



UNIVERSIDAD LAICA VICENTE ROCAFUERTE DE GUAYAQUIL

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RESEARCH PROJECT:

“THE USE OF ROLE-PLAY ACTIVITIES AS A TECHNIQUE TO
IMPROVE ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN 10TH BASIC
GRADE STUDENTS “A” AT “NUEVA ALBORADA” HIGH
SCHOOL 2013-2014.”

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EGRESADA:

MARÍA BELÉN DONOSO CARRASCO

TUTORA:

MSC. MARTHA MEDINA ORELLANA

AÑO LECTIVO

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As an English teacher, who has taught EFL (English as a foreign language) for about five years, I became interested in researching on the relationship between communicative activities and oral communication skills. The fact of helping learners to increase their oral skills through the use of entertaining activities motivated me to pursue this research study, focusing on the use of an interactive communicative technique such as role-playing.

Something worth-mentioning is the fact that Ecuadorian education, in relation with foreign languages, has changed its perspective and at the present days, our government is demanding graduated students who are capable of using their linguistic competence in different scenarios.

This research project is focused on investigating the multiple advantages of the use of role-play activities to increase learners' oral communication skills, at the same time, it seeks to put in evidence any significant improvement on learner's oral skills from 10th grades at a private non-bilingual institution by specifying the most appropriate communicative activities. Similarly, it is attempting to investigate the factors and situations in order to find a suitable solution to the learners' current problem.

The researcher conducts several procedures in order to test the research hypothesis; those procedures include data collection from teacher's and students' roles and opinions by using questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation formats since earlier stages of the process.

A pre-test is applied to determine the level of English in learners and their oral skills. Likewise, the two-week period educational intervention is conducted in a way in which students are constantly evaluated by the researcher. Right after, the post-test is applied to the same group and score results are analyzed to verify the validity of the hypothesis.

The entire research project is presented in four chapters. In chapter one, the background of the problem is detailed, along with description of the research objectives and the significance of the study. In chapter two, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks on role-play activities and the communicative language approach are widely discussed.

Similarly, research questions, hypothesis and variables are presented. Chapter three describes the methodology applied during the project; a qualitative research approach is discussed. Also, the results or findings of this study obtained from interviews, questionnaires and tests are discussed in relation to educational theories. In chapter 4, conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study are specified. Finally, a list of references and the appendices used for the research process are presented in the last pages.

1.1 Background of the problem

Oral communication skills in EFL classrooms are described as a set of skills that allow the appropriate involvement of students in specific communicative situations provided by the teacher and which are imperative for students to master since they will be required in future occasions and in different scenarios, for example at home, the workplace, classrooms, etc.

The development of speaking skills such as fluency, pronunciation, intonation and grammatical accuracy are essential to students' ability to communicate with others beyond their classrooms. Given the relevance of this statement, it is clear that successful EFL interaction among teachers or learners, parents and children, depends on how effective and developed are their speaking skills. The development of these skills also improves learners' interpersonal skills, which enable them to establish healthy relationships with their partners.

It is worth-mentioning that people can learn how to become a fluent speaker of a foreign language since it is not an innate skill. This means that this ability to speak fluently improves by practicing the language through simulated activities

(role-playing) with friends, relatives, colleagues, teachers, acquaintances. Consequently, we can say that these skills can be developed at home or at school by performing specific communicative activities as a good technique to promote students' success when communicating in the foreign language.

Although, the use of role-plays activities with the aim of reinforce the language inside EFL classrooms is not new, researchers have not found agreement on the definition of the terms. Such words as “role-play” and “simulation” are most of the times used interchangeably, but, in fact, they illustrate different notions. One of the concepts accepted by some scholars states that role-plays are communicative activities planned and conducted during the class by the teacher, in which students must take a specific role, fulfilling various tasks according to the assigned role and which they have in real life. Others consider role-playing as one component or element of simulation (Oxford, 1990).

In accordance with regulations in Ecuador stated in the LOEI 2011 (Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural) about teaching English as a Foreign Language, by the end of the academic year 10th grade students should be able to interact and exchange orally basic information with other people in real-life situations. The effective use of communicative activities will enhance oral students' social, personal and academic success during their lives through the strengthening of their communication skills.

As stated by Al-Senadi, S. (2009) and based on the communicate approach; role-play activities promote an adequate training on important components of these skills, such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary knowledge, grammatical control and comprehension. They are necessary to communicate and convey meaning when exchanging oral information.

However, based on the information obtained from the 10th grade students interviewed, there are several factors and situations in the school environment which do not allow students to master this important language skill, having as a result, the inability to express basic information freely in the foreign language. To overcome

this specific problem in this school, it is necessary then to select, adapt and apply meaningful communicative activities such as role-play activities in EFL classrooms.

1.2 Statement of the problem

After gaining its long deserved importance, speaking, as a language skill, has become the interest of many researchers. There have been various research studies on how to develop speaking skills in non-native speakers of the language as well as numerous studies on the development of speaking strategies and activities.

Another subject of debate in the English Language Teaching (ELT) literature is integrating different language skills to reinforce learning. For instance, the role of communicative activities aimed to develop oral competence has been frequently studied. Thus, there remains a need to explore the effects of the use of role-plays on the increase of speaking skills of this particular group of Ecuadorian secondary students.

Based on the emerging consensus over the importance of the speaking skill components among scholars, the need to investigate the possible effects of improving students' fluency, pronunciation, accuracy and intonation through the use of role-play activities naturally arises. Therefore, the present research study aims to investigate the improvement, if any, of students' speaking skills through role-play activities.

Figure 1. “Oral language”

Source: <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/yorkeandmidnorth/pages/SS/44908/?reFlag=1>



1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 Broad Objective

The aim of this research paper is to determine advantages and effectiveness of the use of role-play as a technique to improve students’ oral communication skills.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- ✚ To determine factors and situations that can cause poor students’ oral achievement.
- ✚ To record students’ current oral communication skills.
- ✚ To specify the techniques applied during the educational intervention.
- ✚ To adapt and recreate this type of activities based on real-life situations.
- ✚ To assess students’ progress after applying the communicative activity chosen (role-playing).
- ✚ To validate through the criterion of experts, the effectiveness and relevance of the chosen role-play activities as a technique to improve oral communication skills.

1.4 Significance of the study

This research study provides several adapted role-play activities to be performed by basic users of English in order to increase their oral communication skills. Specifically, 10th grade students from Nueva Alborada School are conscious on the importance of improving not only their communicative but also their social skills; due to the fact, it has been proved that traditional activities conducted by the teacher e.g. dialogues, meaningless repetitions and expositions are not effective enough to reach this goal.

Role-playing is the communicative technique selected by the researcher to promote effective oral interactions based on real-life situations since the nature of these activities is oriented to promote group integration, oral interaction, critical thinking and respect among learners. Ordering food, leaving phone messages, making phone calls, buying tickets for a movie, arranging appointments are some examples of goal-oriented activities to enhance and reinforce pronunciation, vocabulary, intonation, register, creativity and body language in basic levels students.

As a result, the present study benefits teachers, students, future researcher and the school itself. To students, they evidence significant improvement in their oral communication skills as well as the development of empathy and tolerance among them. Additionally, a shift in their attitudes toward English classes is observed since they are more active and motivated to participate on activities of their interests.

To teachers, they can count with a reference guide to perform different activities aimed to different purposes. Also, the creation of a booklet with role-play activities helps them to shift their repertoire and make English classes more communicative and entertaining. Finally, they promote creativity, critical thinking, autonomy and meaningful learning in English classes.

To the school itself, it generates well-being among school members since no money is required for the dissemination of the booklet. At the same time, school

status is re-established due to the fulfillment of the government requirements about foreign languages.

To future researchers, the proposed study can be used as guidance to apply it in larger classes or with bigger samples. Therefore, it becomes necessary to determine to what extent the use of role-play activities language learning can improve students' oral communication skills.

1.5 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The content of this study deals with a review of articles, books, electronic publications on educational benefits of applying role-playing activities in EFL classrooms. This research looks into theories, points of view and contributions which provide insights to increase learners' oral skills. Additionally, recommendations for designing and adapting role-play activities which promote oral practice for students are presented in the last part of the research paper.

This study limits its coverage on 10th grade students at Nueva Alborada School only, at the same time, it focuses on the current 10th grade students of the school year 2013-2014. The present study is aimed to identify factors that influence lack of oral skills in students and to propose suitable role-play activities based on the communicative method.

It is worth-mentioning that some additional aspects this study does not intend to cover, for example:

- Emphasize on the importance of traditional explanation of grammatical structures to acquire the language since this research aimed to improve oral skills.
- Analyze scholars' discussions, contributions, opinions and other research findings about internal or external motivation to take them as main axes of the study.

- Generalize the idea that “role-playing” is the unique tool to increase students’ oral skills without considering other communicative activities.
- Generalize research findings since they may change with different proficiency levels.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of implementing role-plays during English classes of a non-bilingual school to increase students' oral communication skills. At the beginning of the study, the students were administered a pre-test to determine their level of English and their speaking skills. After the pre-test, the experimental group received the educational intervention. At the end of the two-week period, all the students were given a post-test to see if they have improved their speaking skills. The findings revealed that, all the students from 10th grade have perceived a statistically significant improvement at the end of the two-week period. This fact implies that the use of role-play activities based on the communicative language approach was more effective in developing not only their oral but also their social skills than the common communicative activities used by the teacher during regular English classes. This finding confirms the previous literature suggesting the relationship between role-playing and the development of oral communication skills.

Key words: Oral communication skills, social skills, communicative language approach, communicative activities, role-playing.

DEDICATION

I would like to sincerely dedicate this work to Our Father “God” for putting so many wonderful people in my way; including my family, relatives, friends, advisors, colleagues, teachers and students who I have counted on during this challenging but rewarding process.

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CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

At the present days in our country, being a competent speaker of the English language is an important requirement asked in different scenarios such as schools, workplaces, universities and so on. Exchanging information, expressing ideas, and asking basic questions are some of the tasks learners should be capable of reaching at the end of the high school years. That is the reason why several researcher and language experts are concerned on promoting effectiveness and benefits of communicative activities in EFL classrooms.

Shade, Scott, Ments, Dorathy, Celce-Murcia, Maxwell, Richard and Rodgers, Littlewood, Krain and Lantis' ideas, opinions, case studies and conclusions include the theoretical review of this section. Similarly, these experts' contributions are deeply discussed and analyzed in the following pages. On the contrary, key concepts on oral competence, speaking components and role-playing are presented in the conceptual framework. Consequently, this project facilitate and promote the adaptation of valuable role-play activities which can be applied in EFL classroom in order to motivate students to increase their oral skills by practicing the use of the language in real-life situations.

2.2 Theoretical Review

The present study takes as main axe the different contributions made by linguistics and educational experts on educational role-plays in EFL classrooms as a technique based on the communicative language approach. This communicative technique provides opportune information in order to conduct this study aimed to improve students' oral skills.

2.2.1 Outlining oral competence

Oral communication and its components are wide concepts in EFL learning which teachers as well students need to consider for reaching accurate oral fluency. So, it is necessary to understand some definitions stated by many authors' on oral competence.

Bygates, M. (1991) concluded that the ability a speaker has to create suitable utterances in different circumstances when speaking is defined as oral competence. It is important to mention here that many authors' definitions of oral competence includes the ability to make rapid language decisions that best fits to any situation in an oral exchange.

Then again, O'Maley, J. & Valdez, P. (1996) refers to oral competence as the capacity two or more speakers have to convey meaning. Additionally, Brown, J. & Yule (1983) says that oral competence is an interactive process in which two or more people produce and received processed information.

2.2.2 Communicative competence

2.2.2.1 A description of competence

According to the Common European Framework, a competence is a group of areas of knowledge accompanied by aptitudes, attitudes and general skills. Obviously, the level of competence among users of English varies from one user to another one. The conjunction of these competences provides the learners the capacity to communicate meaningful messages known as communicative competence.

It is imperative then, to separate between linguistic and other types of competences. The CEFR states two main competences: general and communicative language competence. Among this two, there are strategic and learning competence.

2.2.2.2 Communicative language competence

The communicative language competence includes several components such as linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences; aptitudes, knowledge and skills are important parts of these.

The linguistic competence refers to the learner's ability to manage the language features such as lexis, phonology and syntax. This competence refers about not only the quality of knowledge but also cognitive organization and how knowledge is stored in memory.

2.2.3 Oral fluency: A brief description

Giving an accurate definition on oral fluency is a difficult task since it embodies many aspects of language which cannot be displaced or ignored. Hartmann & Stork (1976) suggest that "a person is said to be a fluent speaker of a language when he can use its structures accurately whilst concentrating on content rather than form, using the units and patterns automatically at normal conversational speed when they are needed."

On the other hand, Brumfit, C. (1984) feels that fluency is "to be regarded as natural language use." Similarly, Richards et al. (1985) maintain that fluency is "the features which give speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and use of interjections and interruptions."

Taking as basis native speakers' oral productions, Fillmore, C. (1979) identified four abilities that are considered under the term "fluency", the first one is the ability to talk at a normal length making few pauses. The three other abilities include coherence at the moment of speaking, appropriateness of diction and creativity in language use. (P. 93).

Therefore, one of challenges EFL teachers face when learning a second language is providing learners realistic tools and adapted activities aimed to improve their oral fluency. Specially, in countries where learners share a common mother tongue and have little or no exposure to the L2 outside the classroom. Bresnihan & Stoops (1996), found that structured pair and group work communication tasks as they are structured in ESL classrooms are often ineffective or not as effective as teachers desire to reach the purpose. The main reason is palpable because during any communicative activity in the classroom, learners prefer to use their native language rather than English to communicate or express simple ideas and it is hard for teachers to convince them to try.

2.2.4 Communicative Language Tools

A study conducted in an Arabian setting by Al-Sibai, D. (2004) about promoting oral fluency of second language learners, mentioned the features and language tools required to master oral fluency. She defined the term language tools as a set of elements learners need to have to use the language like a native speaker. Unfortunately, traditional methods of English as a second language are focused on the acquisition of language components isolated and never integrated as a whole. Therefore, instructors need to facilitate not only pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary lists but also elements well used by native speakers such as paralinguistic features, kinesics language features, and pragmatics.

2.2.4.1 Paralinguistic Features

Paralinguistic features are those characteristics of the spoken language found quite apart from pronunciation. Some of these include facial expressions, head movements, hand gestures, eye movements, and eye gaze.

Paralinguistic features are essential communication devices which human beings employ all the time in all types of oral interactions. Thus, the effective use of

these features will enhance fluency, and perhaps they will be one of the set of tools that learners can fall back on when all other language tools have failed.

2.2.4.2 Kinesics Language Features

Kinesics language features have to deal with the use of the body in any communicative setting. Proximity, touching, and posture are examples of kinesics language features. These language tools are important because they can be used to communicate friendliness, concern, hostility, and many other complex emotions without the use of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

Hence, ESL learners need to internalize such kinesics in the same order of importance as they need to learn complex grammar rules, vocabulary and pronunciation, not because their use of kinesics is incorrect, but because of the way it can lead to misunderstandings.

2.2.4.3 Pragmatics

They are directly related to specific context and social situations in which the language is being used. That means pragmatics incorporates the interactions between the language and the real world knowledge in a specific context. Similarly, the relationships between speaker and listener in that context are important aspects of pragmatics.

And so, pragmatics can be a simple issue if the pragmatic rules of all languages and cultures were quite similar, but unfortunately, there are great significant variations. Since these differences can cause communication problems, they must be taught in order to improve students' fluency.

2.2.5 Communicative Language Choices

Communicative language choices are seen as the different options within the sets of language tools, learners need to select taking into consideration the context where communication occurs.

According to Widdowson, H. (1978) there is a distinction between reference and expression rules. He defined as reference rules to those rules that compose the learner's knowledge of the language. For example, a student's reference rules would consist of what they know of the paralinguistic, kinesics, pragmatic, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary rules of the English language.

On the contrary, the expression rules are those rules that determine what the student actually does with the language. These expression rules frequently center on the choices they must make due to differences in settings, social roles and register and style.

2.2.5.1 Settings

Setting involves the place where the communication occurs. Such as a cell phone conversation, in front of a classroom, at the gym, at school, at the restaurant, etc.

2.2.5.2 Social Roles

Within various situations and social roles may further determine the choices that people make in communicating.

Social roles involve certain differences that people play in life and how those roles affect communication. We all take on a variety of social roles. For instance, people play the role in their personal life of a father, mother, teacher, student, customer, employee, etc. It is clear then, that learners make language choices day by day as they move from social role to social role.

2.2.5.3 Register and Style

It is quite common to be confused in the definition of these two terms such as register and style. Register refers to differences in language choices based

membership in different occupations (e.g., teachers, students, doctors, lawyers, etc.) or different hobbies or interest areas (e.g., teaching, piloting a plane, administering an enterprise, in a court, etc.). On contrary, the term style is used to describe differences in level of formality, differences that range from very casual to casual to colloquial to formal to very formal.

2.2.6 Communicative Language Strategies

Communicative language strategies are skills which learners need in order to maximize effective communication when they are not so accurate in their use of language.

Fluency is a matter of degrees, students at any level of proficiency can probably achieve some degree of fluency. Considering several communicative language strategies can help them communicate fluently anytime. There are at least six such strategies, including the abilities: (a) to use speed to their advantage, (b) to use pauses and hesitations efficiently, (c) to give appropriate feedback, (d) to repair competently, (e) to clarify effectively, and (f) to negotiate for meaning when necessary.

2.2.6.1 Ability to Use Speed to Their Advantage

This ability is mainly focused on state a difference between being a fluent speaker and being a fast speaker in L2. The majority of non-native speakers think they speak fast becomes them more fluent. However, fast speech does not mean being fluent. In fact, a great difference among L1 and L2 users of English is that native speakers often speak slowly in order to have more time to think before they talk compared to non-native speakers who think the fast they can speak the more fluent they are.

2.2.6.2 Ability to Use Pauses and Hesitations

Native speakers of English often use pauses and hesitations while they are talking just as a non-native speaker does in a normal conversation or communicative

situation. Indeed, researchers have found that native speakers spend up to 50 percent of their speaking time pausing.

It is important for non-native users to understand that using slower speed with pauses and hesitations may necessitate the use of fillers. Some fillers in English are just sounds like uhm, er, uh, ah, and umm; while, other are words such as okay, you know, well, so, etc. In that way, communication sounds more natural and fluent and not like if they are talking to a robot.

2.2.6.3 Ability to Give Appropriate Feedback

Feedback involves a series of signals a listener used to indicate the speaker if the message has or has not been decoded correctly. These signals do not only consist of words, they can also be gestures or facial expressions. Agreement or disagreement words such as yes, okay, right and facial expressions like smiles, frowns, winks are good indicators of the speaker proficiency and fluency in the second language.

2.2.6.4 Ability to Repair Competently

These techniques rely on the ability native speakers have and non-native speaker should try to imitate when correcting the “mistakes” they make during any oral exchange in the foreign language. It is true that native speakers are better handling their mistakes by self-correction or even pair correction. Teachers need to socialize different ways in which non-natives can take advantage of these techniques without creating controversy or offense if others correct their errors.

2.2.6.5 Ability to Clarify Effectively

As main difference among native and non-native speakers were established previously, it is remarkable to state another one big difference between these two users. Native speakers will try to clarify the message by using a sort of techniques such as using gestures, rephrasing, giving examples and even miming when they realized they are not being understood; on the contrary, non-native speakers tend to use a particular resource such as the use of mother tongue in L2 situations when misunderstood.

2.2.6.6 Ability to Negotiate for Meaning When Necessary

The process by repairing mistakes and clarifying messages is known as negotiation. It consists on the capacity to cooperate to get the meaning across leaded by grammatical, pronunciation, or even pronunciation mistakes. This ability is strong in native users of the language and learners should embrace it in order to improve fluency.

2.2.7 Promoting Fluency

Schmidt (1992) said that, "Fluent speech is automatic, not requiring much attention, and is characterized by the fact that the psycholinguistic processes of speech planning and speech production are functioning easily and efficiently." In other words, it is necessary to set up opportunities which lead non-native speakers to improve their fluency in oral exchanges through automaticity which only occur when the students themselves are trying to use their language knowledge to actually communicate.

Principles on automaticity during oral production are set by Brown, D. (1996), who emphasized on the fact that teachers can promote fluency if they: (a) encourage students to go ahead and make constructive errors, (b) create many opportunities for students to practice, (c) create activities that force students to get a message across, (d) assess student's fluency not their accuracy, and (e) talk openly to the students about fluency.

2.2.8 Causes of Weakness in English Language Learning

In Ecuador since remote times, English has been considered "not so important issue" to pay attention during school years since it is not the mother tongue language. The situation is quite similar in any country of the world in which English is taught as schools as a subject and not as a necessary tool to have opportunities in an international market.

According to Souvannasy, Masashi, & Yukiko (2008b), there are several factors which cause weaknesses in English language learning such as unqualified English teachers and also unstandardized curriculum.

Another study conducted by Muhammad (2007) on the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence on communication in the target language found difficulties of language learning. For example, he mentioned the presence of differences in learners' and target language cultures; differences in speakers' social status. Additionally, it is generalized the truth that non-native speakers preferred to use their mother tongue rather than English when communicating.

After investigating on factors that lead poor performance of students in English language, Trawiński (2005) mentions the followings:

- ✚ English is regarded as a difficult subject to learn.
- ✚ Learners' learning depends on the English teachers as authorities.
- ✚ There is a lack of support to use English in the home environment and the community.
- ✚ Learners have insufficient or lacking of exposure to the language as there is a limited opportunity to use English outside the classrooms
- ✚ Students have a limitation of vocabulary proficiency as well as English reading materials are not always available.
- ✚ Learners have a lack of motivation to learn English as they do not see the immediate need to use the language.

Similarly, learners' lack of self-motivation, lack of efficiency of schools and the lack of parents' support to reinforce the language outside the classrooms are some factors mentioned by Chang (2010). Moreover, Alderman (2004), states to the students' poor performance of language learning are affected from a lack of effort, lack of effective learning strategies, whereas a good language learner is a highly motivated students and a successful user of a large number of different strategies

(Trawiński, 2005). So, teachers have to help them to improve the motivational beliefs and language learning strategies in order to find ways that reach to their academic achievement.

2.2.9 History of the role-plays

It is impossible to try to find a suitable definition of the word “role-play” without exploring its origins and different usages over the years. The first ideas of using a medium for instruction by playing different roles can be attributed to the Greeks. It is supposed to think that after the activity, teachers and pupils discussed their roles afterwards and it that way role-plays were used to instruct on how to provide suitable responses according to the context.

Through the years, scholars has discussed the terms “simulation”, “games” and “role-plays”, in fact, some scholars have used the terms interchangeably in different contexts. To be precise, in much of the early literature, these terms are connected when referring to what is now known as educational role-plays.

According to Shade, W. (2006) there are some punctual differences between simulations, games and role-play exercises. Simulations “place students within a reasonable representation of a real environment within which political or social interaction occur” (p. 53). On the other hand, when students perform role-play exercises, they are usually given prescribed roles so, they must work to develop their character and think about how she/he would respond according to the context and circumstances. That is, interactions within role-playing exercises are more interpersonal than goal-oriented.

Based on Scott’s premise (2001) role-plays allows students to “inhabit the issue and think beyond their own perspectives” (p. 347) that is, role-plays make activities more real and engaging for students. Similarly, Wheeler, S. (2006) stated that role-playing exercises typically involve fewer complex interactions compared to other types of communicative activities.

Information on the different uses experts had given to role-plays indicates that in 1946, Moreno created the socio-metric measure, a technique that studies interpersonal attraction and group membership in institutional settings. He used role-play for psychiatric objectives. These plays are known under the names of psychodrama and socio-drama, very popular nowadays.

The educational use of role-play became more and more popular worldwide, having as a result that during the 1970s and 1980s, the use of role-play has increased even further to train learners in different scenarios and to be part of university curricula, business, and industrial training programs.

2.2.9.1 Definition

There has not been agreement among scholars to construct a “defined” concept for the term “role-plays”. One of the definitions accepted by some Scholars states that role-plays are communicative activities planned and conducted during the class by the teacher, in which students must take a specific role, fulfilling various tasks according to the assigned role similar to what they do in real life. Other scholars consider role play as “one component or element of simulation” (Oxford, 1990).

According to Qing, X. (2011), role play is defined as “the projection in real-life situations with social activities” (p. 37). Similarly, Ments, V. (1999) states, in a role-play “each player acts as a part of the social environment of the others and provides a framework in which they can test out their repertoire of behaviors or study the interacting behavior of the group” (p. 5).

2.2.9.2 Uses of role-plays

Ments, V. (1999) said, “The most obvious uses of role-play are in those areas which deal primarily with aspects of communication” (p. 19). The general objective of this research study is to help students to improve their oral communication skills.

Since role-play is communication based technique, I applied it to see its effectiveness through various activities in controlled environment.

Role-play activities gives students the opportunity to practice by interacting with others in certain roles and regarding purpose of roleplaying Ments said, “their aim is to feel, react and behave as closely as possible to the way someone placed that particular situation would do” (p. 9). Since role-play deals “primarily with aspects of communication” Ments stated, “it is therefore ideally suited to those subjects that deal with linguistic ability, namely languages, literacy and social skills training” (p. 19). He mentioned several areas where role-play could be used. For example, this technique could be used for testing linguistic ability, to provide students’ meaningful learning experiences and also to motivate effectively to learners.

The learners linguistic ability can be tested “by devising scenes of everyday life, in particular those situations which make use of the vocabulary to be learnt, the students can be encouraged to use language in a free and interesting way” (p. 19). He also noticed that the learner is really using the language, applying not only words but also non-verbal communication becoming learning “an integral part of the task”.

Talking about an area “motivation” which is really important when learning a language, Ments mentioned that role play is “motivational and effective because it involves activity” (p. 13). While, I was examining the use of role-play on the students I found out that this technique was highly motivational because it was different from regular lectures, dialogues and conversations from the students’ books. Through this activity, students were seen to gain confidence and to adapt their personalities to the role they were performing, which helped them to reduce anxiety if they commit errors.

2.2.9.3 Benefits of using role-plays in the classroom

According to Celce-Murcia, M & Hilles, S (1988), using role playing in the classroom has many benefits. It helps to build empathy among learners since they are likely to accept their partners by putting themselves in situations which they get

different perspectives and points of view, creating an atmosphere in which they support each other. Similarly, role-play activities increase students' confidence when practice communicating in authentic ways and real-life situations beyond the classroom.

Memorable learning experience is another benefit students could get since the process students go through when they perform role-play activities. For example, creating or learning the dialogue, practicing and presenting in front of the class, will help to consolidate solidify new information. Celce-Murcia, M. (1988) stated that these simulated activities provide "some of the richest and most memorable experiences students have in their struggle with the second language" (P.71).

Apart from what was mentioned before, role-plays have the benefit to be adaptable for multiple levels, since they can be modified to fit upper and lower level students within the same activity. Lower-level students or beginners can stick to the script meanwhile upper level students can modify dialogues or improvise on their own. Parrish, B. (2004) states that role-plays decreases inhibitions "because learners are taking on a different "persona" to a degree, they sometimes are less inhibited than they might be with other fluency activities" (P.106).

Furthermore, Stern notes that role playing activities are "a curative for the frustration and lack of interest which can often occur during second language learning" and "provides strong instrumental motivation" for learning a new language. That is, this technique is an excellent instrument to increase motivation and self-esteem. He concludes that role playing "raises self-esteem by demonstrating to second language learners that they are indeed capable of expressing themselves in communicative situations."

Last but not least, raising students' self-esteem and showing them that they can be successful in communicative scenarios are another advantage of using role-playing activities since they can be modified to build learners' confidence when they need to communicate in real-life situations.

2.2.9.4 Problems in role-playing

Ments, V. (1999) pointed out some of the problems which teachers need to avoid when working with role-play activities. According to him, assigned situations, roles and personalities sometimes can create conflicts among group members and as a result, they could not be really engaged with roles assigned previously or it might hurt the feelings of others' emotion (p. 16). He also mentioned that role-play might be seen as "too entertaining and frivolous" (p. 16).

Dorathy, A. (2011) stated that the major drawback in role playing is the "insecurity of class members". Some may react "negatively to participating in a situation which will be discussed and possibly criticized by other members of the class". Additionally, she pointed out that "role-playing takes time". That is, "the class discussion of a five-to-ten-minute role-playing situation may extend to several times the length of the situation itself."

In her opinion, "the relationship of the people in the group is a crucial factor in the success of role-playing". Since, it may appear as a negative factor. For example, if group members experienced interpersonal difficulties previously, it could affect and even "corrupt the role-playing situation".

Dorathy, A. (2011) says "these difficulties with the method are formidable, but they are not insurmountable". In fact, "nor are they so extensive that they should prohibit us from experimenting with role-playing". The potential benefits of this communicative based technique overbalance the difficulties which may arise at the beginning.

2.2.9.5 What are role-plays good for?

According to Celce-Murcia (1988), "these techniques facilitate a match between structure and social functions and can be used for both communicative and focused grammar practice" (P.61). That is, role-playing is good to improve learners' communication skills and grammar.

Applying role-plays frequently in EFL classroom develops in learners “fluency” since they will allow them to practice words, phrases, and sentences in a realistic setting; using appropriate response time, inflection and, as a result, learners become more fluent with the language.

Another good reason to use role-plays is the presence of the “spontaneity state”. That is, using role-plays often encourages learners to use resources and language that he/she may not even know they possess. Celce-Murcia notes: “the experience is really quite remarkable for students and teachers alike, and the fluency and accuracy exhibited are often amazing” (P.63).

Role-play activities can be used as an excellent assessment tool. For example, when students are performing their role play, it is quite easy to identify if they have grasped the grammatical structures, content, vocabulary, or other new information presented previously to them. They will display what they have learned and present that knowledge to the class.

Finally, Maxwell, C. (1997) stated that “language learners can gain a deeper awareness of the target culture by means of experiences in which they role play authentic situations” (P.2). That is role-plays can be a great way to teach cultural factors or etiquette. If they are able to observe a model first and then practice in a similar scenario, they will be prepared and culturally aware of the appropriate responses.

2.2.10 Technique

2.2.10.1 Definition

The definitions given by the Oxford dictionary implies the word “technique” as “a particular way of doing something, especially one in which you have to learn special skills”. A second definition states “technique” as “the skill with which somebody is able to do something practical”.

In general then, we can think of the word “technique” as a method or style of implementing systematic knowledge. This general definition of technique includes cultural behaviors as well as human interactions with educational tools associated with teaching methods.

2.2.11 Communicative Language Approach

2.2.11.1 History

The Communicative Approach appeared as a reaction against the audio-lingual method and its principles. Although, it emerged in the early 1970’s as a result of the work of two European experts Al-Mutawa & Kailani (1989), it can be also attributed to the work of Noam Chomsky in the 1960’s, when he introduced two different terms “competence” and “performance”.

According to Hedge, T. (2000), Hymes later on called “communicative competence” to the mixture of these two key concepts which refers to the psychological, cultural and social rules which discipline the use of speech.

His view, therefore, focused not only knowledge but also ability to put that knowledge into use in communication. Several dimensions of “communicative competence” which are identified in the current literature include: linguistic or grammatical competence, sociolinguistic or pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence (Richards & Rogers, 1986) and fluency (Hedge, 2000).

2.2.11.2 Purposes of using communicative approach based activities

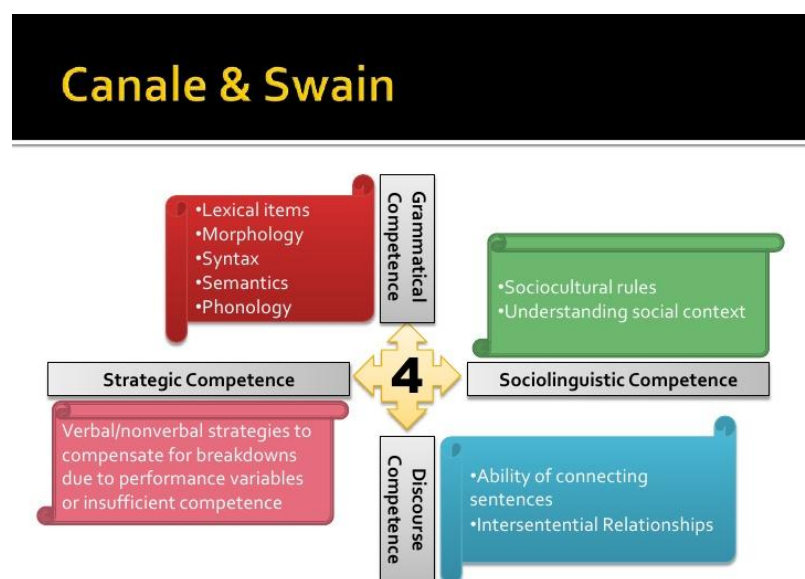
Littlewood, W. (1981) suggested various purposes of using communicative activities in the classroom. According to his opinion, such activities provide meaningful practice, enhance motivation, improve natural learning, and create a supportive context. That is, when the learner is familiar with them, communicative activities provide a useful opportunity to train the complete set of communication

skills in foreign language. Due to communicative activities, learners can use the relationship between their classroom work and their ability to communicate in real world, which is the main reason why they learn a second language.

Littlewood, W. (1981) states that it is likely “that many aspects of language learning can take place only through natural processes”, which are in progress when “a person is involved in using the language for communication” (P. 17,18). Therefore, communicative activities play an important role in the whole learning process. These activities also create opportunities to build strong relationships among people involved in the process. As a result, warmer and more supportive learning environment can be achieved.

Finally, it is important to mention that this approach emphasize on learners’ responsibility for fulfilling tasks created by the teacher. In fact, the teacher has not a central role like in the other behavioristic methods of language. Here, the teacher can serve as a guide; advisor or observer, on the contrary, main responsibilities comes from the learners.

Figure 2. “Communicative competence Canale and Swain model”
Source: <http://www.slideshare.net/n3ol3oy/communicative-competence-6014198>



2.2.11.3 Implications

The communicative approach emerges under a holistic rather than a behavioristic theory of language teaching. It started from a theory of language focused on the importance of effective communication (Richards & Rogers, 1986) which implies knowledge on the usage and use of the language (Widdowson, H. 1984).

Despite the audio-lingual method, the communicative approach gives emphasis to the semantic content of the language learning. That is, learners acquire grammatical knowledge in a meaningful way and not like isolated structures. In fact, (Richards & Rogers, 1986) pointed out, "learning activities are selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaningful and authentic language use)" (P.72)

2.2.11.4 Points of criticism

Educational experts and critics have emphasized several points of criticism against this language theory. For example, they pointed out that:

- The communicative approach focuses on the use of language in everyday situations, or the functional aspects of language, and less on the formal structures.
- This approach relies extensively on the functional-notational syllabus which places heavy demands on the learners.
- The various categories of language functions are overlapping and not systematically graded like the structures of the language.
- A major premise underlying this approach is its emphasis on learners' needs and interests. This implies that every teacher should modify the syllabus to correspond with the needs of the learners.
- The approach gives priority to meanings and rules of use rather than to grammar and rules of structure. The latter are taught by means of functions

and notions. Such concentration on language behavior may result in negative consequences in the sense that important structures and rules would be left out.

- Finally, the requirements are difficult: availability of a classroom that can allow for group work activities and for teaching aids and materials.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

There has been a numerous contributions made by educational experts and linguistics on the communication process through the years. The conceptual framework of this research project focused on investigating factual information concerning oral communication, oral competence, speaking components, communicative activities and finally the multiple advantages of using role-plays in EFL classrooms.

2.3.1 The communication process

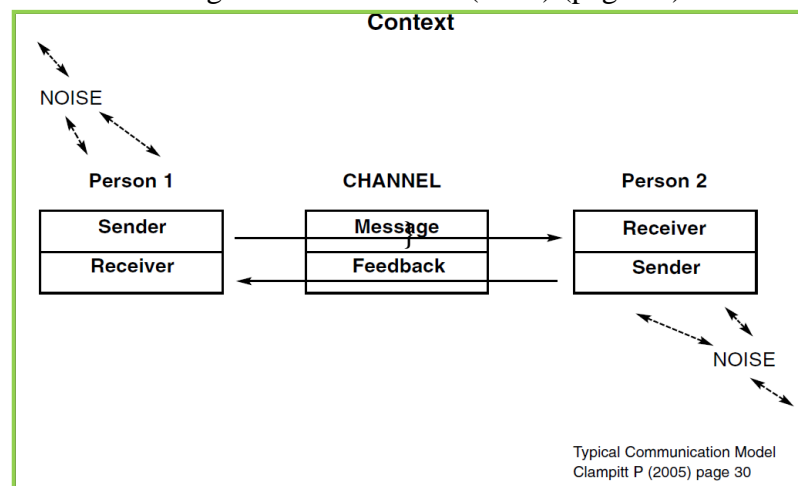
In order to understand why interpersonal communication can be interrupted or misunderstood it is imperative to understand the basic communication process by which communication occurs.

Clampitt, P. (2005) defined the word “communication” as an active process, influenced by all the complexities and ambiguities of human behavior. This can be attributed to the fact that communication is not a passive event and not all the time individual responds as it is supposed to be, that is why Clampitt precisely stated that “we actively construct meanings within a unique vortex that includes the words used, the context of the utterances, and the people involved.” (P.8). As a result, if individuals take into consideration all the elements mentioned before, communication among them can be effective.

An accurate way to understand the communication process can be described as a dynamic process in which verbal and non-verbal behavior are closely related. Several models have been developed to summarize and detail the communication

process and to help us to understand better this complex yet important process. The “Typical Communication Model” developed by Clampitt (2005) demonstrates a number of key elements in the communication process.

Figure 3. “Clampitt’s communication model” Source: Communicating for Managerial Effectiveness (book) (page 30)



To understand better the graphic is necessary to explain Clampitt’s communication model. This model presents communication process between two people:

- Person 1 is the one who constructs and sends a message.
- Messages are described as signals and symbols that they use to convey what they want to transmit.
- In order to send the message, it must be encoded into words, as well as tone, inflection, facial expression, and other non-verbal language.
- Person 2 is in charge to receive, decode the message and send a response.
- The channel refers to the means used to deliver messages and the related formats. Examples of this are telephone, pager, written, radio and video communication. In face to face communication, which is most often preferred for communication of more important matters, communication

occurs through visual, auditory and olfactory formats, while the tactile medium may or may not be used.

- Feedback comprises both the verbal and non-verbal messages of others, and allows us to evaluate how the message has been understood and the response to it. Actively listening to feedback is a key skill in effective communication.
- The term “noise” describes anything that can interfere with or distort the meaning of a message.

2.3.2 Communication skills and oral competence

The ability to express ideas and reflections clearly, to make contact with people quickly, to provide opportune feedback and finally to be tolerant to people’s different points of view is one of the most suitable definitions for communication skills or oral competence. This competence turns visible when the sender is able to look for, find and transfer different information decoding the message and providing correct feedback.

Based on teaching second languages principles, Savignon, S. (1972) used the term communicative competence to refer to "the capacity of language learners to communicate with other classmates"; she distinguished this ability, which allows them a meaningful use of language, from the other one which allows them, for example: repeat dialogues from the books or answer certain questions correctly. Canale, M. (1983), who has researched the study of the second language learning, describes the communicative competence as "a set of four interrelated competencies: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence".

The common European framework for foreign language classifies the communicative competence of the language, including linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic, competences, which are summarized in the following way: knowledge (knowledge of the world); knowledge on how to do (skills and abilities); knowledge

on how to be (the existential competence: concerning the attitudes, motivations, values, etc).

On the teaching of foreign language, the definition of communicative competence has had a broad and deep influence, being an important aspect to consider in the design of educational curricula, in the practice of teaching English in the classroom, and finally in the conception and preparation of tests.

2.3.3 Oral communication

2.3.3.1 Brief definition

Cregan (1998) used the term “oral language” to describe “the child’s first, most important, and most frequently used structured medium of communication”. However, this medium is not exclusively used by children. In fact, “it is the primary means through which each individual child will be enabled to structure, to evaluate, to describe and to control his/her experience”.

2.3.4 Speaking Components

Communicate with others is more than just words. It involves the use of our voice, facial expressions, and body language in order to transmit the messages correctly. There are several components involving the non-verbal communication such as volume, intonation, pauses and pronunciation.

2.3.4.1 Voice

Refers to the use of intonation and pauses that convey meaning and attitude.

2.3.4.2 Volume

Volume depends on the situation, purpose and audience. Loud voices are required during the performance of role-plays, for example meanwhile quiet voices are necessary when working in the library. The use of varying volume will help to create emphasis or drama when performing different activities.

2.3.4.3 Intonation

Intonation is an important component which indicates changes in speech. For example, downward intonation indicates that a message is complete, while upward intonation indicates a question.

2.3.4.4 Pauses

Pauses are moments of silence between phrases, used to separate ideas and also used for holding attention. This is particularly useful when giving formal presentations such as an oral report or telling a story.

2.3.4.5 Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to the way words are said. It varies across regions. It is important that pupils know the accepted pronunciation of words in Standard English.

2.3.4.6 Proximity

Proximity is the amount of personal space between people who are talking. The relationship between them, their personalities, and their culture or whether the situation is personal, social or public will all affect the amount of proximity needed.

2.3.4.7 Eye contact

Eye contact is the use of the eyes or gaze in face to face communication. The level of eye contact often depends on the relationship between the communicators and affects both the speaker and the listener.

2.3.5 Communicative based activities

Littlewood, W. (1981) in his Communicative language teaching suggests various purposes of using communicative activities in the classroom. According to his opinion, such activities provide whole-task practice, improve motivation, allow natural learning, and are able to create a context which supports learning. To give more detailed explanation to each of his suggestions, when the learners have had

enough practice in the part-skills, communicative activities provide a useful opportunity to train the total skill communication in foreign language.

Due to communicative activities, learners can realize the relationship between their classroom work and the ability to communicate in real world, which is the final objective of their studies. He also states that it is likely “that many aspects of language learning can take place only through natural processes” (P.17), which are in progress when “a person is involved in using the language for communication” (P.17-18). Therefore, communicative activities play an important role in the total learning process. These activities also create opportunities to build relationships among all people involved in the learning process.

Littlewood (1981) divides communicative activities into functional communication and social interaction ones. Functional communication activities are designed for the learners to use “whatever language they have at their disposal” (P.20). As a result, the success is measured primarily by their ability to cope with the given task, not by their grammatical accuracy and appropriateness of their choice of the language. Social interaction activities place emphasis also on choosing language which is acceptable according to the particular situation. Consequently, the success is measured according to both the function effectiveness and correct language choice.

2.3.6 Role-plays

It is necessary to review what some authors claim on what would be the benefits of applying role-play games to the classes in order to promote significant learning focused on the development of skills.

According to Krain & Lantis (2006) the simulation, as the role play exercises, "improve the educational experience since they promote critical thinking and analytical skills, providing students a deeper level in the dynamics of political exchange, promotion of oral and written communication skills and the building of students' confidence " (p.396), benefits that students will achieve if they participate in activities of their interest and adapted to their context in classes.

Furthermore, DeNeve & Heppner (1997), states the role plays are considered a technique of active learning, which has a growing potential of demand among teachers and students, against the techniques of passive learning, such as classes with traditional methodology, especially by the possibility of combine or supplement new knowledge or information with knowledge acquired previously.

This make us to understand that applying this technique, the participation of the students when using role plays in classes will increase since learners will be motivated by current topics of their interest, useful in daily life situations, in contrast with traditional techniques such as the literal translation, complete with short answers, change positive to negative answers, or choral repetition of grammatical structures without context, which do not encourage meaningful learning, and at the same time, will promote the improvement of self-esteem and personal.

Similarly, David, J. (1997) states that "games promote or help to promote widespread participation, creating situations that in social conventions are broken, promoting two new roles regardless of the traditional participant, which are the coordinator and the observer" (p. 19). Based on the premise above, we can say that besides promoting social interaction and communication, students will develop strong foundations of leadership and group work in learners, since role-play games are specialize in fulfill certain roles and complement each other to achieve one common goal through equal of participation opportunities because they are cooperating and not competing.

Based on Porter's premise (2008) role plays has multiple motivational reasons for students: they helps them to make ideas and to take other positions apart from their own, to work as a team, to make decisions, to be involved in school attendance; and thus they will analyze and correct factors that could affect learning a new language.

Thus exposed, a teacher should consider the possibility of incorporating role-play activities in EFL classrooms since data collected in different researches, confirm the importance of using a wide range of activities to facilitate meaningful learning in students of a foreign language, especially through the use of funny activities like

role-plays, considered by specialists, a suitable technique to increase learners' communicative skills.

2.4 Research Questions

Questions that require immediate answers arise, such as:

- ✚ What are the factors and situations which lead significant decrease in students' oral communication skills?
- ✚ What techniques will be applied to improve oral communication skills in students?
- ✚ What benefits will students obtained by developing and strengthening their oral communication skills through role-play activities?
- ✚ Are the current activities meaningful enough to increase their oral skills?
- ✚ What delimitations or challenges will the teacher face during this research project?

2.5 Hypothesis

The research hypothesis is presented in the following statement: "The use of role-play activities based on the communicative method and adapted to the context of students from 10th grade in this institution, will lead a significant improvement on their oral communication skills".

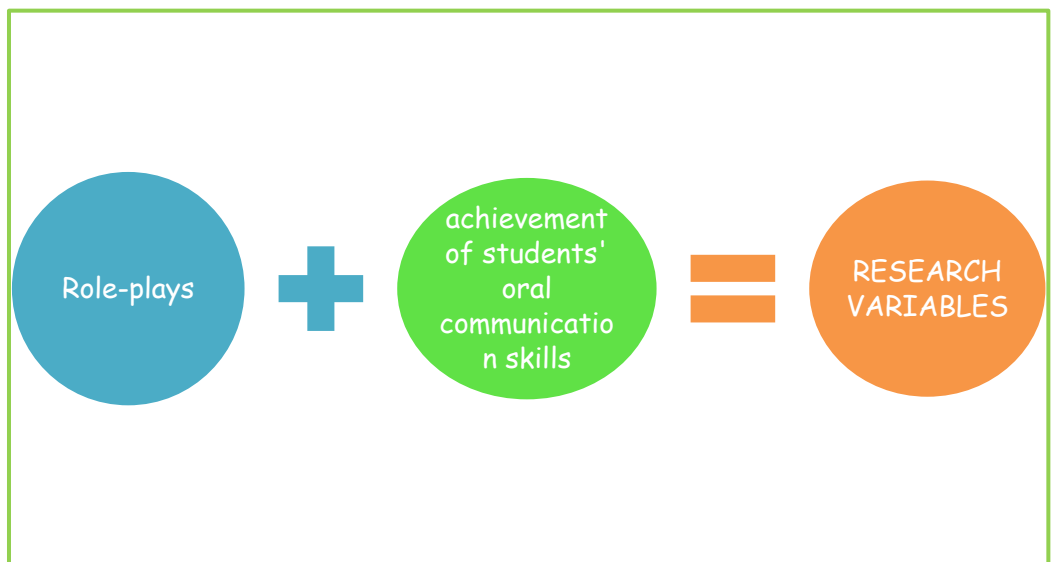
2.6 Variables and Indicators

This research project is composed by two main variables which are "role-plays" acting as the independent variable and "students' achievement of oral communication skills" as the dependent variable.

Independent Variable: Role-play activities

Dependent Variable: Students' achievement of oral communication skills.

Figure No. 4 "Research Variables"



Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

The figure above indicates the relationship between the two variables.

Table No. 1 "Independent Variable"

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	INDICATORS	INSTRUMENTS
Role-play activities	Communicative activities planned and conduct during the class by the teacher, in which students must take a specific role, fulfilling various tasks according to the assigned role.	Pronunciation Fluency Vocabulary Knowledge Grammatical control Comprehension Body language Motivation characterization of the role Materials	Classroom observation Checklist Class participation grades

Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

The independent variable, its conceptual definition, indicators and the instruments the researcher is going to use are shown.

Table No. 2 “Dependent Variable”

DEPENDENT VARIABLE	CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION	INDICATORS	INSTRUMENTS
Achievement of Oral Communication skills	Oral communication skills are the set of skills that allow the appropriate involvement of students in specific communicative situations provided by the teacher.	Overall content Grammar Vocabulary Performance: Voice Volume Enunciation Body: Eye-contact Movement Organization: Equal participation Time efficiency	Classroom observation Checklist Rubrics Oral presentation grades (group-work)

Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

In Table No. 2, the dependent variable, its conceptual definition, indicators and the instruments the researcher is going to use are shown.

2.7 Definition of terms

The following terms are detailed to clarify the terminology used in this chapter. Several electronic and printing resources were used for this purpose.

Approach: The particular techniques, methods, and procedures used to achieve something.

Communication skills: Refers to the ability (verbal and non-verbal skills) people involved in the communication process possess in order to make it effective.

Communicative activities: Activities which provide whole-task practice, improve motivation, allow natural learning, and are able to create a context which supports learning.

Communicative competence: A person's ability to communicate information and ideas in a foreign language.

Fluency: The quality of being able to speak or write a language, especially a foreign language, easily and well.

Interpersonal communication: occurs when you think or talk to yourself, it requires only a single communicator, you.

Intrapersonal communication: is the ongoing, ever-changing process that occurs when you interact with another person, forming a dyad, which is defined as two people communicating with each other.

Oral competence: Communication competency means that the sender is able to look for, find and transfer different, information, coordinate all inner and outer information that reaches the organization.

Role-play: A learning activity in which you behave in the way somebody else would behave in a particular situation.

Simulation: A situation in which a particular set of conditions is created artificially in order to study or experience something that could exist in reality.

Technique: A particular way of doing something, especially one in which you have to learn special skills.

2.8 Summary

The previous literature review focused on important aspects to consider when using activities based on the communicative language approach. As "role-playing" was the selected technique by the researcher to investigate, this chapter provided different language experts' and researchers' perspectives and contributions on different purposes and advantages of using it in EFL classrooms.

Effective communication in a foreign language depends much on the speakers' verbal and non-verbal abilities which includes not only the use of words but also symbols to communicate and to be understood in the foreign language. As much as 70 percent of work time is spent communicating with others, it is imperative for teachers to develop effective and efficient oral communication skills in learners through recreated situations based on real-life experiences.

“Role-playing” is a technique which enhances the use of the language (vocabulary, expressions, slangs, etc.) in real-life situations and forces them to think “on other’s feet”. Additionally, it trains students to work together as a team or group, and to communicate in order to understand each other. Similarly, role-play activities can be used to introduce specific vocabulary for particular situations, as learning English is sometimes done for a specific purpose; role-plays give learners more responsibility in their learning process. Also, they encourage interaction and offer students the chance to evaluate their learning progress and their level of English.

Even though, this is not a new educational technique, some Ecuadorian English teachers tend to guide their lessons to more traditional activities focused on reinforcing isolated structures. It is imperative then, to emphasize on the importance of this review to consolidate the effectiveness of this technique to increase not only oral but also learners' social skills.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

3.1 Methods and Techniques

The present research aimed to describe the problems surrounding the variables required the application of theoretical and empirical methods.

3.1.1 Theoretical method:

Within the theoretical method, the analysis-synthesis method was applied, which allowed the researcher to make a quantitative analysis of the students' oral communication skills from 10th grade at "Nueva Alborada" High School, arising to the conclusion through the synthesis processes of what were the main factors and situations which interfered in the normal development of these important skills when producing the language. Similarly, data collection analyses of the research results as well as the statistical analysis were applied.

3.1.2 Empirical method:

Based on the empirical method, classroom observations and data collection were used during the research. Observations on teachers and students during English classes allowed the researcher to verify teacher's performance, students' behavior and discipline in the classroom, and strategies and techniques applied in the teaching-learning process.

For data collection, questionnaires were applied to students to get information about their internal and external motivation, level of interest during English classes and methodological tools applied by the teachers. Interviews to teachers were carried out in order to gather opinions based on teachers' experiences about the problem.

3.1.3 Research design and Techniques

This research project is a quantitative study and has explanatory, exploratory and descriptive natures. It is a quantitative study because the logic process apply in this project is purely deductive, that means, the researcher makes general observations of the school situation, teacher's role and students' speaking competence and common errors when they produce orally the language through the use of classroom checklists making deductions of what are the situations and factors which affects negatively students' oral competences and arising to the conclusion of what are the most suitable techniques and methods to improve students' communication skills.

Similarly, it is exploratory because through the research techniques such as interviews and questionnaires, the researcher identifies causes and consequences which interfere in the normal development of students' oral skills. Moreover, valuable information about students' internal and external motivation when learning English is obtained.

In addition, it is descriptive because the researcher uses the information obtained from classroom observations and students' class participation related to strategies used in classes, teachers' performances, students' behavior and discipline in the classroom and finally the level of students' interest during English classes; the researcher can make a complete description of the school current situation.

At the same time, it is explanatory because after revising the data collected in the study, the researcher creates a valid explanation of main causes and consequences of poor students' oral performances during the last academic year.

3.2 Research Population, Sample and Setting

3.2.1 Population

The present research project aimed to improve students' oral skills was carried out at "Nueva Alborada" High School located in the north of the city and it

required as subjects, a specific group from the whole institution. The subjects of study included 1 English teacher and 13 students, nine boys and four girls between 14, 15 and 16 years old from 10th basic grades. Time employed for the educational intervention (role-plays) was 8 class periods of 45 minutes each.

Because the educational institution is non-bilingual, most of the students had a basic knowledge of the language. (A1 level according to the Common European Framework).

Table No.3 “Research Population”

No.	Class Classification (Group)	Number of Students
1.	10 th grade A	13 students

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The table above represents the population in the research study.

3.3.2 Sample

Sample is composed by 13 students, nine boys and four girls between 14, 15 and 16 years old from 10th basic grades at “Nueva Alborada” High School. Like the research was conducted during regular English classes because students could not miss classes, the research counts with an “intact group”.

Similarly, sample was selected in a not probabilistic way since no formula was required. In addition, it is intentional since school’s average grades in the foreign language during the first partial of the past school year were analyzed and finally, the group with lower oral skills was selected.

Table No. 4 “Research Sample”

Group	Class	Treatment	No. of Students
Experiment	10 A	Role-play activities	13

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The table above indicates the distribution of the treatment in the research study.

3.3 Research Instruments

The materials and instructional tasks required to carry out this study included initial and final classroom observation checklists, questionnaire, interviews, rubrics and the educational intervention by the researcher, as well as a pre-test and a post-test which proved the validity of the hypothesis.

3.3.1 Procedures

The following procedures were carried on in order to see the significant improvement of students’ oral skills through communicative techniques in 10th grade English classes.

In Table No. 5, the procedures the researcher is going to apply are shown.

Table No. 5 “Research Procedures”

1.	Conduct classroom observations
2.	Conduct an interview to teacher and English Coordinator
3.	Administer a questionnaire to students.
4.	Administer a pre-test (rubric)
5.	Apply the educational intervention.
6.	Administer a post-test (rubric)

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

Before the intervention, the researcher observed the subjects of the study from 10th grades during a communicative activity for about 45 minutes (1 period class). A classroom observation checklist (see Appendix A) based on the Licker rating-scale was used in order to store information about their level of English during role-play activities, teacher's performance in the school environment, students' motivation during communicative activities conducted by the teacher, teacher's and students' roles.

Similarly, a final classroom observation was conducted after the intervention with the aim of verifying the effectiveness of the application of this technique (role-play) in the increase of students' oral communicative skills.

As a second step, structured- Interviews (see Appendix B) to the English teacher and English Coordinator was conducted to gather opinions about the factors and situations which could cause a decrease in students' oral communication skills and their degree of motivation during English classes. In addition, Open-questions interviews stored information about methods, techniques and strategies used by teacher to facilitate natural language learning processes.

After that, the researcher administered structured- questionnaire (see Appendix C) which aim focused directly on obtaining data from students about the internal and external motivation when learning English, the degree of satisfaction by performing communicative activities and the level of acceptance of the techniques and methods applied by the teachers.

In order to diagnose students' speaking skills (fluency, pronunciation, grammar accuracy, body language, creativity, etc) a pre-test was administered to the students. It consisted of performing a specific role-play in pairs. In order to evaluate students' performances were used rubrics which you will find in the Appendix D, and in the appendix E you will find the pre-test.

Right after the pre-test, it was imperative to apply the educational intervention in 10th grade classes. The educational intervention consisted of explaining the purpose of the activities to students as well as helping students to

perform nice role-play activities based on the communicative method in order to increase their oral skills. In the appendix F you will find the lesson plans and activities done in class.

Finally, a post-test with two purposes was administered by the researcher. One of the purposes of the post-test was to diagnose students' speaking skills (fluency, pronunciation, grammar accuracy, body language, creativity, etc) and the other purpose was to prove the validity of the research hypothesis. As mentioned in the pre-test, rubrics with the aim of evaluating students' performances were used during the process.

Figure 5. "Observation cycle"

Source: <https://allthingslearning.wordpress.com/2012/02/27/why-do-we-still-have-so-many-misfires-with-classroom-observation-part-04/>



3.3.2 Data Analysis Methods

To support research reliability and validity during the whole process, the present study gathered information through quantitative and qualitative methods of study. The qualitative data analysis of the structured questionnaires, observations and interviews was done by the researcher.

The researcher recorded the interviews as well as transcribed answers in order to analyze data carefully looking for answers to the research questions stated before. Similarly, information collected from classroom observations on teacher-student interaction, teacher's role, rapport, motivation and types of activities was done as a check list.

Two observations were done in this study before and after the application of CLT activities. Furthermore, interviews were recorded and then answers were transcribed by the researcher. Main points discussed in the interviews were about teacher's experience and personality, methodology, and classroom management.

Data collected from tests was organized manually by the researcher. It is worth- mentioning that in order to organize pre/post test results; information was entered into a computer program called "R" used by "ESPOL" University to obtain statistical results. Consequently, pre/post test results were graphically compared to see if there was significant difference after applying the educational intervention.

In the next section, qualitative data results are presented and widely detailed at the beginning. Right after, the quantitative results with the statistics, graphics and charts are presented. Finally, each interview and questionnaire answers are briefly explained and analyzed by the researcher.

3.4 Results/Findings and Analysis

3.4.1 Classroom observations before the educational intervention

Classroom observations were conducted to get the most valid information on teacher's role, perceptions and experience on the current situation. By this mean, the researcher could detect, identify and restate the causes of poor students' oral skills to communicate in L2.

Observations done over a week time period stated that the following conditions promoted in students, poor oral skills. The use of the mother tongue to

conduct English classes, the lack of opportune oral correction on students' pronunciation, the lack of vocabulary and incorrect pronunciation affected students' pronunciation and allow them to fossilize pronunciation. Finally, activities were mechanical and not emphasize on the use of the language meaningfully.

3.4.2 Interview Results before the educational intervention

Question 1: "Do you consider the majority of your students are engaged to learn the language?"

- Answer: Most of the students are not really engaged because they do not take English as a priority. They are more focused on Spanish subjects.

Analysis: As a result, we can conclude that their poor oral skills are due to their lack of interest in the subject.

Question 2: "Are your student motivated in English classes?"

- Answer: Yes, the students are motivated during English classes.

Analysis: So, the English teacher can take advantage of the students' motivation to conduct entertaining communicative activities such as role-plays since her students are very participative during regular classes.

Question 3: "What language skill do you consider your students need to improve?"

- Answer: Speaking.

Analysis: The lack of oral fluency is a serious problem; students can overcome this problem if they practice their speaking skills through role-play activities.

Question 4: "Do your students participate actively in communicative activities?" "Do they enjoy them?"

- Answer: Students like to participate in communicative activities.

Analysis: The teacher affirmative response gives us insights on the acceptance of activities oriented to meaningful oral practice. As a result, role-play activities can be welcomed by 10th grade students.

Question 5: “What do you think can be the factors and situations which do not allow an increase in students’ speaking skills?”

- Answer: There are multiple factors such as the lack of audiovisuals in the school, students’ lack of commitment to practice the language by listening or reading English materials, their lack of internalization of grammatical rules and their lack of vocabulary.

Analysis: We can conclude that there is no a single factor which is affecting students oral skills but the union of internal and external situations which limits students to master the language.

Question 6: “What teaching methods you use to improve students’ speaking skills?”

- Answer: She uses constructivist language theories.

Analysis: The isolate use of one single method as a main axe of her daily teaching practices is considered a situation which causes a decrease of students’ oral skills. Teachers must use eclectic teaching method to reinforce meaningful learning experiences of the language.

Question 7: “Which methods do you frequently use in classes?”

- Answer: She uses drills, crosswords, games and flashcards.

Analysis: Although the teacher uses different didactic techniques, these are focused to reinforce grammar which is not oriented to reinforce students’ oral skills. These can be another factor attributed to students’ current problem.

Question 8: “What kind of communicative activities students perform in classes?”

- Answer: They perform dialogues, debates, expositions.

Analysis: By this way, we can conclude that students are not familiarized with activities in which they have to develop their improvisation and critical thinking skills since they feel comfortable performing the same activities presented in the book. As a result, this can turn into a negative aspect in the learning process.

Question 9: “Do you think current activities performed by students are effective enough to increase their speaking skills?”

- Answer: Yes.

Analysis: Although the teacher thinks the methodology applied is effective enough to help students to increase their oral skills, classroom observation and pre-test scores reveal a different reality. Students must vary different type of activities to enhance oral practice.

Question 10: “Which strategies do you use to increase their speaking skills?”

- Answer: she conducts guided expositions.

Analysis: Personally, I think topic expositions are good to acquired new knowledge (vocabulary and pronunciation of words) but not to reinforce oral skills because during the development of them, students are more aware on the pronunciation of words and memorization of content than on their body language, gestures, and response.

Question 11: “What is your definition for the word “role-play activities?”

- Answer: They are games in which you change the occupations, ideas and roles that you use in real life situations.

Analysis: We can conclude that one of the reasons, some teachers do not use this technique is because of the lack of information about the multiple advantages of using role-play activities in EFL classroom.

Question 12: “Do you implement role-plays in class frequently?”

- Answer: She does not use them because of the lack of time.

Analysis: One of the limitations teacher and students face in the language acquisition process is the lack of time to employ role-play activities aimed to reinforce oral skills. As a result, students know the language structures but they do not how and in which situations use them.

Question 13: “Do you know what the goals of using role-plays in class are?”

- Answer: She does not know the answer.

Analysis: Again, the teacher’s lack of information on multiple advantages of role-plays, is an important factor which obstacles students’ opportunities to practice the language by using different entertaining activities.

Question 14: “Do you know what the benefits to use role-plays in classes are?”

- Answer: They are used to increase vocabulary and students’ speaking skills.

Analysis: Although role-playing has been used to reinforce leadership skills in different fields, these types of activities have been proved to promote guidance on oral reinforcement in the educational area.

By this way, the researcher got a general first impression of the problem and its causes. Similarly, the research questions of this study, “What are the factors and situations which lead the lack of oral communication skills in 10th grade students? and “What techniques are applied to improve oral communication skills in students?” were answered.

3.4.3 Questionnaire results

The questionnaire answers obtained from 10th grade students about their motivation to learn the language and their opinions about the subject, the teacher and the methods applied in classes are detailed in the following part.

This research instrument was divided in 4 sections:

- part A related to their personal information,
- part B is about the subject,
- part C related to communicative activities and role-plays and finally,

- part D is about the teacher's role.

PART A

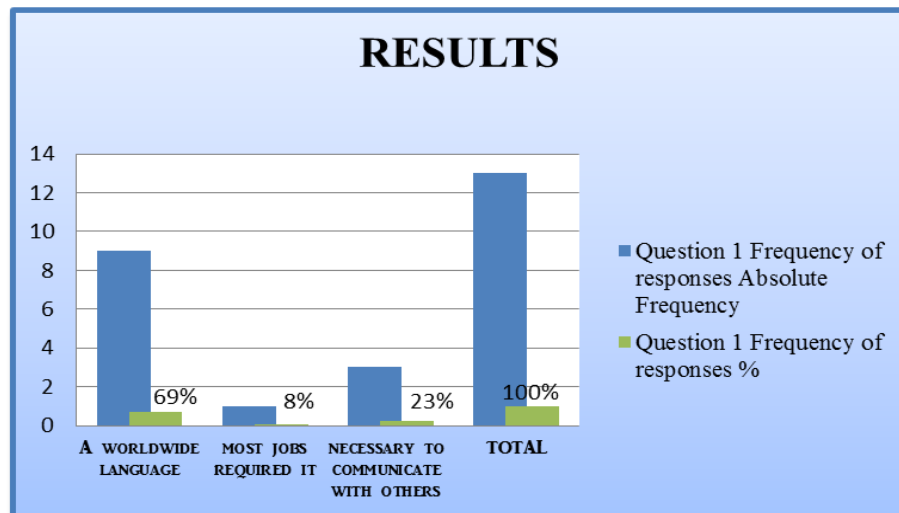
Students' Questionnaire

Sample: 13 students from 10th grade

Question No. 1: "Do you think English is important because it is...?"

Question 1			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
A worldwide language	9	0,69	69%
most jobs required it	1	0,08	8%
necessary to communicate with others	3	0,23	23%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



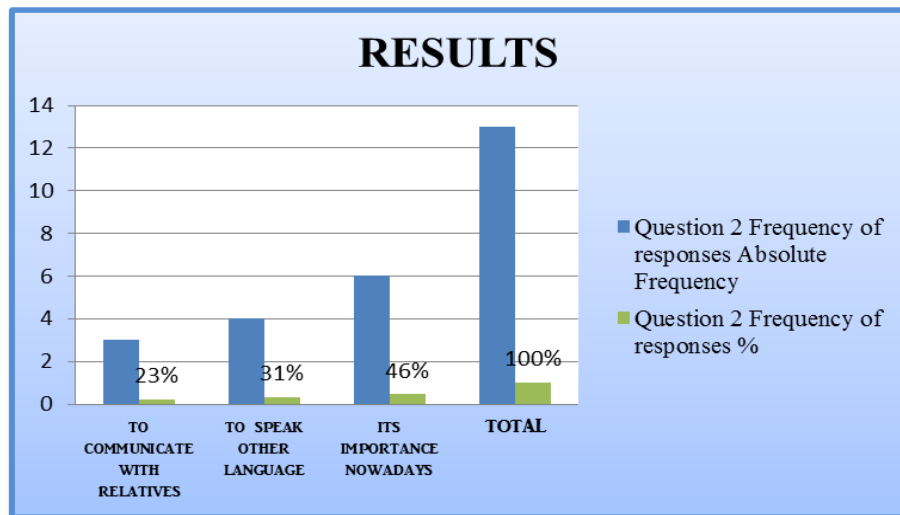
*Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

According to the questionnaire, 69% of the students interviewed were conscious on the importance of learning English since it is a worldwide language used for different purposes such as education, trading, technology, etc. This result provides the research positive incomes on the willingness of students to learn a new language.

Question No. 2: “What motivates you to learn English?”

Question 2			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
to communicate with relatives	3	0,23	23%
to speak other language	4	0,31	31%
its importance nowadays	6	0,46	46%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



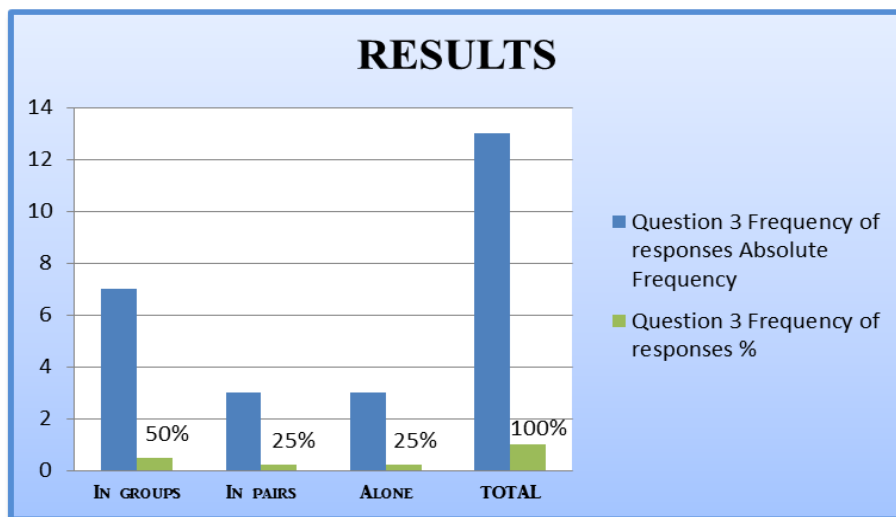
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The results represented in the graphics above shows that 46% of the students interviewed were motivated to learn the language because its importance nowadays. In addition, they confirmed that bilingual speakers have more opportunities in the professional and personal areas. So, teacher, friends and even parents are of crucial importance to motivate learners to practice the foreign language outside the classroom.

Question No. 3: “During English classes, do you like to work...?”

Question 3			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
In groups	7	0,5	50%
In pairs	3	0,25	25%
Alone	3	0,25	25%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso



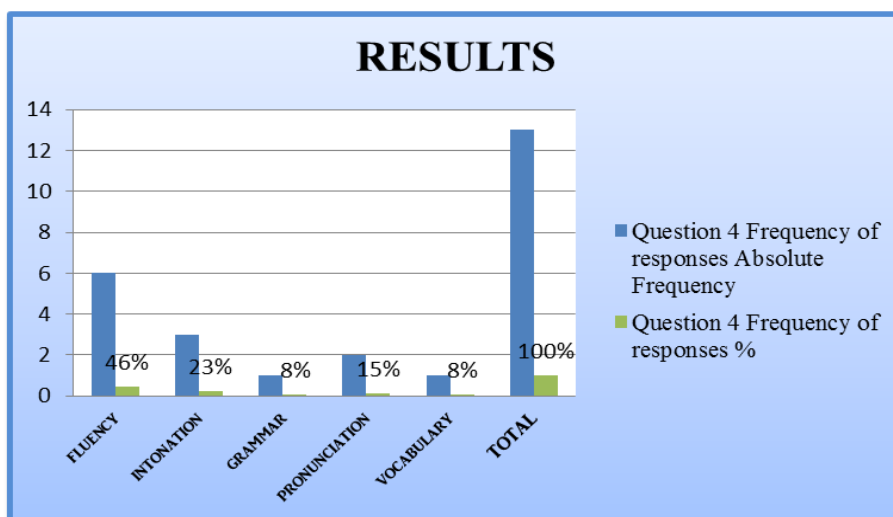
Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

Although 25% of students, prefer to work in pairs or even alone, this graph shows that 50% of the students really enjoy working in groups. Team-work really beneficiate learners since not only their oral skills but also their social skills can improve. The application of role-play activities has been proved to enhance self-confidence while interacting with others.

Question No. 4: “What component of you speaking skill need to be improved?”

Question 4			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
fluency	6	0,46	46%
intonation	3	0,23	23%
grammar	1	0,8	8%
pronunciation	2	0,15	15%
vocabulary	1	0,8	8%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



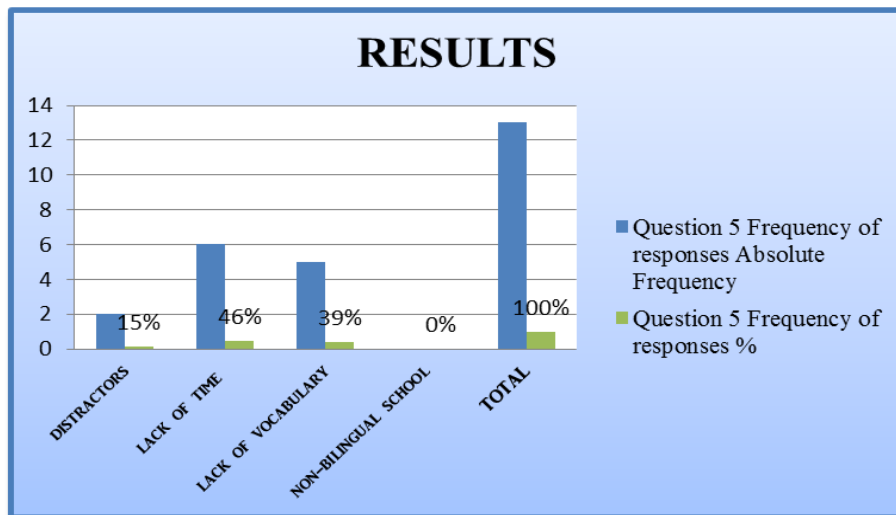
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

46% of students consider that their fluency must be improved since they notice they tend to shorten the words. On the other hand, 23% of them think their intonation must be corrected since most of them register a “plane” tone. Similarly, they realize that the majority of the time they use the target language, the communication is limited and exposed to misunderstandings. This can be corrected if the teacher provides enough meaningful activities during classes.

Question No. 5: “What do you think can be the causes of your lack of speaking skills?”

Question 5			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
distractors	2	0,15	15%
lack of time	6	0,46	46%
lack of vocabulary	5	0,39	39%
non-bilingual school	0	0	0%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



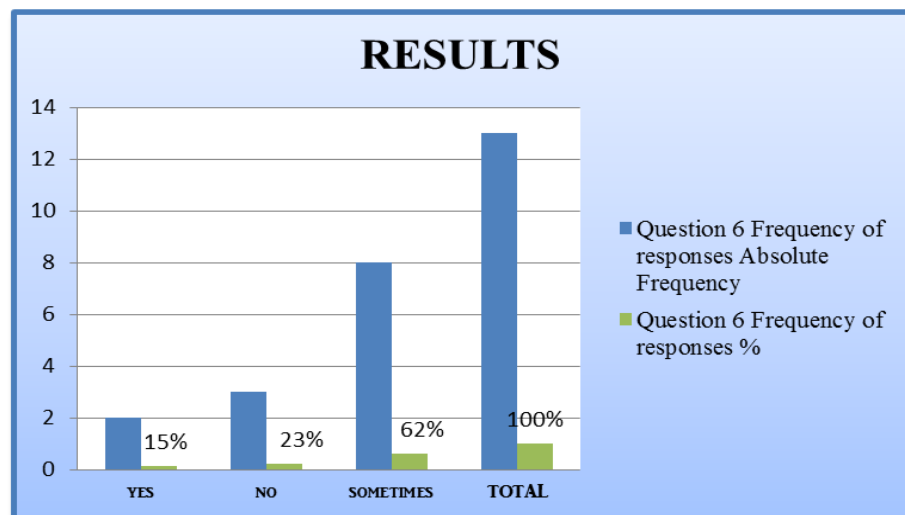
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

This graphic shows that 46% of students confirmed that they do nothing to increase their vocabulary because they are not really motivated to dedicate time at home to practice what they learned at school; meanwhile, 39% of them attributed their lack of vocabulary as a main factor which causes their current problem. The teacher can get rid of this problem by motivating students and by applying simple communicative activities which can be reproduced at home using basic vocabulary.

Question No. 6: “Do you practice English outside the classroom?”

Question 6			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	2	0,15	15%
no	3	0,23	23%
sometimes	8	0,62	62%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



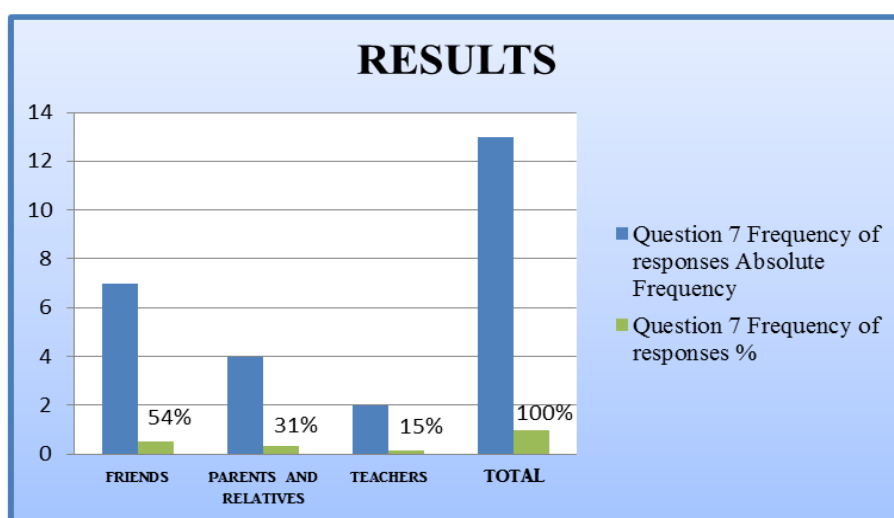
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

In the graphic above, 62% of learners mention that sometimes they practice the language in context; meanwhile, 23% do not. One of the reasons of their poor oral skills is the lack of commitment to practice the language regularly. It is important for teachers and students to separate a time during classes to work on students’ oral proficiency through the use of a wide range of communicative purpose activities.

Question No. 7: “Do you use the language to communicate with...?”

Question 7			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
friends	7	0,54	54%
parents and relatives	4	0,31	31%
teachers	2	0,15	15%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

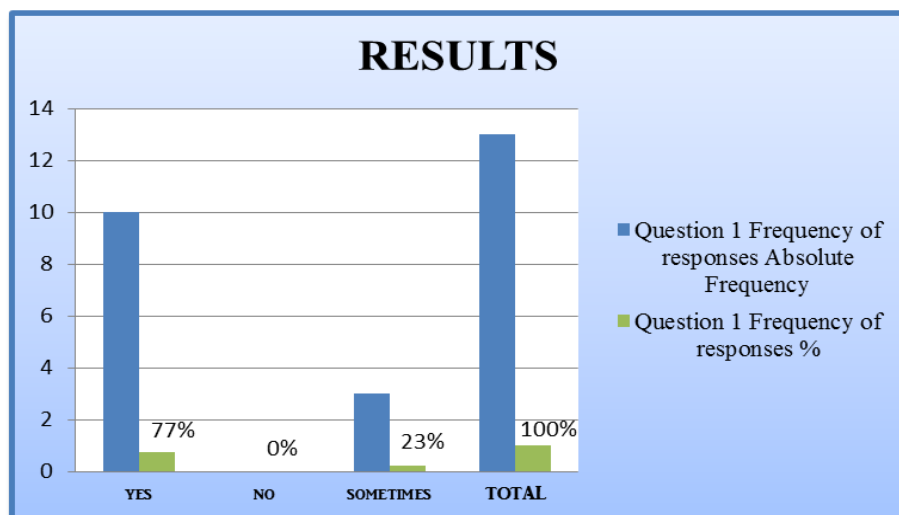
The results obtained in question 7, indicates that 54% of the students use the language to communicate with friends. On the other hand, only 31% of them use them with parents and relatives through video chat sessions when surfing the internet. Role-playing can be an effective technique to promote a collaborative and safe environment to practice the foreign language because students will feel more confident and less nervous or embarrassed when they speak to someone who understands colloquial language and slangs or even if they commit mistakes.

PART B

Question No.1: “Do you enjoy English classes?”

Question 1			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	10	0,77	77%
no	0	0	0%
sometimes	3	0,23	23%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



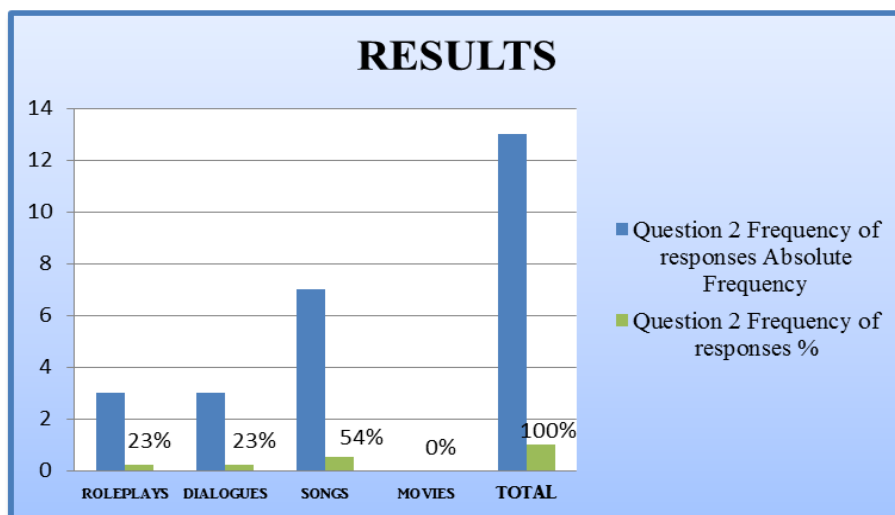
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

This graphic shows that 77% of students really enjoy English classes and the 23% of learners sometimes feel happy during them. This is attributed to the fact that the teacher is doing a good job because they are motivated to learn a new language at the same time, she is providing a wide range of activities oriented to communicate in L2.

Question No. 2: “Which of the following activities are interesting to you?”

Question 2			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
roleplays	3	0,23	23%
dialogues	3	0,23	23%
songs	7	0,54	54%
movies	0	0	0%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



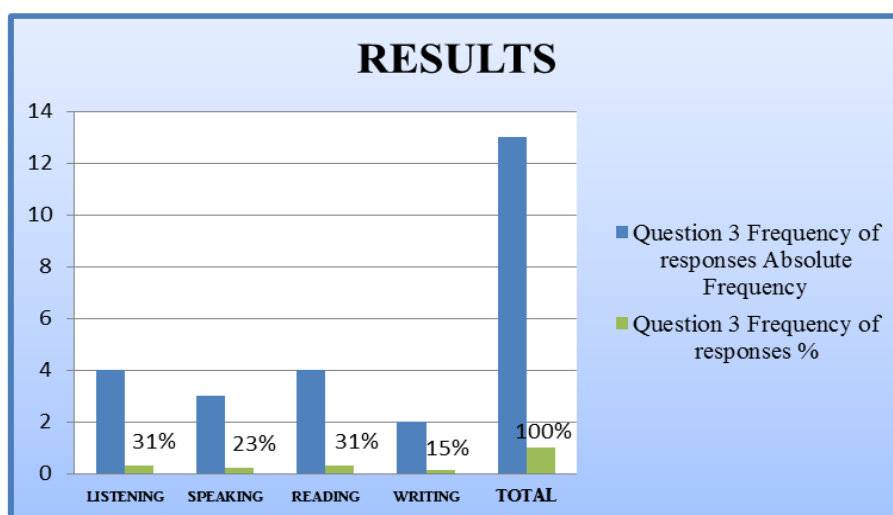
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The result in the graphic above indicates that most of the students, 54% of them, consider “songs” as the most interesting activity to perform during English classes. Only the 23% of them consider that role-plays and dialogues are effective tools to increase vocabulary and pronunciation skills since they use the language in context and are not mere repetition of language phrases.

Question No. 3: “Which language skill do you consider the easiest to master?”

Question 3			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
listening	4	0,31	31%
speaking	3	0,23	23%
reading	4	0,31	31%
writing	2	0,15	15%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



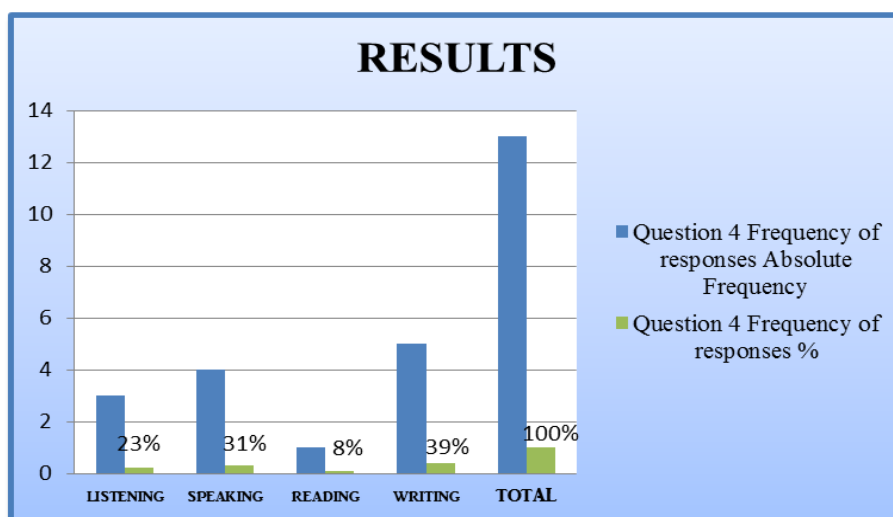
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

31% of students consider that listening and reading are the easiest skills to master because they confirm they use them at least once every day. In fact, learners are used to listen and repeat dialogues or songs in the foreign language during English classes. So, it is clear that for many students in this group, the receptive skills mentioned before are the easiest to master.

Question No.4: “Which language skill do you consider the most difficult to master?”

Question 4			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
listening	3	0,23	23%
speaking	4	0,31	31%
reading	1	0,08	8%
writing	5	0,39	39%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



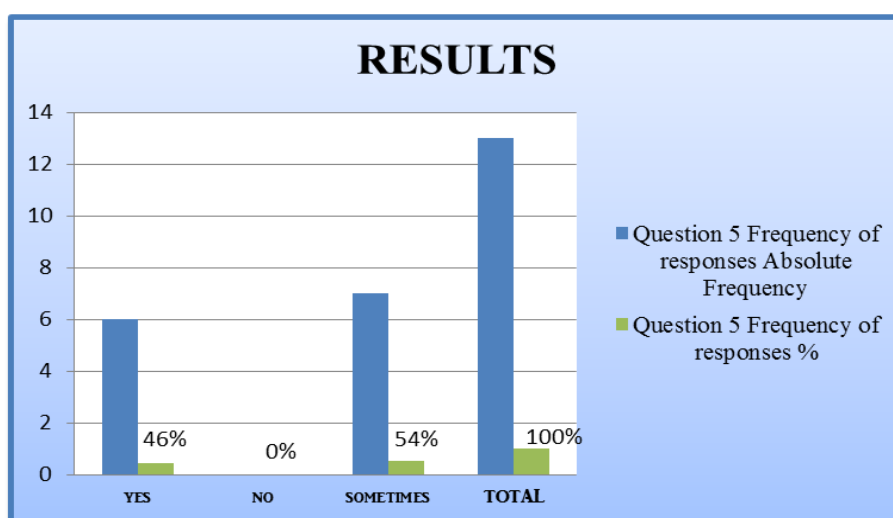
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The graphic shows that 39% of students consider writing as a difficult skill to master; meanwhile, 31% of them mentioned the option “speaking”. As a result, we can get to the conclusion that for 10th grade students, the productive skills are the most difficult to master because of several factors mentioned before. Role-playing can benefit students since they promote students oral production of meaningful language phrases and in that way their productive skills will improved.

Question No. 5: “Are the communicative activities performed meaningful enough?”

Question 5			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	6	0,46	46%
no	0	0	0%
sometimes	7	0,54	54%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

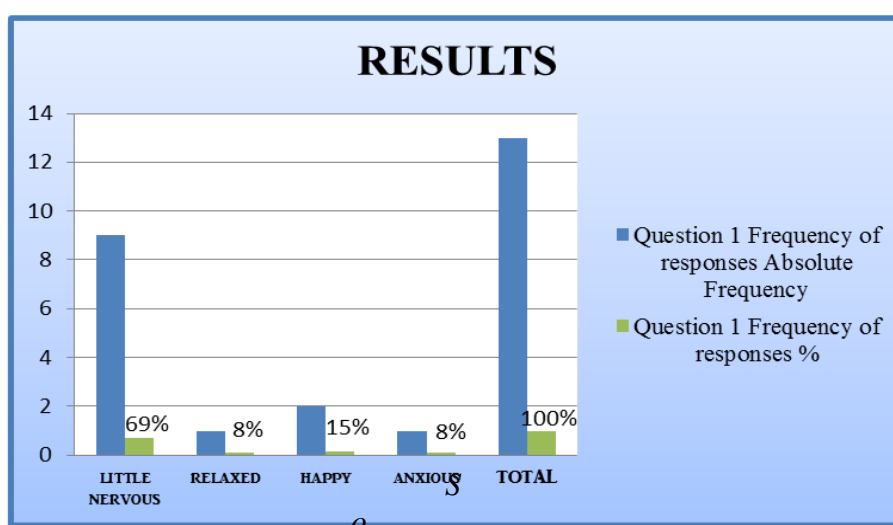
Although there is no a great difference between the two options, the results indicates that 54% of the students think that “sometimes” the communicative activities performed in class and conducted by the teacher are meaningful enough to improve their oral skills. On the contrary, 46% of them consider that the activities conducted by the teacher promote improvement on their oral competence. It is estimated that goal-oriented communicative activities reinforce learners’ oral competence compared to the old-fashioned techniques bases on mere repetition of dialogues and controlled drills.

PART C

Question No. 1: “How do you feel when participating in communicative activities?”

Question 1			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
little nervous	9	0,69	69%
relaxed	1	0,08	8%
happy	2	0,15	15%
anxious	1	0,08	8%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



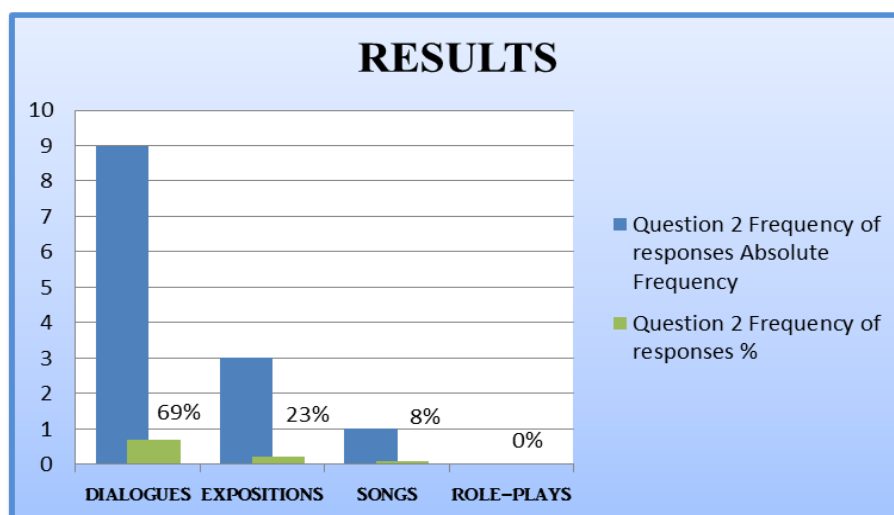
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The results obtained from this question indicate that only the 15% of students feel happy during the performance of any communicative activity. On the contrary, the 69% feel a little nervous when speaking in front of the class. As a result, if they commit a mistake, the development of their self-confidence can be affected since at this age they are worried about being embarrassed in public. So, one of the advantage of role-play activities is that they are oriented not only to practice the language but to construct a safe learning environment and empathy among learners.

Question No. 2: “What kind of communicative activities do you perform in class?”

Question 2			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
dialogues	9	0,69	69%
expositions	3	0,23	23%
songs	1	0,08	8%
role-plays	0	0	0%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



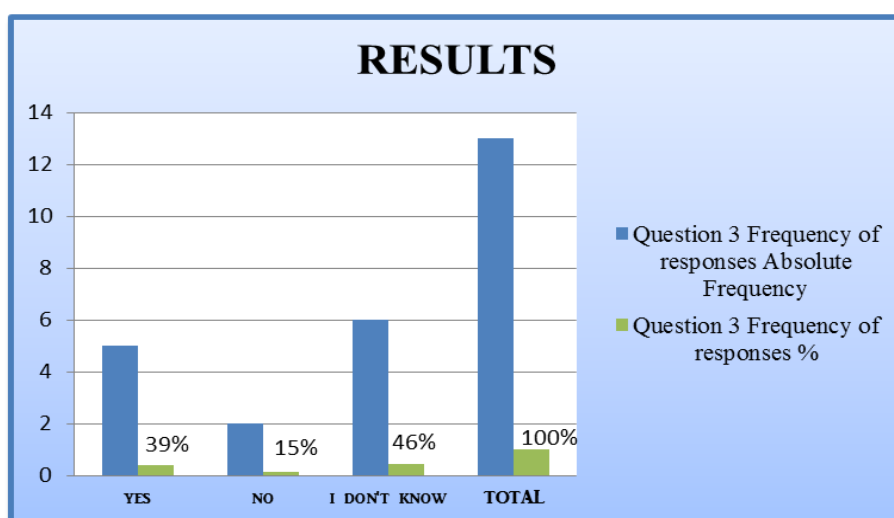
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

Although the majority of students (69%) expressed that they communicate verbally through dialogues and the 23% do it through expositions, is evident that for most of them, use the adequate words and correct pronunciation is a serious problem. Meaningless repetition of dialogues out of content for students may have negative consequences in their learning environment. On the other hand, role-plays can be an opportune alternative with positive results against the traditional methods they are currently using.

Question No. 3: “Do you think current activities are effective to increase your speaking skills?”

Question 3			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	5	0,39	39%
no	2	0,15	15%
i don't know	6	0,46	46%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



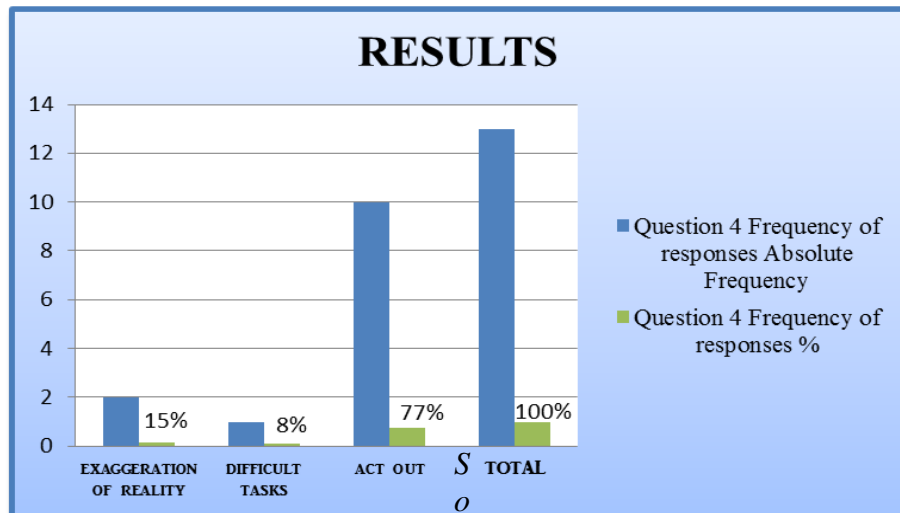
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

46% of learners interviewed answered that they are not sure about the effectiveness of the current activities conducted by the teacher aimed to increase their oral skills. This can be attributed to the lack of evidence (any improvement in their fluency and pronunciation) after using the traditional communicative activities for many years proposed by the standardized English book. So, the teacher should take into consideration this fact when selecting appropriated activities for foreign language learners.

Question No. 4: “In your opinion, role-plays include...?”

Question 4			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
exaggeration of reality	2	0,15	15%
difficult tasks	1	0,08	8%
act out	10	0,77	77%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



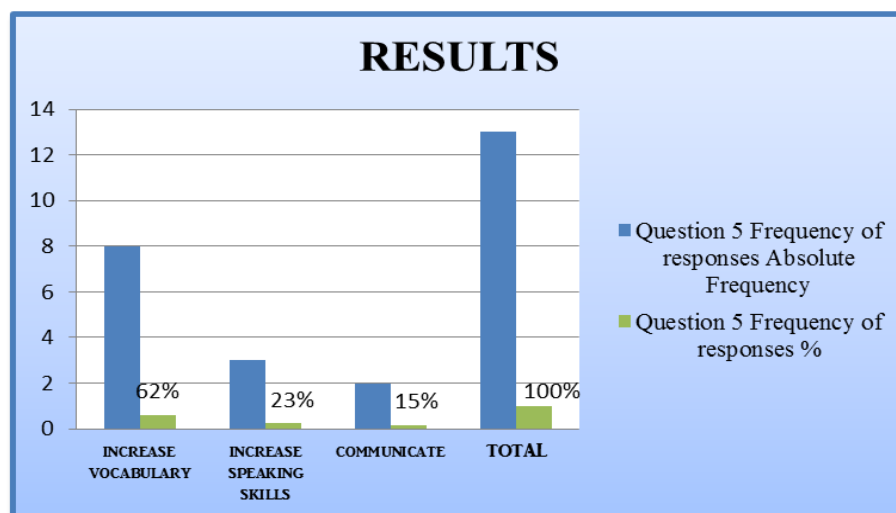
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The graphics above reveal that 77% of students from 10th grade agreed on the fact that role-plays include act out activities being someone else. Only the 15%, though they include an exaggeration of real-life situations. Only 8% commented that they can be difficult tasks to perform if the teacher does not give them clear instructions.

Question No. 5: “What are the most important benefits of performing role-plays in class?”

Question 5			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
increase vocabulary	8	0,62	62%
increase speaking skills	3	0,23	23%
communicate	2	0,15	15%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

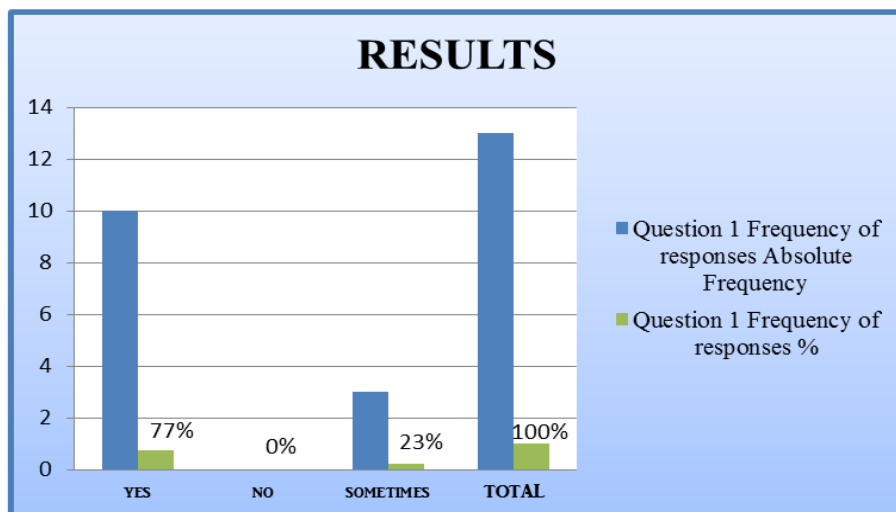
The majority of the students (62%) agreed that role-plays are applied to increase their vocabulary. Similarly, 23% of them mentioned they can increase their speaking skills. Only the 15% of this group see them as a tool to communicate to others in the target language. By this way, we can be concluded that most of the students see the activities proposed by the book or the teacher by the notional and not by the functional context.

PART D

Question No. 1: “Does your teacher motivate you to learn the language?”

Question 1			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	10	0,77	77%
no	0	0	0%
sometimes	3	0,23	23%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



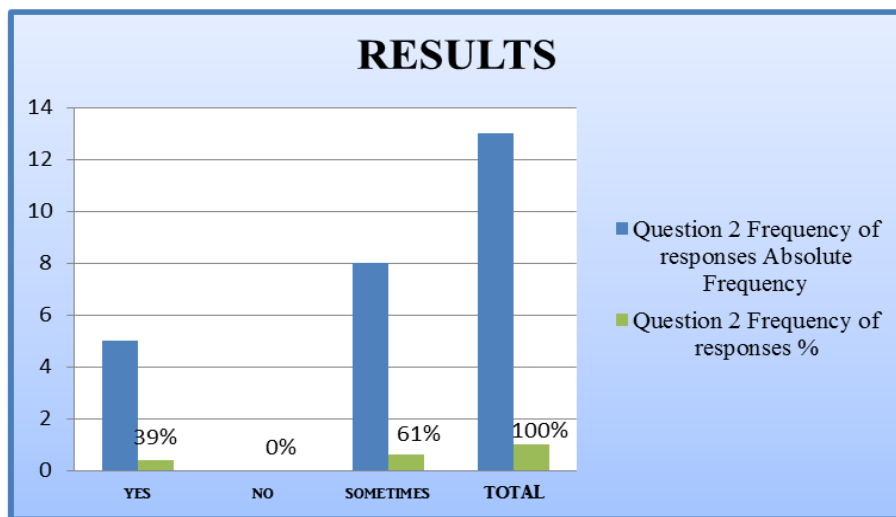
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The results in the graphic above indicate that 77% of the students expressed that they are constantly motivated to learn the foreign language by their teacher. On the contrary, the 23% considered that they feel teacher’s motivation from time to time. This statistic shows students’ positive attitudes to learn English though this study considers the teacher as one important factor to motivate students to improve their oral outcomes.

Question No. 2: “Does your teacher promote oral participation in class?”

Question 2			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	5	0,39	39%
no	0	0	0%
sometimes	8	0,62	61%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



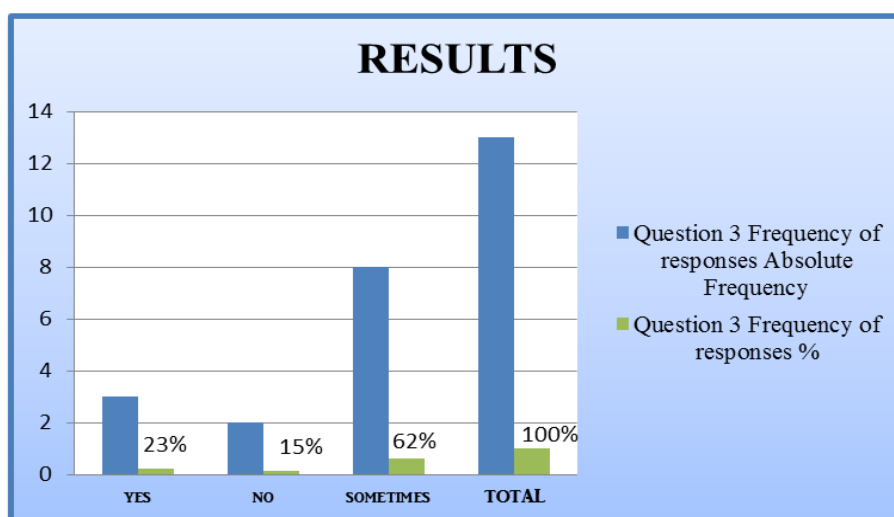
*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The graphic above shows that the majority of students (61%) interviewed consider that their teacher promotes oral participation in some occasions, and the 39% of them agree on the regular opportunity they have to speak in English. The promotion of communicative activities is as much as important as the equal opportunity to practice the language. This can be affected by the presence of several distractors and the lack of time to practice the language. Having as a result, a teacher focused more on notional than functional methodological procedures.

Question No. 3: “Does your teacher use role-plays in classes?”

Question 3			
Frequency of responses			
Options	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency	%
yes	3	0,23	23%
no	2	0,15	15%
sometimes	8	0,62	62%
TOTAL	13	1	100%

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*



*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

In question 3 shown in the figure above, the majority of the students (62%) mentioned that the teacher sometimes conduct role-play activities. On the other hand, 23% confirmed that they are familiar to these types of activities during English classes. So, as the acceptance among learners for these communicative activities is positive, the researcher can get positive results after applying the educational intervention.

By this way, the researcher collected current and factual information and opinions from students about the language, teacher's role, the methods and the activities applied in English classes.

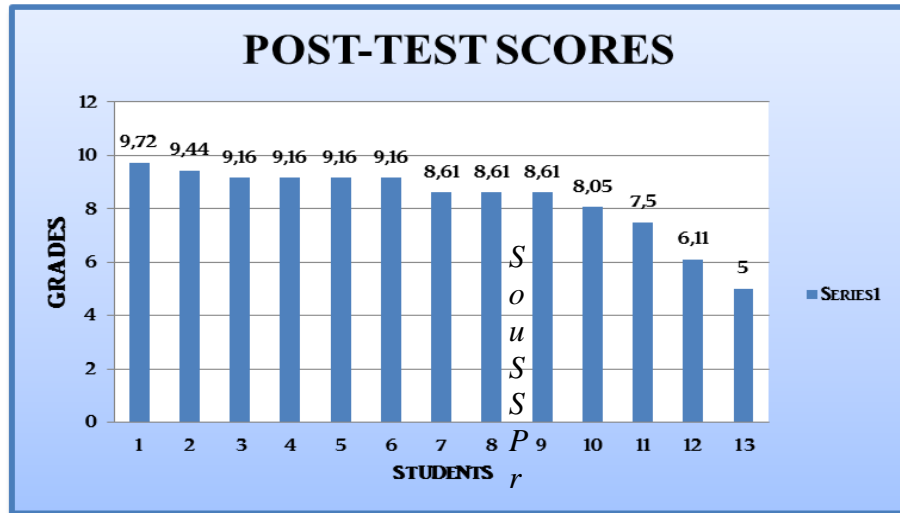
Similarly, the research questions of this study, "What techniques are applied to improve oral communication skills in students?", "What benefits will students obtained by developing and strengthening their oral communication skills through role-play activities?" and "Are the current activities meaningful enough to increase their oral skills?" were answered.

4.1.3 Pre/post Test

Results obtained from pre/post test administered to students, are detailed in the next lines. Pre/post-tests had two main purposes: to determine student's level of English and to diagnose their speaking skills (fluency, pronunciation, grammar accuracy, body language, creativity). Likewise, it is oriented to specify problems and difficulties when producing the language orally.

It has been established that the majority of the students have pronunciation, grammar, intonation and fluency mistakes. The test results obtained from pre-test and post-test scores are graphically explained in the following tables.

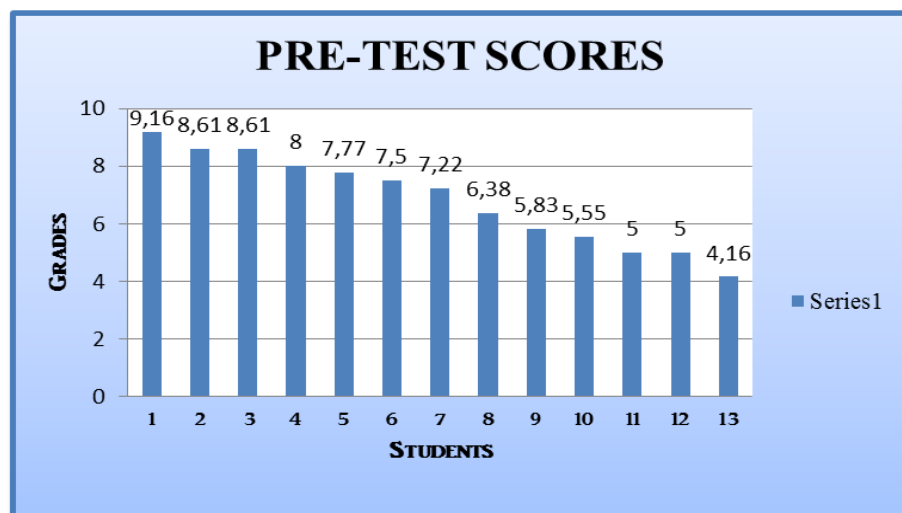
Figure 6. “Students’ pre-test scores”



Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

This graphic shows that students’ highest score before the educational intervention was 9,16; meanwhile, the lowest score was 4,16 out of 10.

Figure 7. “Students’ post-test scores”



Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

The graphic shows that students' highest score after the educational intervention was 9, 72; meanwhile, the lowest score was 5 out of 10, which indicates that the student with the lowest grade increase his/her score to the score average.

In order to examine the difference between the pre and post-test results, first, the descriptive statistics were calculated.

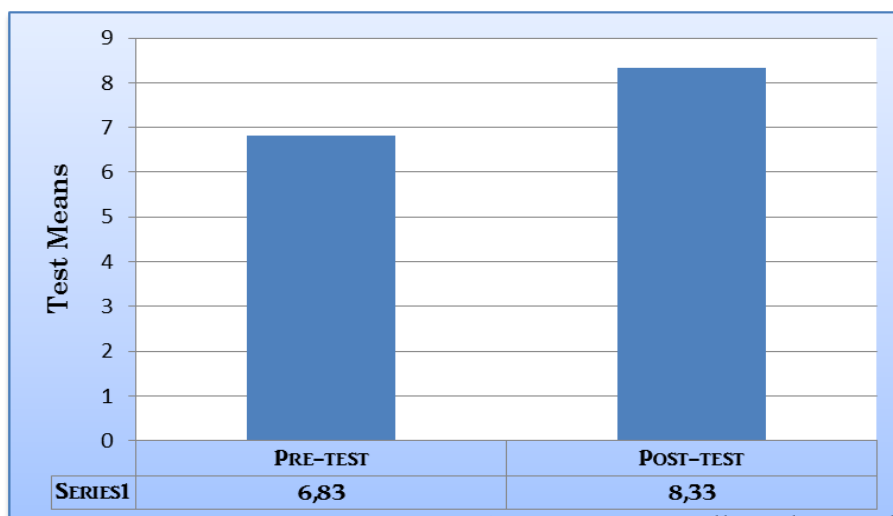
According to the descriptive statistics, the post-test mean of the students was higher than its pre-test mean. While the pre-test mean of the students was 6, 83; the post-test mean was 8, 33.

Table No. 6 "Pre-test scores, Summary chart"

Pre-test Summary					
Min.	1st Qua.	Median	Mean	3rd Qua.	Max
4.16	5.55	7.22	6.83	8.00	9.16

*Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

Figure 8. "Pre/post tests means"



*Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The graphic below shows the mean of the students' pre and post-test.

The minimum grade obtained by one student after evaluating the pre-test sheets was 4.16 meanwhile the maximum grade was 9.16. Similarly, the median which is in this case the central score taking into consideration the minimum and the maximum grades was 7.22. Finally, the mean of the pre-test was 6.83.

Table No. 7 “Post-test scores, Summary chart”

Post-test Summary					
Min.	1st Qua.	Median	Mean	3rd Qua.	Max
5.00	8.05	8.61	8.33	9.16	9.72

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

The minimum grade obtained by one student after evaluating the post-test sheets was 5.0 meanwhile the maximum grade was 9.72. At the same time, the median was 8.61. Finally, the mean of the post-test was 8.33.

After applying the statistics formulas, the standard deviation of the pre-test was 1.614, meanwhile, the standard deviation of the post-test was 1.382. The next table shows the standard deviation of both tests.

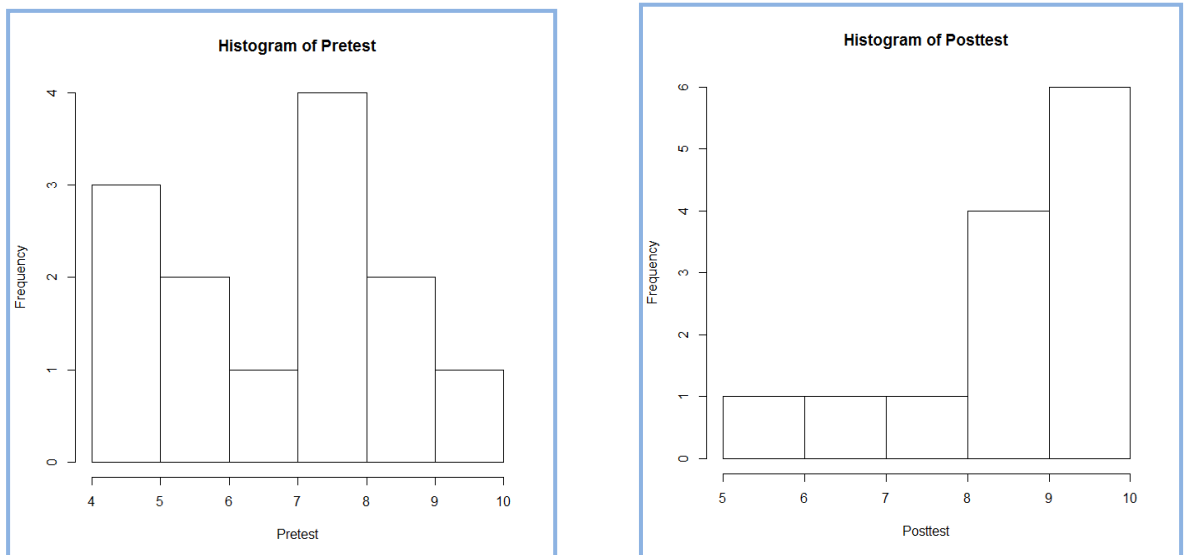
Table No. 8 “Standard Deviation”

Technique	Standard Deviation
Pre-test	1.614.693
Post-test	1.382.618

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

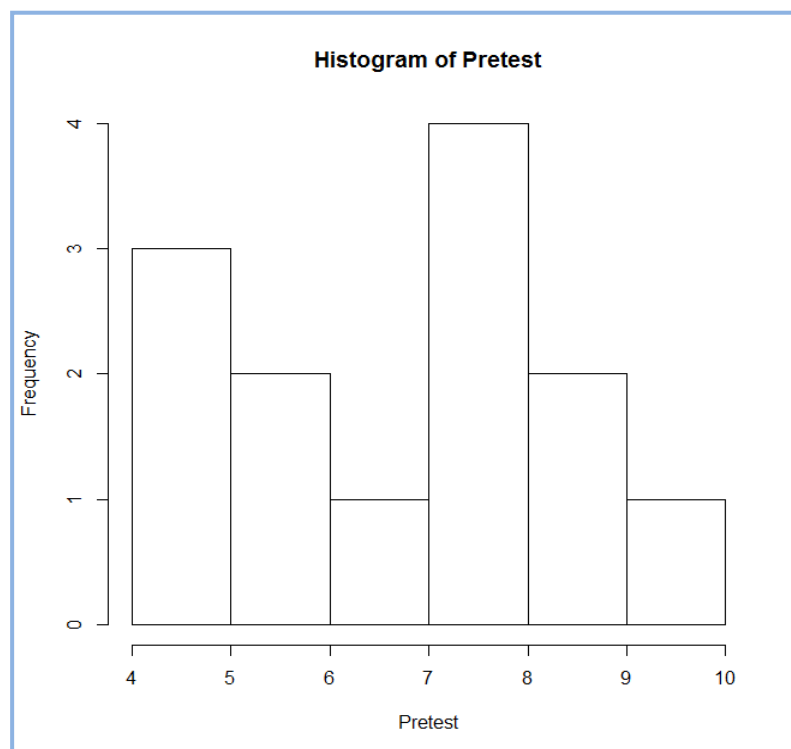
The next figure represents the histogram of the pre-test scores from 10th grade students before they were conducted by the researcher to the performance of role-play activities aimed to improve their oral skills.

By analyzing the data in the chart, we can get to the conclusion that students were not familiarized with these activities and at the same time, their oral skills were limited.



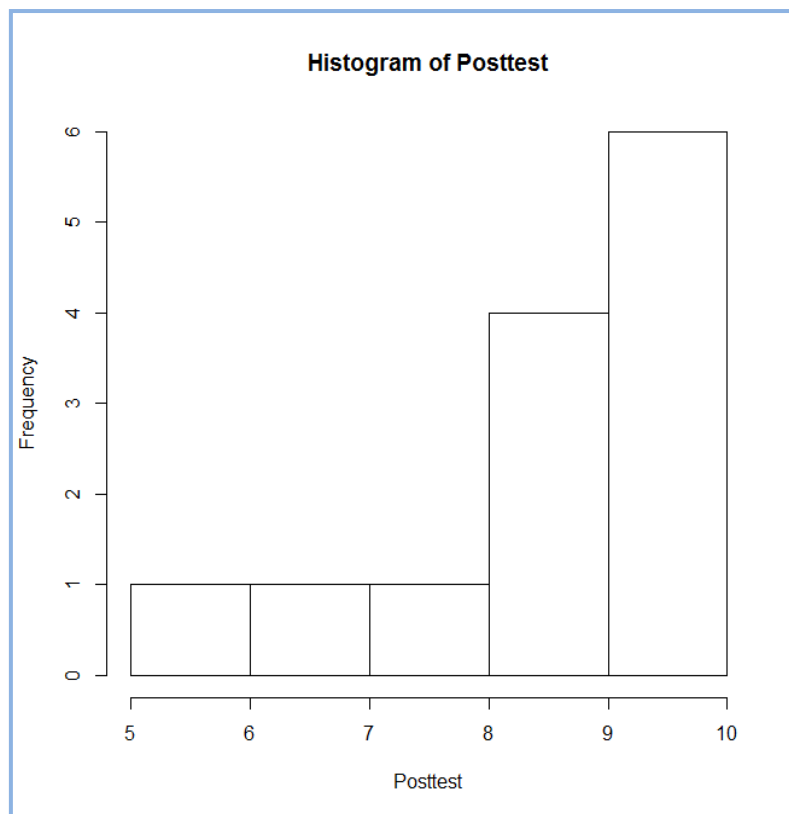
*Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

Figure 9. "Histogram of the Pretest"



The histogram of the post-test scores from 10th grade students shown in the figure below indicates that after applying the educational intervention for 2 week-period, the students show a significant increase not only their oral but also their social skills, this can be attributed to the fact they were really engaged during English classes since they perform fun and meaningful role-play activities.

Figure 10. “Histogram of the Post-test”



*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

3.5 Resource, Timeline and Budget

3.5.1 Resources

In order to conduct the present study aimed to improve students’ oral skills, important resources were required. In Table No. 6, in this page, resources are shown.

Table No.9 “Resources”

1. Subjects
1 English Teacher 13 Students from 10th grade
2. Materials and supplies
Questionnaire sheets Interview sheets Pre-test/post-test sheets Role-plays sheets Rubrics Class observation sheets Markers and pens Whiteboard Books related to educational role-plays Websites related to educational role-plays
3. Equipment
Laptop Voice Recorder Computer program (R) Printer

*Source: “Nueva Alborada” High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

3.5.2 Timeline

All the activities done by the researcher and supervised by tutors aimed to plan, organize, and conduct this research are shown on the appendix G.

3.5.3 Budget

In Figure 10, the cost estimates and budgets were prepared by the researcher taking into consideration all the costs required during the research project and the application of the educational intervention.

Figure 11. “Cost estimates and Budgets”

Accounting Unit Budget	
CATEGORY TOTALS	SUBTOTALS
1. Travel	
Transportation	\$80.00
	\$80,00
2. Equipment	
Printer	\$60.00
Laptop	\$100.00
Voice Recorder	\$10.00
Computing program (Excel)	\$10.00
	\$180,00
3. Materials and supplies	
Questionnaire sheets	\$2.00
Interview sheets	\$0.20
Pre-test/post-test sheets	\$1.00
Role-plays sheets	\$6.00
Rubrics	\$6.00
Class observation sheets	\$0.50
Markers and pens	\$1.60
Whiteboard	\$0.00
Books related to educational role-plays	\$20.00
Websites related to educational role-plays	\$0.00
	\$37,30

4. Contracted Services		
Internet	\$25.00	
Printing Services	\$15.00	
	<hr/>	
		\$40,00
RESEARCH GRAND TOTAL:		<u>\$377,30</u>

Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

CHAPTER IV

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Conclusions

After analyzing data collection and establishing the relationship between role-playing and development of oral skills; the researcher, could finally applied the educational intervention for a two-week period. During this period, general conclusions of important key points were drawn by the researcher.

4.1.1 Conclusions from teacher's interview

- ✚ 10th grade students do not take seriously English classes since previous educational regulations in our country (August, 2011) do not state it as an obligatory subject for primary and even secondary levels, due to the fact that it was presented in the instructional curricula as an optional subject. Additionally, for some parents English is not of great importance to master because they do not use it to communicate with others; as a result, they do not motivate their children to learn or practice it beyond the classrooms.

- ✚ The lack of video and lab classes oriented to improve language skills, make English classes less interesting to students, in addition of a teacher's repertoire based on drills and meaningless repetition of dialogues. This current limitation has a strong negative consequence on students' motivation which opposites the ideas of some researchers. For example, Hyunsuk, S. (2000) noted that learners, especially young adolescents, are motivated to learn a second language through videos which shows the language comprehensively and in real context.

- ✚ Students' lack of basic vocabulary limit their oral expression and fluency during any kind of communicative activities and it was noticed that their lack of internalization of grammatical rules make them commit basic errors. In Richards and Renandya's premise (2002), they stated that "Vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write." So, it is necessary to take into account that vocabulary is an essential skill to be mastered in order to be a proficient user of English.

- ✚ Considering that the teacher applies traditional techniques such as mere repetition of dialogues and guided expositions oriented to reinforce grammatical structures, 10th grade students might miss the opportunity to practice the language in real context. Brown, D. (2001) stated that language learning becomes meaningful when it is focused on promoting long-term retention rather than rote learning; in that way, learners are attracted to talk about something appealing, contextualized and relevant to them. Other perspectives include the contribution made by Krashen and Terrell (1983) who suggested that it is of crucial importance for teachers to plan situations within which students will be able to use their language for a purpose in the classroom context.

- ✚ Finally, the teacher has no clear idea of the advantages of using role-plays in EFL classrooms and that is why she prefers using traditional techniques focused on the notional syllabus oriented to learners' acquisition of grammar rules. On the contrary, Krashen and Terrell (1983) proposed that communicative classroom processes enhances meaningful interaction among learners. At the same time, communication at an appropriate level of difficulty is the key to a language course, rather than focusing teaching around a predetermined grammatical syllabus.

4.1.2 Conclusions from students' questionnaire

- ✚ “English” is of great importance for students and they are conscious that it has been required in the economical, educational and social areas since previous years in our country.
- ✚ Students feel more comfortable when they work in groups and responsibility is divided among group members rather than working alone or in pairs. Group work activities provide students the opportunity to use the language freely, at the same time, they feel more confident to give their opinions and even make mistakes when they are inside the groups. Brown, D. (2001) mentioned that “small groups provide opportunities for student initiation, for face-to-face give and take, for practice negotiation of meaning, and for extended conversational exchanges, and for students' adoption of roles that would otherwise be impossible” (p.178).
- ✚ They are conscious that some of their speaking skills such as fluency, intonation and speed need to be improved immediately, that is one of the reasons why they commit basic mistakes since they do not separate a time apart to practice the language outside the classroom. According to Brydges, R et.al (2010) learners in teacher-directed groups do not perform as well on different tasks due to their lack of autonomy necessary to “tailor knowledge production to his or her specific needs” (p. 512).
- ✚ 10th grade students enjoy English classes showing their intrinsic motivation during the performance of different tasks inside the classroom. As a result, they do not put so much effort to learn the foreign language just for this particular group it not so difficult to use it in everyday activities such as playing video games, listening music, etc. Moreover, Dorneyi, Z. (1990) and Oxford, R. (1996) found that when learners see practical purposes in learning the language, they are motivated even if the language is not significant in the learner's community. Clement's model (1980) focused on the influence of

the social context on learner's motivation in second language learning. He found that positive language learning experiences increase learners' self confidence in using the second language; as a result, they are motivated to learn it.

- ✚ Students consider all the receptive skills (listening and reading) the easiest to master among speaking and writing. Additionally, they love participating in communicative activities which demand from them the use of critical thinking and creativity. Similarly, they expressed they enjoy receiving constructive and well-organized feedback from their teachers. So, using communicative activities such as role-plays can be a simple yet effective way to bring into the classrooms real life tasks which demand high creativity from students. Nunan (1990) expressed that “role plays “can be wholly scripted or wholly improvised, students are given choice in what to say and there is a clear aim to be achieved” (p. 68). In that way, it is proved that by implementing these types of activities in classrooms, students are being encouraged to use not only their knowledge but also their critical thinking skills.

- ✚ They are convinced that role-play activities are funny activities oriented to increase their English levels. Gardner et al. (2004) agree with the fact that language learning in the classroom and in speaking activities help to increase “knowledge, fluency and familiarity ...with the language” (p. 3). Similarly, Bray, E. (2007) mentioned that role play activities have been found through a number of studies to be an effective approach used in attempts to improve speaking skill of students. Additionally, Richards, J. (1985) confirmed that role play activities also develop conversational skill among students.

- ✚ The majority of them feel a little bit nervous when they perform in-front of class activities but with teacher's help and frequent oral participation, the fear of speaking in public can be overcome. Tam, M. (1997) expressed that is necessary for teachers to provide students with a variety of situations and

frequent speaking tasks to witness significant improvement of students' fluency when speaking; correspondingly, self-confidence and competence usually reinforce oral skills when learning a foreign language. Likewise, Patil, Z. (2008) stressed that foreign language teachers should have as a priority, the strengthening of self-confidence to eliminate their fear of making errors in order to make learners feel comfortable with their language use.

4.1.3 General conclusions

- To sum up, the implementation of role-plays in 10th grade classrooms of this non-bilingual school had positive impact on improving students' speaking skills since it adds variety and interest to English classes, at the same time that motivates students to learn the language, increasing their vocabulary, intonation, fluency and pronunciation .
- Role-plays provide them with the opportunity to practice the language in different real-life situations at the same time they promote confidence among learners by reducing the anxiety and fear of speak in public which some students presented before the educational intervention.
- Although during each session, the situation gets a little bit stressing since students were not familiarized with these type of activities and the teacher had to explain the purpose of the activities, reinforce the vocabulary, divide the class in groups and pairs, little time was employed for the activity itself, eventually with time and a little help from students, this problem can be resolved.
- Finally, like all the activities were recorded by the teacher, they allowed her to provide effective feedback on each student's performance helping students to see their progress and consequently to improve their oral skills.

4.2 Problems and Limitations

The researcher and the project faced some important limitations during the whole process, for example, the research study was conducted on a small scale because sample was not big enough to generalize the idea that role-play activities are the most effective tools for improving learners' oral communication skills in other schools.

At the same time, the educational intervention lasted only two weeks because teachers and students needed to continue with the activities programmed in the school curriculum.

One important limitation was the lack of enough time during each session because the teacher had to explain the purpose of each activity, reviewed vocabulary and clarified instructions to students due to the fact that they were not familiar with the activities, as a result, the first week several minutes were taken for the activity itself.

Likewise, the lack of basic vocabulary, incorrect pronunciation, poor intonation and fluency as well as shyness in the majority of students made role-play activities difficult to perform at the beginning of the intervention.

A general limitation during this research study was time for the reason that the teacher could not apply many techniques and strategies within the two weeks' time because the students had to be part of the research and to attend to their regular classes.

Despite these limitations, the researcher found that although role-playing is not the only technique based on the communicative approach aimed to improve oral skills, it proved to be effective enough to enhance oral and social skills in EFL learners.

Lastly, this small scale research can be taken as a sample guideline to carry out the research on a large scale.

4.3 Recommendations

The results of this study revealed that the implementation of role-plays in English classrooms of non-bilingual schools was effective enough to increase students' oral skills as well as to build their confidence, promote critical thinking skills and values of respect and acceptance to others. Therefore, taking into consideration the conclusions mentioned before, this study made emphasis on the following recommendations:

- Teachers should explicitly adapt and arrange communicative activities presented to learners based on their English level, interest and language needs in order to retain motivation during classes.
- It is important to make agreements between English directors and teachers to separate some time from normal activities in order to plan and implement speaking activities aimed to encourage meaningful oral language practice.
- Train students to perform pair/work-group activities because if they are not familiarized to assume different roles within a group, they will feel uncomfortable and nervous at the moment of performing activities of this nature which involves two or more students making decisions and agreements.
- Check and reinforce vocabulary beforehand in order to have plenty of time for the normal development of the activities.

- Rotate group members every time in order not only to make them work with different classmates but also to make them adopt different roles within the groups.
- Socialize rubrics with students in order to let them know how they are going to be evaluated and what kind of instruments the teacher will use for the purpose.
- Finally, it is necessary that teachers record all the students' performances by using any kind of technological device (voice recorder, video camera and laptop webcam) in order to give accurate feedback at the moment of grading students' performances because it is normal that during role-plays distractors can affect teachers' and students' attention and scores will not face validity.

Although, role-playing has been proved to be effective and has been used for decades in the language teaching environment aimed to help students in a wide variety of areas, it is worth-mentioning that this communicative technique alone is not sufficient when attempting to increase students' speaking skills since teacher's attitudes, parents' involvement and students' engagement during role-playing performances are indeed crucial factors to reach the goal of molding independent and fluent users of the foreign language.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Classroom Observation Checklist

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET Escuela Colegio Particular "Nueva Alborada"



Teacher's name: _____ Observer's name: _____
 School: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____
 Time: _____ Visit number: _____

General Objectives: To have a clear perception of teacher (trainee) student interaction in daily teaching.

Procedures: Teachers, tutors or directors will be supervising the trainee daily during five-hour classes. During each visit the teacher will be evaluated on teaching indicators having the following point system.

4: Expert 3: Proficient 2: Needs Improvement 1: Does not meet the standards

	4	3	2	1	Comments
<i>Personal Qualities</i>					
Punctuality					
Rapport with students					
Presence, style					
Tone of voice					
Ability to project					
Clarity of diction					
Command of the Subject					
Pronunciation					
Intonation					
Vocabulary					
Grammar					
Fluency					
Overall Comments:					

<i>Preparation and Planning</i>					
Follows a class plan					
Aims and objectives are evident					
Coherence in class					
Shape and balance of activities					
Interest					

<i>Performance in class</i>					
Techniques of class management					
Arrangement of furniture and equipment					
Organization of activities					
Distributing teacher/ student talking time					
Ways of involving the class					
Maintaining discipline					
Handling errors					
Monitoring pair and group work					
Teacher movement and gestures					
Timing					
Evaluating student work					
Overall Comments:					

					Comments
Teaching skills					
Warm-up					
Presentation					
Practice					
Production					
Follow-up					
Clarity of instruction					
Exploitation of materials					
Questioning Techniques					
Use of aids and equipment, blackboard, textbook, supplementary materials					
Teaching Strategies					
Reacting to anything unexpected					
Maintaining Motivation					
Pacing					
Effective use of time					
Overall Comments:					

Suggestions:

Rating Scale:

120-97	Trainee fulfills teaching indicators.
96-73	Trainee has capacity to reach effective teaching indicators, but needs teaching tips.
72-49.	Trainee shows average teaching indicators, thus needs to improve
48-25	Trainee experiences difficulty and must attempt to work consistently.
24-0.	Trainee lacks positive teaching indicators, needs to strive to improve

*Source: Universidad Laica "Vicente Rocafuerte" de Guayaquil
Modified by Maria Belen Donoso*

Appendix B: Teacher's Interview Questions

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW | 2014



Universidad Laica Vicente Rocafuerte de Guayaquil
Educational Science Faculty
English School

INTERVIEW FORMAT FOR TEACHERS

Teacher:

Date:

School:

Educational Area:

Age:

Instruction: This 15 minutes interview has as main objective to get real and valuable information from the English teacher around the problem of lack of oral communicative skills in 10th grade students from a private school.

A) About previous experience?

1. What motivate you to become an English teacher?
 2. How many years have you been teaching English? How many years in this institution?
 3. Why do you think English is an important language currently?
 4. Why do you think is the easiest language skill to master? What is the most difficult?
-

B) About the students?

5. Do you consider the majority of your students are engaged to learn English?
 6. Are your students motivated in English classes?
 7. What language skill do you consider your students need to improve?
 8. Do your students participate actively in communicative activities? Do they enjoy them?
 9. What do you think can be the factors or situations that do not allow a significant increase in students' oral communication skills?
-

C) About methodology applied?

1. What teaching methods are familiar to you to improve speaking skills?
 2. Which methods do you frequently use in class?
 3. What kind of communicative activities students perform in class?
 4. Do you think current activities performed by students are effective enough to increase students' oral communication skills?
 5. Which strategies you use to increase students' oral communication skills?
-

D) About role-play activities?

6. What is your definition for role-play activities?
7. Do you implement them in class frequently?
8. Do you know what are the objectives to use them in class?
9. Do you know what are the benefits to use them in class?

*Source: "Nueva Alborada" High School
Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso*

B) About the subject?

1. Do you enjoy English classes?
2. Is the material presented interesting for you?
3. Do you think “Listening “ is a difficult skill to master?
4. Do you think “Speaking” is a difficult skill to master?
5. Are the communicative activities performed in class meaningful enough?

Yes	No	I don't Know

C) About communicative activities or role-plays?

1. Do you enjoy participating in communicative activities?
2. Do you practice the language by giving expositions?
3. Do you practice the language by performing dialogues?
4. Do you practice the language by performing role-plays?
5. Do you think current activities conducted by the teacher are effective enough to increase your oral communication skills?
6. Do you know what role-plays mean?
7. Do you think role-plays will help you to increase your oral skills?

Yes	No	I don't Know

D) About the teacher?

1. Does your teacher motivate you to learn the language?
2. Does your teacher promote oral participation in class?
3. Does your teacher implement communicative activities regularly?
4. Does your teacher use role-play activities in the class?
5. Does your teacher use different methods and techniques to make you practice the language orally?

Yes	No	I don't Know

*Source: Universidad Laica “Vicente Rocafuerte” de Guayaquil
Modified by Maria Belen Donoso*

Appendix D: Rubrics

STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS RUBRIC | 2014



**UNIVERSIDAD LAICA VICENTE ROCAFUERTE DE GUAYAQUIL
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE FACULTY
ENGLISH SCHOOL**

RUBRIC FOR STUDENTS

Name:

Class:

Date:

Dialogue:

		1	2	3	4
A)	Speed of Responses	A lot of hesitation and difficult to understand what he/she said.	The response is rather slow and hesitant.	A little hesitation and pause.	Respond without any hesitation.
B)	Rhythm, stress, intonation	More influence on the first language accent and usually difficult to understand because of very poor pronunciation.	More influence on the first language accent and poor intonation.	Good pronunciation, but a little influence on the first language accent.	Good pronunciation and speak like a native speaker.
C)	Vocabulary (range and appropriateness)	Very limited vocabulary range and usually difficult to understand.	Limited vocabulary range and sometimes uses words that aren't suitable.	Good use of appropriate words, but with some hesitation.	Rich vocabulary and good use of appropriate words.
D)	Appropriateness of responses	Usually not very appropriate response, so it is difficult to understand.	Sometimes not very appropriate response and there are some incomplete sentences.	Appropriate response but sometimes there are some incomplete sentences.	Good and appropriate response.
E)	Accuracy	Usually very serious grammatical errors and it is very difficult to communicate.	Several serious grammatical errors and sometimes it is difficult to communicate.	A few serious grammatical errors but it still is understandable.	Only a few grammatical errors, but able to correct him/herself.
F)	Repetition of responses	The test-taker is asked to repeat words and phrases which are unclear, but very little language is comprehensible.	The test-taker is asked to repeat words and phrases which are unclear, and then everything is understandable, but longer, more complicated sentences remain incomprehensible.	The test-taker is asked to repeat words and phrases which are unclear and then everything is understandable.	Spoken language is very clear.
	Total score out of 24:	_____			

Source: <http://www.thepetjournal.net>

Appendix E: Pre-Post test

SPEAKING TEST | 2014



UNIVERSIDAD LAICA VICENTE ROCAFUERTE DE GUAYAQUIL
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCE FACULTY
ENGLISH SCHOOL

SPEAKING TEST FOR STUDENTS

Name:

Date:

School:

Course:

Instruction: This speaking test has as main objective to identify the students' oral communication skills (intonation, pronunciation, fluency, body language and creativity) when performing pair role-play activities.

PART 1

Work with a classmate and fill in the blanks with the most suitable answers for you. Then, perform the role-play in front of the class.

You must change: **Modals** **Time** **Title and plot of the movie** **Ticket price**

Dialogue:

Worker: Good afternoon. Can I help you?
(You want to know if they are selling tickets.)

You:

Worker: Well, we've sold all the tickets. But we have tickets for two other movies.
(Ask what movies they are.)

You:

Worker: They are "Despicable me 2" and "Mama".
(You want to know what kind movie "Mama" is.)

You:

Worker: It is a horror movie. It is about two girls who get lost the same day their mom is killed.
(Say, you prefer that one and ask for the price.)

You:

Worker: It is \$ 5.00 dollars each ticket.
(Say you want to buy 2 tickets for today.)

You:

Worker: Sorry, we're sold out. We have tickets for tomorrow.
(Say you don't have time tomorrow and ask for Saturday tickets.)

You:

Worker: Ok, for which showing would you like tickets? For 2:45 or 4:15?
(Tell her for which showing you want your tickets.)

You:

Worker: Here you are. Your two tickets and your change.
(Thank the lady.)

You:

Worker: You're welcome. Have a nice day!

Source: <http://www.thepetjournal.net/2012/03/evaluating-students-speaking.html>
Modified by Maria Belen Donoso

Appendix F: Lesson plans and role-plays

Activities

AT THE SHOP

Beverages	Main Courses	Desserts
Water \$0.75	Chicken Hamburger \$2.99	Ice Cream \$1.50
Natural Juice \$1.50	Meat Hamburger \$3.25	Tres leches \$2.00
Soda \$1.00	Pork Sandwich \$4.00	Flan \$1.25
	Potatoes (portion) \$1.25	

Dialogue

Worker: Good Morning! What would you like to order?

Customer: Good morning, lady. I will have a chicken hamburger, please.

Worker: Would you like it with salad or potatoes?

Customer: Potatoes, please.

Worker: What kind of potatoes would you like? Baked or French fries?

Customer: I would like French fries.

Worker: And what about you? What would you like to order?

Customer: I will have a pork sandwich.

Worker: Ok. White or diet bread?

Customer: white bread it's fine for me.

Worker: And what would you like to drink?

Customer: I guess we will have two bottles of soda.

Worker: Anything else?

Customer: No, that will be all for now, thanks.

Customer: How much do we owe you?

Worker: It's 10 dollars and 25 cents in total.

Customer: Here you have.

Worker: Ok, I will bring it right away. Here is your order. Enjoy it.

Customer: Thank you.

ROLE PLAY

ARRANGING AN APPOINTMENT

8. Role A: You wanna see doctor Henry. You phone his office to arrange an appointment. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- greet.- check if you may see Dr.Henry next Mon, at 8:00 A.M.- suggest another time (Tue,4:00 P.M)- Not good. Having a meeting- Accept it.- tell your name and address	Role B: You are a receptionist of Dr. Henry. Someone is calling to make an appointment. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Greet and offer help- Busy all day long- Not ok. Meeting another patient: Suggest another time (Wed, at 3:00 P.M)- Suggest another time (Fri, at 9:00 A.M)- Ask for name and address
---	---

R: Good morning, thank you for calling Dr. Henry's office. How can I help you?

P: Eh, hi I am Casey. I'm calling because I want to arrange an appointment.

R: Sure, what's the emergency?

P: Well, since yesterday evening I got fever and a terrible headache.

R:Ok. Did you take some medicine?

P: Yes. Two pills of aspirin.

R: Don't take anything until the doctor checks you up. Ok?

P: Sure. Can I see doctor henry today?

R: Let me check his agenda. Wait a minute! Sorry, but the doctor is busy all day long.

P: What about tomorrow at 3 pm?

R: Let me check. He's meeting another patient at 3 pm. But he is free at 4 pm.

P: At 4 pm? Its fine I guess.

R: Good. Could you please tell me your full name and number?

P: Casey Ferguson. And my number is 097845319.

R: Ok, Miss Casey Ferguson, your appointment with the doctor will be tomorrow at 4 pm.

P: Thanks for your help.

R: You're welcome. Have a nice day! Good bye!

P: Bye!

DIALOGUE

LEAVING A MESSAGE

A to B

- A: Good morning, I am **Gerard Piqué**. Can I talk to **Messi**?
- B: Good morning, **Gerard**. I'm sorry but **Messi** is not here now. Do you want to leave a message?
- A: Yes, please. Tell him that **we have to practice the strategy at the field this evening!**
- B: Ok, I will tell **Messi that you want to practice football with him this evening!** Anything else?
- A: No, Thank you!
- B: My pleasure! Have a nice day!
- A: You too, bye.

B to C

- B: Hi **Messi**. How are you?
- C: So far so good! What about you?
- B: **I'm fine thanks.**
- C: Tell me has somebody asked for me?
- B: Yes, I have a message for you.
- C: Good. tell me please!
- B: **Gerard** called and told me that **you have to practice the new strategy at the field this evening.**
- C: Oh, right! ok, Thanks for telling me that **Gerard wants to practice at the field this evening.**
- B: My pleasure!

Role-play

FAMOUS PEOPLE- PAST EVENTS

Instruction: You must perform the role play like it is been broadcasting on the radio or on Tv.

Presenter: Good morning, America . We are XD radio, the new trendy./ This is your tv show "The bomb".

We are here with one of the most outstanding celebrities in the world, and today he/she is going to read some of the questions you post on facebook and tweeter. Welcome.

Celebrity: Good morning to all of you, Thank you for inviting me. It's a pleasure to be here now and I hope you to read nice questions for me.

Presenter: Ok let's start. First question.... What is your real name?

Celebrity: Rihanna

Presenter: Where were you born?

Celebrity: In saint Michael, Barbados

Presenter: Next question.... Which was your first single? (First movie? First appearance on tv?)

Celebrity: My first single was "pon de replay"

Presenter: Next one.. What was the name of your first pet?

Celebrity: Mc Donalds. hahaha

Presenter: Who was your girlfriend/boyfriend when you were at school?

Celebrity: Actually, I don't remember.

Presenter: Really? Ok. When was your first performance on stage?/ (When was your first performance on tv?)

Celebrity: At the VMA'S 4 years ago.

Presenter: Did you win an award? Which one?

Celebrity: Yes, Best R&B singer.

Presenter: Ok, and now the surprise question.. What occupation would you have chosen if you weren't a singer?

Celebrity: Let me think. I would be a kindergarten teacher because I love kids.

Presenter: Ok. That's all for now. This was Rihanna. Ladies and gentleman. Good morning!

Surprise Questions:

- What would you do if you had a superpower?
- Where would you hide if you were an elephant?

Appendix G: Timeline of the activities

ACTIVITIES	November				December				January				February			
Elaborate interview questions	X	X														
Review interview questions		X														
Conduct the interview			X													
Analyze results				X												
Elaborate questionnaire				X	X											
Review questionnaire					X											
Conduct the questionnaire						X										
Analyze results							X									
Plan the classes								X	X							
Select and adapt rubrics for the activities										X						
Elaborate and adapt role-plays										X	X					
Review activities											X					
Conduct the classes and role-plays												X	X			
Design the pre-post test													X			
Review the tests														X		
Analyze final results															X	X

Prepared by Maria Belen Donoso

Appendix H: Photos

Photo 1: 10th grade students checking their pronunciation.



Photo 2: Students taking into consideration different points of view.



Photo 3: Students performing the role-play.

