the point; an elegant outfit says you are a professional.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the dialog.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher asks students to read the dialog. The teacher should be certain that students understood the dialog, and notice the relationship between the communication strategies and the linguistic resources.

2.a Read the dialog again and answer these questions:

- What was Mary's intention in her second speech?

Answer: To explain why to wear an elegant outfit.

- How did she explain it?

Answer: She used an example: An elegant outfit says you are a professional.

- What's the relationship between elegant and casual?

Answer: These adjectives are antonyms.

**Procedure:** The teacher should ask further questions to help students understand how to paraphrase using examples of synonyms and antonyms.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

### Practice activities

3. Imagine you want to say these sentences, but you don't remember the words underlined, or your interlocutor does not understand them. What would you say instead?

1. Be careful. This is a dangerous neighborhood. (not safe, much crime)
2. That guy is very funny. (makes everybody laugh)
3. I need to chat with you. (a word, talk)
4. Salvador Wood is a famous actor. (popular, well-known)
5. Did your family stand by your side? (support, take care)
6. My father is a bad-tempered man. (violent, aggressive)
7. Mary is jealous of Tom. (does not trust)

**Objective:** Students should be able to practice paraphrasing using synonyms and antonyms.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher models an example and then asks two students to solve it in pairs. The teacher uses the linguistic resources provided in parenthesis as help in case students cannot do it. The teacher controls oral and written answers on the board to allow slow learners understanding it.

**Recommendation:** In further lessons the teacher should provide examples of synonyms and antonyms whenever a new word is introduced.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Strategy:**

**Restructuring or rephrasing:** The speaker realizes that cannot finish an idea and goes back and rephrases it, this time using more manageable means.

**Awareness activities:**

4. Listen to the following questions and answers and reorganize the dialog.

3 ANNE: Is it large enough for the six of you?

1 JANE: Tell me about the new house you bought.

5 ANNE: Wow! That's a big house.

2 ANNE: It is quite a nice place. It has a comfortable kitchen and a balcony facing the garden.

6 JANE: You bet it is. I love it.

4 JANE: Yeah, it has four big bedrooms.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of this dialog.

**Techniques:** Individual

Working pairs

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher writes the dialog on the board in order to complete the activity. Students should work first individually and then check answers between them. The teacher asks students to translate each sentence, and notice similarities and differences between Spanish and English language, particularly word order.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Practice activities**

5. Imagine you are interacting with a Canadian. Translate the following sentences and remember what you learned in the previous activity.

1. Cuba es un hermoso país.

2. Apuesto a que puedes hacerlo.

3. ¿Quiere una limonada?

4. ¿Le gusta el café cubano?

5. Me gustaría visitar Canadá.

**Objective:** Students should be able to translate these sentences.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher helps students giving them an example (Cuba it's a beautiful country/Cuba is such a beautiful country). The teacher asks students to translate each sentence, rephrasing sentences if they cannot finish the idea using this time more manageable means.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Strategy:**

**Circumlocution:** The speaker offers a definition or description of the target item. Additionally it can be used the negation of a phrase of converse meaning.

**Awareness activities:**

6. Listen to the following short dialog between a father and his son. Complete it with what the son would say.

Father: John, please help us. I need you to go to the Butcher's.

Son: Pardon?

Father: I need you to go to the place where you can buy some meat?

Son: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the dialog.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher should be certain that students understood the dialog and what they have to do, making an example. The teacher controls oral and written answers on the board to allow slow learners understanding it.



**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**7.** Listen to the dialog again and answer these questions:

- What does the word pardon mean?

Answer: It means that the son did not understand what the father wanted.

- What does the father do in his second intervention then?

Answer: He explains what the son did not understand.

- How did he explain its meaning?

Answer: Defining.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the dialog.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure** The teacher should ask further questions to help students understand how to paraphrase using definitions.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**8.** Read the following conversation between two friends. Get the gist of it.

Finn: Pedro, do you know where the screwdriver is?

Pedro: I'm sorry, what?

Finn: Do you know where the tool that pulls marbles out is?

Pedro: Oh, yes! It's on that table.

**Procedure:** The teacher should be certain that students understood the dialog and notice the relationship between the communication strategies and the linguistic resources.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**9.** Listen to the dialog again and answer these questions:

- What does Pedro meant when he first talk?

Answer: He did not understand what Finn wanted.

- What does Finn do in his second intervention?

Answer: He explains what his friend did not understand.

- How did he explain its meaning?

Answer: Defining.

**Objective:** Students should be able to understand the essence of the conversation.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure** The teacher should ask further questions to help students understand how to paraphrase using definitions.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Practice activities**

**10.** Imagine you want to say these sentences, but you don't remember the words underlined, or your interlocutor does not understand them. Do not remain in silence, instead define the word in your own words or describe it.

1. Surgeons are very important at a hospital. (doctors who operate)
2. My friend is smart. (he solves any problem).
3. My uncle is here to visit us. (my father's brother)
4. We agreed to meet at the headquarters at 3 pm. (main offices where I work)
5. My teacher is open-minded. (someone you can talk to, you could say)

**Objective:** Students should be able to practice paraphrasing using definitions.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher models an example and then asks two students to solve it in pairs. The teacher uses the linguistic resources provided in parenthesis as help in case students cannot do it. The teacher controls oral and written answers on the board to allow slow learners understanding it.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Recommendation:** In further lessons the teacher should provide definitions whenever a new word is introduced.

**Strategies:**

- **Asking for repetition:** The speaker asks the interlocutor to repeat what just has said to facilitate comprehension.
- **Asking for clarification:** The speaker asks the interlocutor to clarify the meaning of what just has said to facilitate comprehension.
- **Asking for confirmation:** The speaker asks the interlocutor to confirm the meaning of what just has said to facilitate comprehension

### **Awareness activities**

**11.** Answer the following questions asking for confirmation, clarification or repetition following the given examples:

- Is your brother 14? **Confirmation:** Did you say 14 or 40?
- Where did your sister study? **Clarification:** Sorry, your sister, my sister?
- What does your father do for a living? **Repetition:** Could you repeat, please?  
/Pardon.

- a. Do you live in a house?
- b. Is that 17 Street?
- c. Are you a singer?
- d. Have you ever been married?
- e. How do you feel?

**Objective:** Students should be able to create the dialog based on the situation.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher will explain and write on the board some of the linguistic resources used to ask for confirmation, repetition and clarification.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

### **Practice activities**

**12.** Let's play the role.

#### **Card #1**

##### **Student A**

- You are in playing in the park and there is a boy hunting birds. Tell him not to do that. Try to convince him.

##### **Student B**

- You are hunting birds in a park. Someone tells you not to do that. At first you do not pay attention, but you realize what you did wrong and apologize. Ask for repetition.

**Card #2****Student A**

- Your brother wants to prepare lemonade, as a present to your mother' birthday, but he does not know how to do it. Give instructions to prepare lemonade.

**Student B**

- You want to prepare lemonade, as a present to your mother' birthday, but you do not know how to do it. Ask your sister's help to prepare the lemonade. Ask for confirmation and clarification.

**Objective:** Students should be able to create dialogs based on a given situation.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher organizes the classroom in random pairs. The teacher asks students to use the strategies: asking for confirmation, clarification and repetition.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Strategies:**

- **Affective reaction:** The speaker shows emotions and feelings publicly.
- **Interest showing:** The speaker shows interest in the listened information and asks follow-up questions related to it.
- **Positive attitude:** The speaker shows respect, politeness, solidaristic and empathy using a positive feedback.

**Awareness activities**

**13.** Imagine yourself in the following situation. How would you behave?

Situation: You are in a bus with your grandfather who is coming back home from the hospital. He is not feeling well. Then a young person tells him: Please, come and sit down.

Professor: What would you do?

Student: I would thank that person.

Professor: What could you say to thank him?

Student: Thank you very much. I appreciate your kindness.

**Objective:** Students should understand the essence of the situation in order to answer showing emotions and feelings publicly.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher gives the students some real life situation and they have to answer appropriately. It could be answer with examples provided by many students.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**14.** What would you do if a friend tells you the following statements? How will you react?

Statements:

- a. I am writing a poem for my girlfriend.
- b. Stacy, I think I failed the exam.
- c. I am going to drop out college.

Alain: Really? Interest

Pablo: Great! Enthusiasm

Ernesto: Incredible! Disbelief

Gabriel: Indeed! Sarcasm

Hanna: No way! Negation

**Objective:** Students should react accordingly showing their emotions sincerely.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher reads the statements orally to students. Students will have five seconds to react accordingly; they should say and express the emotion that there is transmitted to them.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

### **Practice activities**

**15.** Complete the dialogue given from the following situation.

Situation: Two close friends see each other in a park after a long time without contact.

Dialogue:

John: Hi, Peter. Long time no see. I see you sad and worried, man. What's the matter?

Peter: Oh Hi! My Dad is at the hospital.

**Objective:** Students should complete the dialogue reacting accordingly with the given situation.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher presents the situation and writes the dialog on the board. In pairs, students have to continue the dialog allowing each pair to answer the same situation on their own.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.

- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**16.** Read the phoned dialog conversation and write a different one changing the underlined sentences. You should have present the essence of the dialogue.

Beth: Hello.

Jean: Hi, Beth. This is Jean. Did you go to the hospital yesterday?

Beth: Oh, Yes, I did .I saw Dr. Brown. He gave me the guide to study for the test.

Jean: Have you studied for the test, yet?

Beth: I haven't. I am feeling very bad.

Jean: Do you want to go to the beach this weekend?

Beth: I would like to but I have fever and a sore throat, and we still have the test.

Jean: Well, good bye.

Beth: Good bye.

**Objective:** Students should understand what they have to do in order to complete the activity, reacting accordingly with the given situation.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher writes the dialog on the board. Students should work in pairs and change Jean's reactions in the dialogue, taking into account the sense of the conversation.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Strategies:**

- **Using fillers:** The speaker uses empty words such as: well, actually, you know, etc. to gain time to think of what to say or how to say it.



- **Using self-correction:** The speaker hears itself making a mistake in pronunciation, grammar, choice of words etc. and immediately corrects it.

**Awareness activities**

**17.** Introduce yourself using the following words as help when speaking: well, actually, you know, for example, in fact, etc. Talk about your name, age, hobbies, personal likes and dislikes, etc. Guide yourself with the following questions.

a. What's your name?

Possible answers:

- I am Molly.
- I'm Stephen.
- My name's Molly.

b. What's your age?

Possible answers:

- I am 18 years old.
- I'm 18.

c. What are your hobbies, likes and dislikes?

Possible answers:

- Well, I have several hobbies, for example horse riding and playing the piano.
- Actually, I read a lot, I go climbing and I like to go swimming.
- You know! I like to meet friends. I love to eat, for example I like noodles and sweets.

d. What do your parents do for a living?

Possible answers:

- Actually, my mother is a teacher and my father an accountant.
- Well, my mother works in an office and my father is currently unemployed.
- In fact! My father and my mother are both lawyers.

e. Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Possible answers:

- I have one older sister and one younger brother.
- In fact, I'm an only child.
- Well, I have two younger annoying sisters.

**Objective:** Students should understand what they have to do in order to introduce themselves using the fillers to express themselves better.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Recognition

**Procedure:** The teacher writes the questions on the board. Students should work individually. The teacher specifies what the students should talk about giving an example by answering one of the questions orally.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**18.** Talk about your favorite hobby using the following words as help when speaking: well, actually, you know, for example, in fact, etc. Guide yourself with the following questions.

a. What is your favorite hobby?

Possible answer:

- Well, I read a lot. Reading books is my favorite hobby.

a. What is the most enjoyable thing about this hobby?

Possible answer:

- Actually, reading always takes me to a whole different world through imagination. And that's in fact, pretty amazing.

c. Would you have to spend money on if you start this hobby?

Possible answer:

- Well, there are options. For example, in our reality it could be for free thanks to the internet. But you could always buy books in book stores.

**Objective:** Students should write down the answers, using the fillers to express themselves better. Then hand the information to their classmate. The classmate has to turn the information into a coherent paragraph and present it orally to the class.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher writes the questions on the board. All students should write down their information about their favorite hobby and give it to their classmate. Each classmate has to talk about it creating a coherent paragraph and present the hobby that they were given.

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**Practice Activities**

**19.** Look the following pictures about food and select one you like and one you don't like. Express your opinion. Use the following words as help when speaking: well, actually, you know, for example, in fact, etc. Take your time to pronounce correctly.



Possible Answer:

Well I really like to eat chocolates, because they are delicious, but ice creams in the other hand are too cold for me. Actually, I hate them.

**Objective:** Students should express what their likes and dislikes are, using the fillers to express themselves better.

**Technique:** Individual

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher places all the pictures on a table. Students should select two pictures: one they like and one they don't. When they are ready, each one explains orally their selection. Students can repeat as many times they need to correct mistakes in pronunciation, grammar, choice of words etc. (see Annex. III)

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.

**20.** Select one picture, the one you like the most, and describe it with your own words taking into account the following words as help when speaking: well, actually, you know, for example, in fact, etc. Take your time to pronounce correctly.



Possible answers:

- Actually I really like fish, that picture shows two clown fish in its habitat. You know, the anemone its purple, in fact is very common in the reef.
- Well, ducks are a lot of fun. The first picture shows a very colorful one. Actually, you can see that is swimming because of the waves in the water.

**Objective:** Students should be able to describe the picture chosen, using the fillers to express themselves better.

**Technique:** Working pairs

**Level:** Reproduction

**Procedure:** The teacher hands over both pictures to every pair of students. Each student will select one and describe it, in pairs they will change their notebooks and check each other's answers in order to correct themselves. They will answer orally the activity to the class. Students can repeat as many times they need to correct mistakes in pronunciation, grammar, choice of words etc. (see Annex. III)

**Control:** It is expected that students will:

- Use English during the activity.
- Show interest and curiosity.
- Take risks and initiative.
- Demonstrate clear sense of interaction and solidarity.
- Behave correctly during the activity.