UNIVERSIDAD DON BOSCO

FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS Y HUMANIDADES

PROYECTO DE GRADUACIÓN:

DEVELOPING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE

COMPETENCY: A CURRICULAR DESIGN FOR TEACHERS TRAINING

PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE:

MAESTRA EN GESTIÓN DEL CURRÍCULUM DIDÁCTICA

Y EVALUACIÓN POR COMPETENCIAS

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"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world".
Nelson Mandela

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1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Due to the recent and great demand of English as a social communicative tool in the global context, seven universities in El Salvador have decided on offering majors related to the acquisition of English as a foreign language. Among these, *Universidad Don Bosco* offers two undergraduate degrees in languages, which claim the development of English language skills using the competency-based approach.

However, from a practical perspective, there are some students that seem not to have developed the communicative competence. This gap was verified through data gathered on a diagnostic research done to 24 students that belong to B1 level. The data was collected through the administration of a standardized test and revealed that these students had not fully developed their communicative competences. They showed low proficiency on three dimensions of the communicative competence; these dimensions were: grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, and interactive communication and global achievement.

The results of the diagnostic research encourage a deeper analysis for the possible causes of the low results obtained by the group of students under study. The first possible cause is the role that both the professor and students have in the learning process. According to an inquiry made to ten educators of the B+1 course, educators are still seen as knowledge keepers while students have a passive role as knowledge receivers in the whole process. Second, the learning experiences are still being designed based on the content and not on the B1+ competencies established for the Communicative English Course; thus, class mediators deem important to rely on developing English content, rather than encouraging a language c*ompetence*.

The third possible cause of low results obtained by the group is that despite the fact that the curricula propose ideas of teaching strategies, professors resist to implement them. The curricula specify three English courses prior to B1+ level, in which students should have developed their communicative competencies; so that each subject suggests a set of teaching strategies to enhance students' communicative competence. The program for English B1+ course suggests teaching strategies that can directly contribute to the development of the communicative competency; nevertheless, in day-to-day instruction, professors hardly ever use them due to diverse reasons. Among these reasons, class mediators point out that teaching strategies are time consuming (i.e., because it takes too much time to plan them) the lack of participation from low proficiency level students and the limited time to cover all the contents.

The fourth possible cause of low results obtained by the group may be due to a single, repetitive course assessment strategy, as participants are systematically assessed on a monotonous role play performance, three times during the semester, throughout five English courses ranging from A1, A2, B1, B1+ and B2. Thus, the implementation of other type of evaluation strategies that require a high domain of oral ability could be beneficial for the students because they would be challenged to use the language in different contexts and scenarios similar to real-life situations, enhancing their abilities to solve real-life issues.

Furthermore, it is essential to highlight that the oral assessment takes place at the end of each period. The semester has three periods that are divided into four weeks; so, evaluations take place on the fifth week. Therefore, it becomes an elaborate scenario to examine students' levels of acquisition of language competence. It also becomes crucial to support the learning process by providing ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve planning and students to improve their learning. Hence, it is necessary to provide teachers with assessment strategies focused at enhancing the learning process.

Among the four possible factors that may cause the low proficiency identified on B1+ participants, the present project focuses on the implementation of teaching and assessment strategies that encourage students to develop their communicative competencies. The reason to focus specifically on these possible causes is that the diagnostic enquiry on faculty members indicated that it is necessary to boost up succinct teaching and assessment strategies to better enhance communicative competence of B1 + participants. Our first observations rendered that students who carried out the teaching and assessment strategies used in the present project eventually improved proficiency levels. It is also believed that the present research project may benefit other students' competency standards.

1.2. Background

Teaching English has been a topic of discussion since the beginning of the 20th century with the Grammatical Approach. Nowadays, the need of learning English language has become a trending factor to develop future professionals (Almanza Casola, 2006). In El Salvador, only a few universities offer a degree on English acquisition; *Universidad Don Bosco* is one of them. The two undergraduate programs offered in this institution embrace a system that promotes development of communicative competence in English under the competency-based approach. Thus, understanding what the competency-based approach means is crucial to provide students with the necessary competencies to face real-life situations.

According to Richards (2005), the Competency-Based for Language Teaching approach (CBLT) "seeks to teach students the basic skills they need in order to prepare them for situations that commonly encounter in everyday life" (p. 41). In other words, the CBLT consists of providing learners with the necessary abilities to solve and face daily life situations. Also, the CBLT is currently part of the pedagogical model in our country (USAID, 2013) because this model consists

of the conjunction of competencies for life in order to solve real-life problems. The CBLT has four significant aspects that should be considered: performance, meaningful context, autonomous learning, and problem-solving skills (Williamson, 2007).

In addition to the adoption of the competency-based approach on the education system, it is also needed to incorporate a set of well-selected and well-designed teaching and assessments strategies centralized on developing communicative skills. Nevertheless, there are still doubts that teachers face about how to design learning experiences as they apply the competency-based approach. Hymes (1972) defines communicative competence as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations (p. 283). In other words, it means the way students use the language to interact with others in different real-life scenarios. Canale and Swain (1980) further suggest that communicative competence is as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skills needed for communication (p. 7). Thus, students not only use speaking skills but also, their abilities to interact with others.

According to Quintanilla et al. (2017) the communicative competence implies expressing ideas with linguistic precision (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation). Several authors coincide that to develop communicative competence, teachers must use real-life situations or authentic activities that require real-life communication. These activities or situations must also be meaningful for students' lives. Ferro et al. (2017) addressed the issue of the communicative competence by applying a program aimed at developing speaking ability. This program featured strategies centered on designated performances, role-plays, interviews, problem-solving learning, among others by using different scenarios where communication occurs. The results that were gathered by Ferro indicate that the program had a positive effect on students' communicative competence. When students took the test most of them got a low proficiency level, 85.7% to be exact. Once the program was run, the post-test was applied showing that only a few students got a

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low proficiency level, 7.1%. It means that most of them got an Intermediate proficiency level, 78.6%; this represents a significant difference from starting point prior to pre-test sessions and current time after post- test environment.

Previous research on English acquisition has delved into teaching strategies as proposed by Prieto (2012) who defined teaching and learning strategies as "the instruments that teachers apply to develop the competency that students have" (p. 3). In other words, teaching and learning strategies are mechanisms that educators use to enhance students' competencies. Research has found positive effects after implementing teaching and learning strategies in time-constrained environments. A number of competency-based approach theories have also been applied and explained by education experts in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) scenarios.

Other scholar efforts have resulted in a characterization of the language teaching-learning process. For instance, one of the characteristics that the teaching-learning process must have is procedural knowledge, which involves constant practice. Almanza Casola (2006) did a quantitative research, with pre-experimental design of a group of students with pre-test and post-test. The results of the research highlighted positive effects on the communicative competence of participants after exposing them to alternative methodology featuring techniques such as debates, pandora box games, story building, the spider web, dancing, simulations, role plays, among others. Almanza Casola (2006) also emphasized that to design the teaching and learning process, two elements must be put into consideration: *learning* as the activity carried out by the student who is being trained and *teaching*, as an activity carried out by the teacher, who is responsible for managing and guiding this learning" (p. 61). Almanza Casola further suggests that the use of the methodology contributed to the quality of the communicative process, causing significant changes in the performance of students in the acquisition of knowledge.

In the same manner, Machaca (2016) applied a teaching strategy, role-play, with the aim of increasing the speaking ability. The methodology used was experimental, with pre-test and post-test. The results confirmed that after 15 sessions of conducting Role Plays on participants, the domain of the communicative competence increased significantly. Likewise, Shanthi et al. (2014) did a research where they applied different teaching and learning strategies with third- year engineering students. Some of the strategies that helped to improve the domain of the communicative competence in the research were: sentence building games, strip stories, storytelling, Q & A games, think-pair-share. Shanthi et al. (2014) suggested that teachers should plan and select strategies using authentic materials and real-life situations.

Finally, it is also significant to know how to assess students under the competency-based approach. According to Tobón (2006) competency assessment is as follows:

a meaningful learning experience, that is based in the determination of achievements and aspects to improve in a person regarding to a competency, based on criteria and evidence, within the framework of that person's performance in carrying out activities and the analysis, comprehension, resolution of problems in the professional, social, disciplinary and investigative context, considering knowing how to be, to know, to do and to live together. (p. 134)

In other words, the competency assessment is understood as the process of acquiring and moving forward in which students develop a certain ability based on accomplishments and aspects to upgrade, considering the criteria and established objectives. Furthermore, the competency assessment is focused in embracing real-life issues that require the four pillars of education that are "learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be" and that are not necessarily linked to assigning a numerical grade, but to inform students about their progress in the process (Tobón, 2006). Thus, *assessment* differs at *grading,* by the fact that *assessment* refers to

using the resulting information to understand and improve the learning process, meanwhile, *grading* refers to calculating a particular score, via summative feedback for an individual student on a score scale.

1.3. Proposal of Solution

In order to provide a solution for one of the possible causes of the low proficiency speaking performance identified on B+1 participants, it is recommended to facilitate a professional development course aimed at providing teachers with an insight of key resources for meaningful learning that boosts up communicative competency on B1+ participants on a competency-based platform.

1.4. Content and Structure of the Project

This project was developed in five sections that are described below. The first section is the current one: the introduction, which describes how the problem identified is affecting students' communicative competency; this contains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, and the proposal of solution. The second section is the statement of the project; this section includes the potential impact to the teacher community that the professional development course will provide to teachers of B+1 from the School of Languages at *Universidad Don Bosco*. Moreover, this section describes the social significance of the project on both students and faculty. It also presents the general and the specific objectives of the project. Finally, this section ends with the description of the professional development course (PDC) as proposal of solution.

The third section shows the methodology used to gather the data that became the basis for the proposal of solution. It describes the assumptions, scope of the investigation, the data collection process, the instruments used to gather data, the validity and reliability of the process. The fourth section contains the curricula design of the professional development course. It has the intended

outcome, curricular map, that includes the scope and sequence, the learning experiences, instructional and evaluation methods. The fifth section provides the conclusions and recommendations for implementing the course for developing the professors' in-classroom research skills.

2. Statement of the Project

2.1. Potential Impact and Contribution to Teacher Community

The PDC become aware of effective learning procedures for better guiding students on their learning process. Moreover, the PDC will contribute to recognize and use assessment strategies that may foster positive students' learning outcomes. This training is intended to move the perception that teachers have toward assigning a *grade* instead of *providing feedback* to students in the learning process.

2.2. Social significance of the Project

The Professional Development Course will seek to contribute in promoting learning processes by changing the role of teachers as facilitators. This change of mindset seeks to promote autonomous learning for students, meaning that the process will transform the passive role that students have; therefore, students will become aware of their learning process, thus producing more responsible learners, who decide how to improve their abilities by themselves. Moreover, the Professional Development Course will guide teachers to create a teaching strategies handbook that can be used in different moments of the learning process. The course will also provide a layer of practicum ideas where students will be taught under the competency-based approach, it means that participants will have opportunities to confront real-life scenarios such as casual teacher-student conversations, tour guiding, managing tourists, etc. The present research will also benefit the Language School Faculty at *Universidad Don Bosco* by observing the learning outcomes of

language students in a time-constrained research study. It will also help to identify successful classroom practices that help to reach out to established language proficiency standards.

2.3. Project objectives

2.3.1. General objective

To design a professional development course for teachers of B+1 at the School of Languages at *Universidad Don Bosco* centered on teaching and assessment strategies to improve the students' learning experiences so that they can develop their communicative competency at appropriate level.

2.3.2. Specific objectives

- To outline the intended outcome of the professional development course based on the results gathered from the needs assessment and diagnostic research project.
- To design the curricular map focused on the areas of achievement: teaching and assessment strategies applying the competency-based approach.
- To plan the scope and sequence of the contents, including the learning assessment strategies and their learning outcomes.

2.4. Description of the project

The project has been designed with the aim of providing students meaningful learning experiences, in which they are going to be the main moderators of their learning. This goal is planned to be achieved through special training to be given to teachers at the School of Languages; hence, it will directly contribute to further upgrade teachers' practicum. The Professional Development Course will last eight weeks. It will be divided in two modules; each module will last 4 weeks. Each week, they will have to work on assigned content, as well as activities that will enhance their learning process. The training is designed to be delivered virtually via synchronous

and asynchronous sessions. Each week, teachers will have three hours to complete assigned tasks and one hour for a live session. They will hand- in two learning products by the end of each module. Our assessment process will serve two purposes. That is, evidence of teacher´s progress, and a how- to- provide feedback session to reflex on their learning processes.

3. Methodology

3.1. Scope and Constrains of the Project

The project will contribute to B1+ language teacher practicum at *Universidad Don Bosco, Soyapango* and *Universidad Don Bosco, Antiguo Cuscatlán*. The teacher training seeks to contribute to the teachers' understanding of the whole assessment process and its implication in the students' learning process. This instruction practice will contribute to shift the conception that teachers may have toward using teaching and assessment strategies, and how these can impact and transform students' performance on learning a foreign language. Yet, the project has two constraints to be considered. The first one is that the professional development course will be carried out using a virtual platform, due to the health crisis of COVID 19. The second constraint is that this project will be addressed exclusively to the School of Language teachers who have previously delivered   B1+ courses at *Universidad Don Bosco*. It is assumed that a deeper consideration about the teaching and assessment strategies from a competency-based perspective will further develop teachers' abilities to assemble lessons that allow students to go up- the- scale for subsequent courses such as Intensive English course (B2 level), Reading and Conversation, Listening and Conversation, Advanced Grammar, Writing Styles, among others.

3.2. Study Design

A diagnostic research was conducted during the II semester of the year 2020 to collect data used as the basis for the project. The research approach was quantitative through the design of a

quasi-experiment held with 24 students of the subject Intermediate English B1+ in both English undergraduate programs: *Licenciatura en Idiomas con Especialidad en la Adquisición de Lenguas Extranjeras* and *Licenciatura en Idiomas con Especialidad en Turismo* at *Universidad Don Bosco*.

3.3. Methods of Data Gathering

The methodological design required the participation of two groups, an experimental group (EG) and a control group (CG). Three phases were carried out for data collection. The first phase was the pre-test, in which a standardized test, Preliminary Test (PET) by Cambridge University, was applied for both groups. The second phase was designing a treatment for the EG based on the needs analysis identified through the test scores. The treatment consisted of applying eight teaching and assessment strategies intended to develop the communicative competence of the B1+ students who were part of the EG. After applying one teaching and assessment strategy per live session, a total of eight sessions were carried out, and a post-test was applied to both groups. Once the post-test was applied, the data gathered was processed, and the results were analyzed. The results were different after having applied teaching and assessment strategies to boost the communicative competence for eight weeks; the results showed a significant difference. Students in the EG got a higher average after undergoing a treatment, in which the professor used eight different teaching and assessment strategies during the experimental period. These teaching strategies were role plays, simulations, picture descriptions, storytelling, debates, interviews, and comic strips; meanwhile the assessment strategies were based on exit ticket/exit strip, pencil formative assessment, Think-pair-share, 3-2-1, Do and Don't T chart, 30-second Share, the whiteboard, and a peer assessment, a further explanation of these strategies is provided in Annex 1.

3.4. Data Collection Technique

The technique used in the research was a test. Anastasi and Urbina (1997) defined tests as "procedures that assess the presence of a factor or phenomenon that comprises a set of items that are scored in a standardized way and are used to examine and evaluate individual differences in aptitudes, abilities, competencies, dispositions, attitudes, or emotions" (p. 3). The instrument used is described in detail subsequently.

3.5. Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used to gather data was a standardized test designed by Cambridge ESOL, B1 Preliminary Test (PET). PET is applied to students who are in the B1 level established by the Common European Framework (CEF). PET has four sections (reading, writing, listening and speaking), and it is administrated by two examiners to two candidates; for the present research, only the speaking section was used (See Annex 2). The reliability of this test has been measured on a 0.84 effectivity by Cambridge ESOL through the Alpha of Cronbach test.

3.6. Data Analysis

Microsoft Excel was used to analyze the gathered data. The data was preliminarily based on the scores assigned by the two PET's administrators. One of the examiners administered the test during a live session; meanwhile, the second examiner listened to the recording and provided a score. Both scores were added and then divided by two to get the final average score. The statistical analysis used to compare the total average obtained by the two groups of students for pre- test and post-test was the *T test* for nonequivalent groups. In this regard, Fisher (1987), points out that the *T test* is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups.

3.7. The Research Findings

The research results derived in two important aspects. The first aspect was that the results from the CG in the pre-test were seemingly better compared to the EG. The mean for the CG was (μ=90) meanwhile the mean for the EG was (μ= 76.38); which represented a difference of 13.62. The independent-samples t-test conducted to compare the performance of the EG and the CG in the pre-test PET, resulted in a significant difference measuring on a value of 0.002 and 0.005. Hence, the results suggest that the CG showed a better performance on the pre-test PET as displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

T-test for equal variance groups in the PET pre-test

	Experimental Group	Control Group
Mean	76.38888889	90
Variance	160.5218855	70.70707071
Observations	12	12
Variance grouping	115.6144781	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	22	
T Stat	-3.10072387	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002608141	
t Critical one-tail	1.717144374	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.005216282	
t Critical two-tail	2.073873068	

The second aspect to highlight is that after applying the treatment, which consisted of implementing eight teaching and assessment strategies intended to develop students' communicative competence, the scores gathered by the EG increased. When comparing the mean results by the EG in the pre-test, (μ=76.38), and the results of the post-test, (μ=93.05), it was observed that there was a difference of 16.69 after the EG sustained treatment application. (see table 2). Moreover, the independent-samples t-test conducted to compare the global scores of the

EG in the pre-test and post-test PET showed a highly significant difference up to P = 0.000 (See

Table 2). Hence, the results suggest that the strategies applied to participants had a positive impact

on developing their communicative competence in three aspects: discourse management,

interactive communication, and global achievement dimensions. Data on T-test for equal variance

groups is as follows:

Table 2

T-test for equal variance groups in the PET pre-test and the post-test of the EG

	Global score in the Pre-test	Global score in the post-test
Mean	76.38888889	93.05555556
Variance	160.5218855	13.04713805
Observations	12	12
Variance grouping	86.78451178	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	22	
t-Stat	-4.382311682	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.00011856	
t Critical one-tail	1.717144374	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000237119	
t Critical two-tail	2.073873068	

A closer analysis also revealed that the EG presented changes after sustaining treatment in

each of the three dimensions examined in the test (see figure 1). For instance, in the pre-test

participants obtained a score of 3.5, out of 5.0 in grammar and vocabulary. This indicated that

students had a margin for improvement when properly conveying statements during the pre-test.

These results were different after the treatment as they obtained a score of 4.25, which means

students felt more secure, and conveyed more accurate sentences. Meanwhile, on the discourse

management, participants rendered 3.83, out of 5.0. Once the treatment was applied, EG

participants improved on discourse management by showing better interaction with others as they

scored 5 in the post-test. Besides that, in the interactive communication, they got 3.92, out of 5.0.

This indicated that most of the students had difficulties to express ideas in novel conversations during breakout room sessions. The results on interactive communication were different in the post-test as they got a score of 5, which leads to conclude that students conveyed ideas in a more fluent and confident manner. A comparison of dimensions of communicative competence on pre-test and post-test environments is shown on Figure 1.

Figure 1

Comparison of the dimensions of communicative competence of the pre-test and post-test of the EG
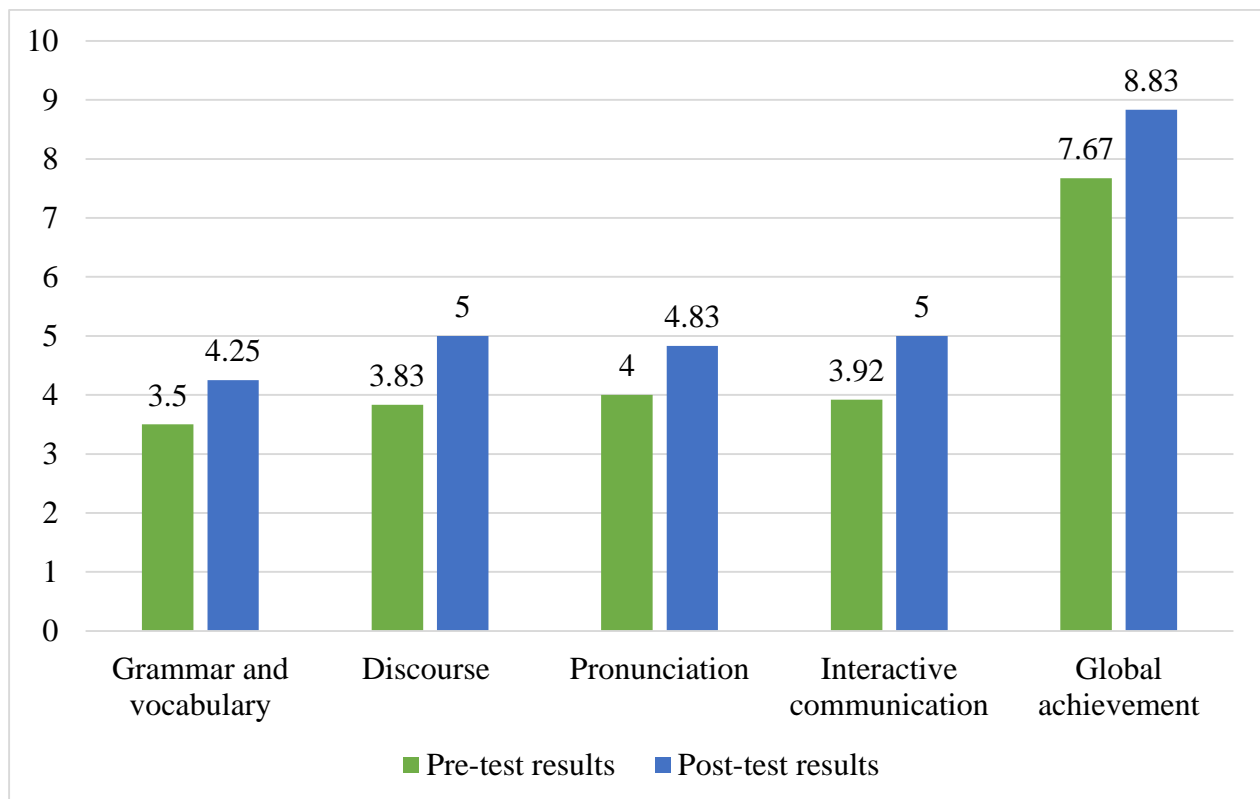
In conclusion, the analysis revealed that the Experimental group outweighed the Control group in post-test environments by the fact that the mean for the EG was (μ=93.05) meanwhile the CG got a mean of (μ= 86.94); which represented a difference of 6.11 (see Table 3). The independent-samples t-test conducted to compare the performance of the EG and the CG in the

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post-test PET resulted in a significant difference because the value of P resulted in 0.02. Hence, the results suggest that the EG showed a better performance on the post-test PET after the treatment was applied. The T-test for equal variance groups is shown on Table 3.

Table 3

T-test for equal variance groups in the post-test of the EG and the CG

	Global score of the EG in the post-test	Global score of the CG in the post-test
Mean	93.05555556	86.94444444
Variance	13.04713805	83.75420875
Observations	12	12
Variance grouping	48.4006734	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
Df	22	
t-Stat	2.151642446	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.021331725	
t Critical one-tail	1.717144374	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.04266345	
t Critical two-tail	2.073873068	

3.8. Basis for the Proposal of Solution

Considering that the transformation of educational practices can be made from different areas such as: educational models, curricular designs and models, school curricula, lesson planning (Soriano 2020), this proposal is committed to make a difference in the class planning, so that it will directly influence the educational practices of educators. The proposal of working with facilitators may bring benefits to the teacher community by the fact that teachers are the ones who plan and carry out the learning process. The basis of this proposal is the result of a quasi-experiment conducted on students enrolled on a B1+ English language course during the second semester of 2020. The quasi-experiment found positive outcomes in the language proficiency of participants after a set of teaching and assessment strategies were applied by the professor. A needs analysis

survey was also conducted on Faculty prior to treatment of EC (See Annex 2) to identify training areas.

3.9. Curricular Activities

To elaborate the curricula for the professional development course, some actions were carried out. The first step was to conduct a Needs and Assessment survey to stakeholders. The stakeholders were ten skillful professionals who have experience working with the competency-based approach. For collecting the information, a Need Assessment and Analysis survey was sent to the ten teachers. Once, the answers were gathered a list of learning goals and outcomes were identified. The next step was to work on the development of the intended outcome of the training course. Once the intended outcome was stablished, there was a selection of training areas. The next step would comprise the competencies and achievement indicators to work on the training course. Then, the curricular map, that includes the learning units to be delivered on the teacher training was developed. Finally, the assessment and evaluation strategies were designed.

4. Proposal of Solution

This chapter presents a proposal of solution to classroom situations identified on students and teachers of an English language B1+ Course at *Universidad Don Bosco*. This proposal describes the intended outcome for the teachers who accomplish the professional development course, the training areas being offered, the competencies to be developed, as well as the achievement indicators for the development of the competencies. Besides that, it shows the achievement indicators' distribution during the training course hours. Moreover, it includes the learning units to be developed during the training course. Finally, it describes the assessment and evaluation strategies.

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**DEVELOPING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCY:
A CURRICULAR DESIGN FOR TEACHERS
TRAINING**

**CURRICULIST:
MONICA LUDIVINA SALMERON REYES**

4.1. Training Project Description

Title of the training project:	**Boosting B1+ students' speaking skills under the competency-based approach**
Level:	A professional development course addressed to teachers in order to boost students' speaking skills applying the competency-based approach
Target audience:	This proposal is intended to English teachers of B1+ at the School of Languages at *Universidad Don Bosco*
Duration of the course:	8 weeks
Number of working hours:	32 hours (4 hours per week, 1 hour of synchronous session and 3 hours of asynchronous tasks)
Curriculist in charge of the curriculum design	Mónica Ludivina Salmerón Reyes

4.2. Intended Outcome

Upon completion of the professional development course to boost students' speaking skills, B1+ teachers from the School of Languages at *Universidad Don Bosco* will transform the learning classroom experiences of students at this level by applying teaching and assessment strategies that enhance the communicative competence and by promoting students' autonomy on their learning process reshaping them into active agents.

4.3. Training areas

Training areas	Description of the training areas
Planning the students' learning process	Teachers will plan the students' learning process by applying teaching strategies that enhance the development of the students' communicative competence.
Designing evaluations activities using formative assessment strategies	Teachers will design evaluation activities using formative assessment strategies to

	assess learning outcomes of the communicative competence of the B1+ students.

4.4. Competencies

- Plan learning processes applying teaching strategies to enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence, promoting students' autonomy, and active learning roles

- Design evaluation activities using formative assessment strategies to assess learning outcomes of the communicative competence, using the principles of the competency-based approach

4.5. Achievement Indicators

Knowing to know

- Classify teaching strategies to boost the communicative competence of B1+ students

- Select teaching strategies for designing learning experiences that enhance the development of the communicative competence in a gradual process

- Distinguish the difference between assessment and evaluation

Knowing to do

- Create a handbook with a set of teaching strategies that can be applied in different moments of the learning process

- Plan formative assessment promoting students' autonomy

- Create a portfolio of evaluation activities which are mainly based on formative assessment strategies that enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence

Knowing to be

- Demonstrate awareness of their role to transform the learning process by using teaching and assessment strategies to boost students' communicative competence

- Cooperate with colleagues on designing a portfolio of evaluation activities that are based on formative assessment strategies

- Provide appropriate feedback by valuing students' autonomy on their learning process

4.6. Curricular Map

Competency	Achievement indicators	Learning area	Duration
1. Plan learning processes applying teaching strategies to enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence, promoting students' autonomy, and active learning roles	1.1 Classify teaching strategies to boost the communicative competence of B1+ students 1.2 Select teaching strategies for designing learning experiences that enhance the development of the communicative competence in a gradual process 1.3 Create a handbook with a set of teaching strategies that can be applied in different moments of the learning process 1.4 Demonstrate awareness of their role to transform the learning process by using teaching and formative assessment strategies to boost students' communicative competence.	Module I Teaching strategies to boost the communicative competence	16 hours

2. Design evaluation activities using formative assessment strategies to assess learning outcomes of the communicative competence, using the principles of the competency-based approach.	2.1 Distinguish the difference between assessment and evaluation. 2. 2 Plan formative assessment promoting students' autonomy. 2.3 Create a portfolio of evaluation activities applying assessment strategies that enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence. 2.4 Cooperate with colleagues on designing a portfolio about evaluation activities using formative assessment strategies. 2.5 Provide appropriate feedback by valuing students' autonomy on their learning process	Module II Formative assessment strategies to assess learning outcomes	16 horas

4.7. Learning Units

Module I:	Competency:
Teaching strategies to boost the communicative competence	Plan the learning process applying teaching strategies to enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence, promoting students' autonomy and active learning roles
Achievement indicators:	Learning unit:

1.1 Classify teaching strategies to boost the communicative competence of B1+ students	Unit 1 Teaching strategies
	  - What are teaching strategies?
	  - Teaching strategies classification
	       1. Cognitive strategies definition and examples

	2. Metacognitive strategies definition and examples
	3. Social strategies definition and examples
	4. Affective strategies definition and examples
	- Defining the communicative competence

1.2 Select teaching strategies for designing learning experiences that enhance the development of the communicative competence in a gradual process	Unit 2 Designing learning experiences - Understanding principles to decide on teaching strategies - What elements should a lesson plan have in order to create meaningful learning experiences?

1.3 Create a handbook with a set of teaching strategies that can be applied in different moments of the learning process 1.4 Demonstrate awareness of their role to transform the learning process by using teaching and assessment strategies to boost students' communicative competence	Unit 3 Designing a teaching strategies handbook - Examining a set of teaching strategies - role plays, simulations, pictures descriptions, storytelling, debates, pictures storytelling, interviews, and comics strips - Selecting the elements for a teaching strategies handbook

Module II: Formative assessment strategies to assess learning outcomes	Competency Design evaluation activities using formative assessment strategies to assess learning outcomes of the communicative competence, using the principles of the competency-based approach.

Achievement indicators: 2.1 Distinguish the difference between assessment and evaluation.	Learning unit: Unit 1 Assessment under the competency-based approach - Do assessment and evaluation mean the same? - Assessment and evaluation differences

2.5 Provide appropriate feedback by valuing students' autonomy on their learning process	- Formative and summative assessment differences - Feedback as a powerful learning tool What kind of feedback will best benefit learners? - Working on self-assessment - Reflecting on assessment under the competency-based approach

2. 2 Plan formative assessment promoting students' autonomy
 	
2.3 Create a portfolio of evaluation activities applying formative assessment strategies that enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence
 	
2.4 Cooperate with colleagues on designing a portfolio about evaluation activities that are based on formative assessment strategies
	Unit 2 Designing formative assessment strategies
	
	- Reflecting on assessment
	  Defining learning outcomes
	  What should students do by the end of the program?
	  What should be evaluated or assessed?
	  When should evaluation and assessment occur?
	- Designing authentic assessments

4.8 Methodological Strategies

This professional development course is an e-learning training, scheduled on synchronous and asynchronous sessions for eight weeks. Each participant will read articles, watch videos, and study interactive presentations related to the content assigned for the unit. They will also participate in forums to share their understanding of the material provided. During the one-hour synchronous session, participants will have the opportunity to socialize their knowledge and experience through debates, breakout rooms, and reflective participation. Feedback will have a constant role as the moderator will provide feedback and comments on assignments and work progress.

4.8. Evaluation Strategies

Unit	Learning evidence	Stated outcome	Instruments	Assessment methodology	Percentage %
Unit 3 Designing a teaching strategies handbook	A handbook with a set of teaching strategies	Determine the suitable teaching strategies that can be applied in different moments of the learning process	Rubric	Pair work	40 %
Unit 2 Designing formative assessment strategies	A portfolio of evaluation activities using assessment strategies	Create evaluations activities that are based on formative assessment strategies that enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence	Rubric	Group work	40%
	Self-evaluation and co-evaluation	Experience self-evaluation and co-evaluation instruments to value their significance in the learning process.	e-survey	Individual	20%

4.9. Evidence 1: Design a handbook with a set of teaching strategies

4.10.1. Description

At the end of module I, the participants will compile a set of teaching strategies intended to

enhance the communicative competence of the students who will attend B1+ course. The handbook

will consist of 10 teaching strategies. Each strategy will have its definition, how to use it, what

moment or moments of the learning process it is used for, and it will include an application

example. Participants will work in pairs and will design their handbook using an online tool such

as *canvas, genially, linoit*, so on; so that the final product can be shared in social networks with other colleagues. The final product must be designed following the APA 7th edition standards. The participants should also revise the accuracy and spelling of the final product. The assessment process will serve for both purposes, first to evidence their progress with the two advances of the assignment and second, to model how to provide feedback. The final product will be evaluated as follows:

Assessment percentage: 40%

4.10.2. Rubric for the teaching strategies handbook

Criteria	Level of achievement			
	Exemplary (10-9)	Proficient (8-7)	Intermediate (6-5)	Novice (4 and less)
Domain of the Content **40%**	For each strategy, it explains in detail and refers to author citations the following information: what it is, how it is developed, what moment it is used for and it includes one application example of a designed implementation	For each strategy, it describes what it is, how it is developed, what it is used for, and presents one case as an implementation example	For each strategy, a superficial description of the following criteria is included: what it is, how it is developed, how it is used for, and present an implementation example	For each strategy, unclear consideration of the following criteria is included: what it is, how it is developed, what it is used for, and it misses including one example of implementation
Presentation **20%**	Presented in a creative electronic format and with public access; the evidence is organized according to didactic criteria, clear and precise information, free of spelling errors	Presented in electronic, creative format; the evidence is organized according to didactic criteria, clear and precise information, free of spelling errors	Presented in electronic format somehow creative; the evidence is presented without following didactic criteria; the information is unclear and imprecise, finding 2-4 spelling errors	Presented in electronic format, lacking of a creative format, without didactic presentation criteria, the information is unclear and inaccurate. More than 5 spelling errors were found

Sources 20%	All 5 citations referred to come from reliable sources such as: academic articles, electronic journals and books. Citations follow APA 7th edition guidelines	Use at least 4 sources like: academic articles, magazines, and books. At least 4 of the citations follow APA 7th Edition guidelines	Use at least 2 sources like: academic articles, magazines, and books. At least 2 of the citations follow APA 7th edition guidelines	Use at least 2 sources like: academic articles, magazines, and books for your citations. Citations fail to follow APA 7th edition guidelines
Punctuation, accuracy and spelling 20%	All sentences start with capital letters and end with a period. The use of commas, semicolons is appropriate. It is well written free of spelling and typing errors	Most, but not all, sentences start with capital letters and end with a period. Sometimes it uses commas, semicolons when needed. Most of the words are well spelled; however, not all words	Some of the sentences begin with a lowercase letter and end without a period. Use commas or semicolons when they are not needed, Some of the words have spelling or typing errors	Most sentences start with a lowercase letter and end without a period. Always use commas or semicolons inappropriately. Most of the words have spelling or typing errors
Total score				

4.10. Evidence 2: A portfolio of evaluations activities that are based on assessment strategies

4.11.1. Description

At the end of module II, the participants will compile a set of evaluations activities that are mainly based on formative assessment strategies that enhance the acquisition of the communicative competence of the students who will take a B1+ subject. The portfolio will include five evaluation activities and their corresponding assessment strategies with the following details: definition, steps to design, and an application example. Participants will work in groups and will design their portfolio using an electronic tool; so that the final product can be shared with other colleagues. The final product must be designed following the APA 7th edition standards. The participants should also revise the accuracy and spelling of the final product. The participants will hand- in two

advances; in which they will receive feedback to improve or continuing with their assignment. The final grade will be assigned on the third delivery of assigned work.

Assessment percentage: 40%

4.11.2. Rubrics for the portfolio of evaluation activities using formative assessment strategies

Criteria	Level of achievement			
	Exemplary (10-9)	Proficient (8-7)	Intermediate (6-5)	Novice (4 and less)
Domain of the Content 40%	Present for each evaluation activity that is based on assessment strategy its definition, steps to be designed, and an application example, providing clear content and research support	Present for each evaluation activity that is based on assessment strategy its definition, steps to be designed, and an application example, providing some content and some research support	Present for each evaluation activity that is based on assessment strategy its definition, steps to be designed, and an application example, providing superficial content and little research support	Present for each evaluation activity that is based on assessment strategy its definition, unclear steps to be designed, and an application example, providing unclear content and without research support
Presentation 20%	Presented in creative electronic format and with public access; the evidence is organized according to didactic criteria, clear and precise information, free of spelling errors	Presented in creative electronic format; the evidence is organized according to didactic criteria, some clear and precise information, free of spelling errors	Presented in electronic format, with little creativity, the evidence is presented without following didactic criteria, the information is unclear and imprecise, finding 2-4 spelling errors	Presented in electronic format, lacking of a creative format, without didactic presentation criteria, the information is unclear and inaccurate. More than 5 spelling errors were found
Sources 20%	All 5 citations referred to come from reliable sources such as: academic articles, electronic	Use at least 4 sources like: academic articles, magazines, and books. At least 4 of the citations	Use at least 2 sources like: academic articles, magazines, and books. At least 2 of the citations	Use at least 2 sources like: academic articles, magazines, and books. Citations fail to follow

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	journals, and books. Citations follow APA 7th edition guidelines.	follow APA 7th Edition guidelines.	follow APA 7th edition guidelines.	APA 7th edition guidelines.
Punctuation, accuracy and spelling 20%	All sentences start with capital letters and end with a period. Use commas, semicolons appropriately. It is well written free of spelling and typing errors.	Most, but not all, sentences start with capital letters and end with a period. Sometimes it uses commas, semicolons when needed. Most of the words are well spelled and have a few spelling or typing errors	Some of the sentences begin with a lowercase letter and end without a period. Use commas or semicolons when they are not needed, Some of the words have spelling or typing errors.	Most sentences start with a lowercase letter and end without a period. Always use commas or semicolons inappropriately. Most of the words have spelling or typing errors.
Total score				

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

1. Currently, in El Salvador seven universities offer undergraduate programs of English as a foreign language using different methods such as the Communicative Approach and Competency-based Approach. *Universidad Don Bosco* offers two English majors under the competency-based approach intended to develop communicative competence. However, after having conducted a diagnostic research with 24 students enrolled in the two undergraduate majors, *Licenciatura en Idiomas con Especialidad en la Adquisición de Lenguas Extranjeras* and *Licenciatura en Idiomas con Especialidad en Turismo* at *Universidad Don Bosco*, it was found that students were not fully developing their communicative competence under the competency-based approach.

2. On a diagnostic research on students enrolled at a   B1+ language course, it was found that students had not fully developed their communicative competences as they showed low proficiency on three dimensions of the communicative competence. An experimental treatment was applied, thus leading to significant positive changes in communicative domains.

3. The competency-based approach provides learners with the necessary abilities to face and solve real-life situations (Richards, 2006). Hence, understanding and applying what the competency-based approach means is essential for EFL professors at *Universidad Don Bosco* to provide quality and meaningful learning experiences.

5.2. Recommendations

1. It is recommended that professors who work with B1+ subject at *Universidad Don Bosco* take the professional development course to boost students' speaking skills, so that, through the completion of this training course, professors will transform the learning classroom experiences by applying teaching and assessment strategies that enhance the communicative competence and by promoting students' autonomy reshaping them into active agents of their learning process.

2. It is recommended to implement constant coaching and training sessions on EFL practicum among faculty at the School of Languages at *Universidad Don Bosco* for better enhancing knowledge and expertise on planning meaningful learning experiences under the competency-based approach.

3. It is recommended to the School of languages at *Universidad Don Bosco* to schedule a series of in-classroom research on practicum effectivity with the aim of identifying successful practices oriented on real-life meaningful scenarios for language students.

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Annex 1 Teaching and assessment strategies used in the treatment phase with the EG

Teaching strategy	Definition	How to use the strategy
1. *Role play*	According to Rodríguez, (2007) a role play is "the representation of a real or an imaginary situation to show an issue or relevant information based on the course's contents" In role plays, students use the language in an authentic way, taking roles in a real-life or hypothetical scenario.	• First, select a situation and explain it to students. Then, select / assign the roles and give time to the participants to get prepared • Second, read the rubrics or give the instructions to the ones who will give feedback • Third, set the scenario and perform the situation • Fourth, evaluate and provide feedback (positive and negative aspects)
2. *Describing pictures*	According to Pratiwi & Ayu (2020), describing picture is useful for training students' imagination and retell story in speaking English. With this strategy, students apply sentences with structures to describe photographs, images, drawings in real contexts.	• First, prepare a set of pictures according to the topic or material of subject. • Second, divide students in groups, ask them to write the vocabularies based on • the result of their examined the picture • Third, every group make sentences and writes on the whiteboard. • Fourth, every group describes their picture by speaking in front of the class.
3. *Storytelling*	According to Isbell (2002) storytelling promotes expressive language development in oral and written form that present new vocabulary and complex language.	There are many forms to use this strategy, the succeeding are just some examples. • Set the topic and ask students to get in groups. Give them an amount of time to participate and share their stories. • Ask students to get a sheet, then, ask students to add some details. Ask students to pass the paper and continue adding details. After some rounds ask them to get in groups and narrate the story created in the paper.
4. *Debate*	Krieger (2005) defines debates as: an excellent activity for language learning because it engages students in a variety of cognitive and linguistic ways (p. 25).	• First, select an issue and create the groups, in favor and against. • Second, set the guidelines on how the debate will be handled. • Third, assign roles to students, speaker 1, speaker 2, a moderator, a time regulator.

	In debates students express their ideas using appropriate expressions, respecting others' opinions through dialogue.	• Fourth, develop the debate.
5. *Picture narrating*	Jabbarova (2020) suggest that picture narrating is a strategy based on presenting several sequential pictures to students, with the intention of promoting speaking skills, socialization and fluency.	• Ask students to tell a story by using sequential pictures, they can use their imagination and include as much details as possible.
6. *Simulations*	Jones (1983) stated that simulation is "an activity which is a 'classroom copy' or 'model' of real life events.	This strategy required the following steps to be used. 1.Select an issue or topic to be developed. Prepare in advance, knowing what you want your students to accomplish. 2. Monitor that students understand the process. 3. Stablish what elements to assess. 4. Provide appropriate feedback.
7. *Interviews (questions and ansnwers)*	Jabbarova (2020) suggest that this strategy consist of conducting interviews with people. This gives students a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in class but also outside and helps them becoming socialized.	These are some steps to conduct this activity. Establish the guidelines to follow in the activity. • Ask students to work in pairs or groups to create the questions for their interviews. • Then, perform the interviews and gather the results. • Analyze and deliver the results gathered to the class.
8. *Comics strips*	According to Snyder, (1997)This strategy is "an open-ended dramatic narrative about a recurring set of characters told in a series of drawings, often including dialogue in balloons and a narrative text, published serially in newspapers"	There are different scenarios where comics strips can be used e.g.: 1. Writing activity: Provide students with pre-designed comic strip with missing panels and ask them to fill in the blanks to complete the story. 2. Speaking activity:

		Ask students to act out comics they created. Similarly, you can involve students in oral discussions about the content of the comics.
Assessment strategies	**Definition**	**How to use the strategy**
1.Think-pair-share	As stated by Usman (2015) think-pair-share is a strategy designed to provide students to think a given topic by enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with another student. It is a collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem.	This strategy requires students to think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and share ideas with classmates.
2. 3-2-1 strategy	It is a strategy that helps students structure their responses to a text, film, or lesson by asking them to describe three things.	Ask students to reflect on what they have learned by responding to the following prompt at the end of the lesson: 3) things they learned from your lesson. 2) questions they want to know more about; and 1) thing they enjoyed.
3. Exit ticket/exit slips	As claimed by Marzano (2012) exit ticket is a formative strategy that offers easy, quick, and informative assessments that help encourage student connections to content, self-reflection, and a purpose for future learning.	This is an easy strategy to apply. First, students write in response to a specific prompt for a short period of time. Second, Teachers collect their responses as a "ticket out the door" to check for students' understanding of a concept taught.
4. Pencil formative assessment	The paper-pencil formative assessment strategy includes questions to answer, topics to address through paragraph responses, problems to solve, etc.	First, students respond individually to short, pencil–paper formative assessments of skills and knowledge taught in the lesson. Second, the teacher collects assessment results to monitor individual student progress and to inform future instruction.
5. Do and Don't T chart	This is a formative strategy where students fill two charts, the do and don't This strategy makes student reflect and	To use this strategy, students list what they know, and reflect on what they do not know as well. They share this T chart with their classmates. Students are not usually aware of what they do not know.

	identify what they really learn during the lesson. The goal is to gain insight as to what they do and don't know about the topic.	
6. 30-second Share	With this strategy, students take a turn to report something learned in a lesson for up to 30 seconds each.	Follow these steps to successfully use this strategy: 1. Students take some seconds to answer individually what they learned in class. 2. students look for a partner and share for 30 seconds what they learned in the class.
7. The whiteboard	This formative strategy consists of writing simple ideas by the end of a lesson. This strategy helps teachers to easily grasp student understanding and reflect on the coming lessons' adjustments.	Students can use their whiteboard, tablet, or an app such as: *padlet, linoit, poll everywhere* to answer or provide information by writing their ideas and raising their boards or postings so that the teacher can read them.
8. A peer assessment	As claimed by Boud et al. (1999) Peer assessment is described as an essential part of collaborative learning since students exercise their ability to give and receive feedback.	There are various ways to provide peer assessment. • By checking aspects on a rubric after having done an activity and providing oral feedback to your peer. • By filling in a matrix, as a way of reflexion on your classmates' performance.

B1 Preliminary Test (PET)
Speaking Test

Part 1

Instructions: Work with a partner. Talk at a normal pace. Provide factual information as you ask and answer the following questions.

Part I Questions

What's your name?
And what's your surname?
And how do you spell that?
Where do you come from?
What do you do / study?
Do you like your work / studies?
Who do you like going on holiday with?
Where did you go on your best holiday?
What is your favorite time of the year?
Tell me something about your family.
Tell me something about your hobbies.

Part II one minute

Instructions: Work with a classmate. Select a picture below. Look at the actions and guess as many situations that you think are taking place. Exchange ideas for at least one minute.

Part 3

In this part of the Speaking test, say a guess about what the man could do on his day off.

A young man works very hard at his office. He has a day off during the week. Look at the pictures and say a guess about what the man could do on his day off.

Activities to help the man relax

Part IV
Based on the previous task, talk to a classmate and   answer the following questions:

What do you do when you want to relax?

Is it useful to learn new skills in your free time?

Do you prefer to relax alone or with friends?

Do you think people spend too much time working/studying these days?

UNIVERSIDAD DON BOSCO
VICERRECTORÍA DE ESTUDIOS DE POSTGRADO

MAESTRIA EN GESTIÓN DEL CURRÍCULUM, DIDÁCTICA Y EVALUACIÓN POR COMPETENCIAS.

Needs assessment survey to collect data for the project Curricular Design for Teaching Training on the Competency-Based Language Teaching Approach

Subject: English B1+

Competency: Demonstrates the proper use of language skills to perform communicative tasks and functions belonging to the B1+ level of English.

This survey is aimed to teachers who have experienced working under the Competency-Based Approach.

1. Based on your experience, what elements are fundamental to implement the Competency-Based Language Teaching Approach?
_____

2. What are some issues you have faced when teaching by using the Competency-Based Language Teaching Approach?
_____

3. Based on your experience, what are some teaching strategies that you put into practice in your classes for boosting your students' communicative competence?
_____

4. What are some of the challenges that you have faced when deciding on teaching strategies aimed to develop the communicative competence on your students?
_____

5. Based on your experience, what are some useful assessment strategies that you have used during your classes?
_____

6. How do you consider the assessment system in an English B1+ subject should be?
_____