

Methodology Supported by ICT to Contribute to the Development of Language Competence in the Process of Learning English as a Foreign Language at the Pre-University Level



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SUMMARY: The general objective of the study is to develop a methodology with the integration of technology for the development of linguistic competence in the learning process of the English language, as a foreign language at the pre-university level of the Dominican educational system, and thus positively influence compliance. of the objectives foreseen in the curricular design (linguistic level B2)

For the fulfillment of the proposed objectives, the various scientific methods of theoretical, empirical and statistical-mathematical research are used. For data collection, two questionnaires addressed to teachers were used to publicize the methodologies that are implemented for the development of linguistic skills in the teaching of English as a foreign language at pre-university levels, generating a scientific contribution for its contribution and improvement. .

The results obtained from the research indicate a group satisfaction index by teachers of 0.9, thanks to the strategies and their impact on the development of linguistic skills as a foreign language, taking advantage of the influence of families. Likewise, a favorable rating was obtained in the activity plan for teacher training. On the other hand, the application of focus group techniques in which the methodological conceptions and the teacher training plan are considered. Finally, recommendations are made for the strengthening of these activities and at the same time, collaborate to continue with the effectiveness of the strategies in linguistic competences.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter refers to an overview of the methodological conception that has been followed in the development of the research process. As a medium, technology provides unique ways to organize and integrate different types of sensory information and generate possibilities, which influences the development of new linguistic communication skills and therefore the creation of methodologies that take into account the characteristics of these media, advances in the field of language learning theories and approaches, and the specific environments in which the teaching-learning process takes place. In this research work, a methodology with the integration of technology is proposed to develop the linguistic skills of the English language aimed at students at the pre-university level of the Liceo Morayma Veloz de Báez educational center.

LICEO MORAYMA VELOZ DE BÁEZ EDUCATIONAL CENTER

The Educational Center Prof., Morayma Veloz De Báez is specifically located in the municipality of Bayaguana, in the sector called Puerta Blanca. The educational center is public and has a medium-low socioeconomic stratum, it was founded in 1980 and has a faculty of 30 teachers and 20 people for teaching and administrative support, it also has a student enrollment of 800 students. This center covers grades from 1st to 4th grade. high school Since 1998 the center has taught English as a foreign language at all levels.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INSTITUTION

- Promote the cultivation and practice of values, especially self-discipline, respect and love of nature, through the convergent action of the entire community.

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- Develop the linguistic skills of the English language at a B1 level.
- Strengthen the interest in research as an essential requirement to fulfill tasks and self-educate throughout life.
- Promote the development of critical, creative and friendly thinking.
- Create the conditions for the members of the educational community to communicate and interact.
- Develop the skills required by the secondary level.

The faculty is made up of education professionals, all graduates

Table 1. List of staff working at the Moray V. de Baez Lyceum

Secondary Education (Baccalaureate)	teachers	Not Teachers	directors	Total
	28	4	4	36
Total	28	4	4	36

Source: Annual Center Project

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE METHODOLOGY

In a very general way, it is proposed that methodology is what links theory with practice. According to the 2016 Grand Dictionary of the Spanish Language, Larousse Editorial, SL, defines methodology as an organizational system, a set of methods or organizational principles that underlie the arts, sciences or a particular area of study.

Niño (2011) points out that in Research Methodology, such a term is used to designate the outline, scheme, prototype or model that indicates the decisions, steps and activities to be carried out to carry out an investigation.

Puerta (2011) conceives it as the general strategy that the researcher assumes to respond to the problem posed.

Sabino (2007) defines it as a theoretical-practical model through which we confront theoretical approaches with empirical facts.

Tamayo (2001) points out that this implies a structure to follow in the investigation, on which the necessary controls have been exercised in order to find reliable results and also determine their relationship with the questions arising from the assumptions and hypotheses and from the issue.

Hernández (1991) for whom it means that the strategy is conceived with the purpose of giving answers to the research questions or to confirm or not the hypotheses raised.

If you refer to the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy, Methodology is defined as: Science of the method. Set of methods that are followed in a scientific investigation or in a doctrinal exposition. And referring to Method as: the set of ordered steps.

These theories are linked to the design characteristics of the teaching-learning process in foreign languages (objectives, contents, types of activities, role of the teacher, role of the students, teaching materials, etc.). The characteristics of the instructional design are linked in turn with the teaching-learning practices in specific teaching-learning environments. This complex of interrelated elements defines a language teaching methodology.

In this regard, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages states that "...when a foreign language is learned, the linguistic and cultural competences with respect to each language are modified through knowledge of the other language and contribute to creating an awareness , skills and intercultural capacities. They allow the individual to develop a richer and more complex personality, and improve the capacity for subsequent language learning and openness to new cultural experiences" (Council of Europe, 2002, p. 47).

To **speak** , the student must know how to plan and organize a message, formulate a linguistic statement and articulate a statement.

To **write** , the student must know how to organize and formulate the message and write the text. To **listen** , the student must know how to perceive the statement, identify the message, understand the message and interpret the message. To **read** , the student must be able to perceive the written text, recognize the writing, identify the message, understand the message and interpret the message".

essence of technology integration is learning, and technology is a means of supporting the teaching process. Technology is only the vehicle for pedagogy in the body of a software, therefore, the conception that supports the design of the software is what allows any device to perform its interactive role.

Generally, in the teaching-learning of foreign languages, the appearance of new media has brought with it the development of new methodologies (e-books and e-dictionaries- grammar-translation method; radios and recorders- audio-lingual method; television that integrated audio and visual aspects - communicative approaches, suggestopedia, approaches through Tasks etc.).

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The objective of this research is the elaboration of a methodology that is supported by technology for the development of linguistic competences in the English language learning process, aimed at pre-university students of the Morayma Veloz de Baez public educational center in Bayaguana. It is considered an integrating methodology because it takes into account the following characteristics in its conception:

- Elective focus on the theoretical foundation.
- Design and adaptation of didactic materials that include, with different degrees of depth, the components of communicative competence for its development at different levels.
- Mixed learning environment that integrates communication tools, teaching materials with a high level of interactivity, a Virtual Resource Center to support the development of a teaching-learning process with specific objectives, with face-to-face activities that address the different components of communicative competence.
- Integration of skills and development of the different components of communicative competence.

A first level that integrates three central axes : a theoretical conception with a communicative approach that contemplates elements of the historical-cultural approach, the Theory of Assimilation of a Second Language and Language Learning supported by Communication and Information Technologies integration and from which the general characteristics that the English language learning process must have with integration to technology are defined and the essential characteristics of the English language class are modeled through them; a process of **evaluation, selection and classification of resources and teaching materials** that will be made available to students for the development of language skills and as a third axis the structuring of **the learning environment** in which the learning process will be carried out through the use of these technologies. For the implementation of the experimental phase of this methodology, the intersection between synchrony and ICT was used, focused on face-to-face educational environments with the support of multimedia materials. In the general application of the project, a semi-face-to-face course (**COLIMPI ENGLISH CLASS**) will be used, which will be planned through the GoogleClassroom platform. The second level of integration of the methodology is how these three axes are applied in a COLIMPI ENGLISH CLASS course through GoogleClassroom designed with specific objectives and that takes into account all the elements designed in the first level of integration.

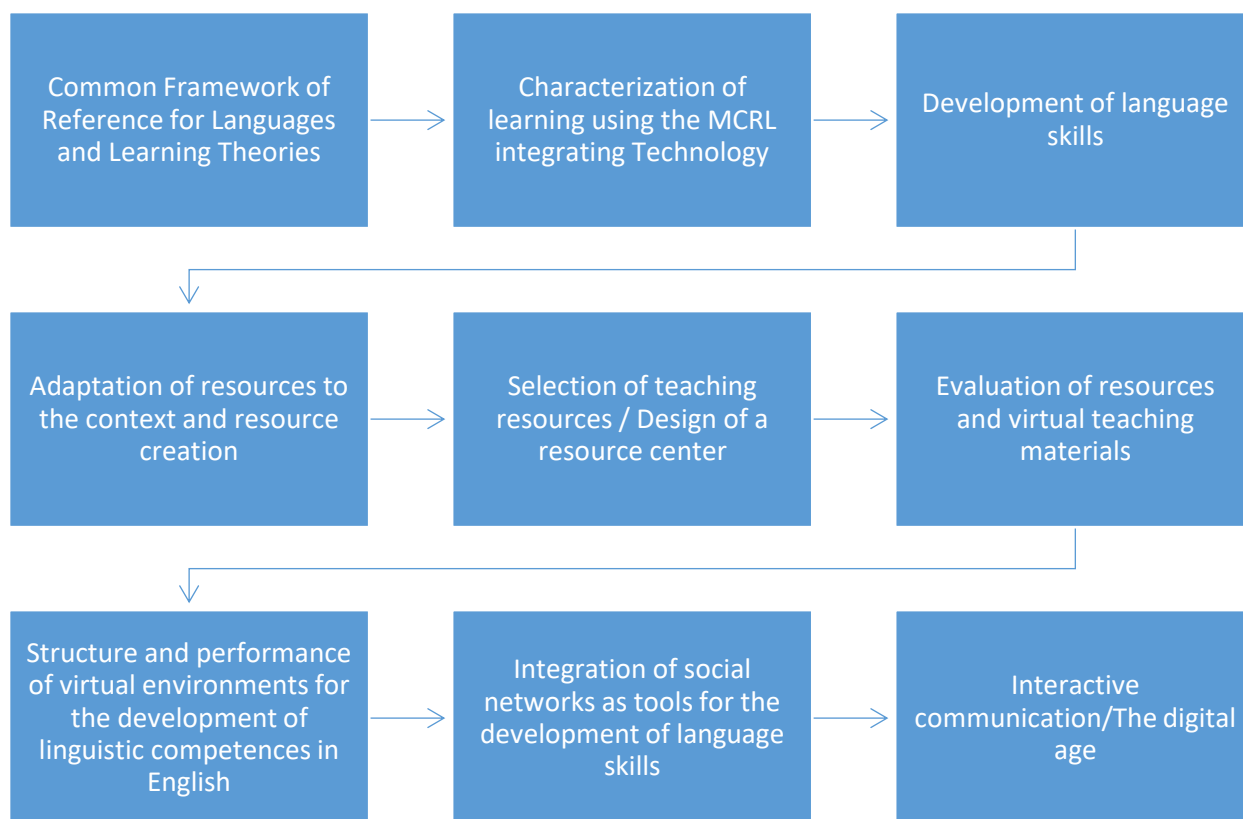


Figure 2.1. General outline of the methodology adapted from Morayma Veloz de Báez

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Characterization of the Development of English Language Skills using *Olimpi English Class* through *Googleclassroom*

The expectation of new conventions for the teaching of English as a foreign language has grown in recent decades, however for the Dominican Republic these changes in the public education sector have not been very significant, since it has not had a merely scientific approach. nor socio-cultural, for this reason reaching a point where the teaching methodology can meet the needs of our students is one of the main goals of this project, and one of the ways to achieve a significant improvement in the teaching methodology for the development of language skills is the implementation of technology focused on the use of the Web as a source of information, collaboration, interaction and communication in students and their environment, both educational and social.

The Horizon 2017 report, as in previous years, identifies six key trends, six significant challenges, and six important developments in educational technology. This corresponds to the fundamental objective of this research, which takes into account the characteristics of institutionalized learning, interaction between a subject who learns and his environment, by which the knowledge and skills of that subject are modified and with it the ability to perform tasks and non-institutionalized learning where there is no guide who teaches; on the contrary, the learner uses his observations and his will to access knowledge (Johnson et al., 2017).

COLIMPI ENGLISH CLASS It is designed from the *GoogleClassroom platform*, which is a free access platform, which makes it easier for the student to make it available, as well as for the teacher to plan classes through this tool, as well as promoting collaboration between students, facilitating the communication with the teacher. This methodology favors the simultaneous interaction of several agents in the teaching-learning process, and places the teacher as a monitor of the students, letting them learn on their own with the sole monitoring of the teachers. It also offers a very flexible training for the students since they will not only work in the classroom, but also work from home in collaboration with the other students.

To carry out communicative tasks, students of English as a foreign language (EFL) have to carry out activities of a communicative nature and put into operation communication strategies. Many communicative activities, such as conversation and correspondence, are interactive, that is, the participants alternate as producers and receivers. In other cases, such as when speech is recorded or broadcast or when texts are sent for publication, the senders are remote from the receivers, whom they may not even know and who cannot respond to them. That is, the communicative act can be considered as the act of speaking, writing, listening or reading a text.

Practice opportunities depend on the task system used in the teaching-learning process. The greater the students' participation in the communicative interaction that the task fosters, the better the opportunities they will have for practice in a communicative class.

Opportunities for student receptivity are increased if the atmosphere provides a suitable environment for a sense of progress and effectiveness in learning, emotional security and personal growth, high self-esteem, a positive orientation towards the language studied, and adequate motivation to learn. . The class must be a model of cognition for the student and its effectiveness depends a lot on whether the reality of the cognitive processes that are developed in the student is recognized. There are three recognized phases in the cognitive act, these are: "approach to the problem", "action on the problem" and "reflection on the problem". The result of the cognitive act leads to the formation of knowledge, skills and experiences and values. Every class of English as a foreign language pursues the same structure in a foreign language, that is, it follows the universal scheme of any cognitive activity, which consists of three steps:

- 1) Introduction (to motivate learning)
- 2) Core Activity (to organize learning)
- 3) Conclusion (*follow-up*, to motivate more learning)

Structure of a Modern English Class

In the proposed methodology, the structure of the English class is assumed in three moments. This type of structure allows the development of linguistic competence in the student, which is put into operation with the performance of different language activities. involving **understanding**, expression , interaction , or **mediation** (specifically, interpreting or translating). Each of these types of activities is made possible in relation to texts in oral or written form, or both. As processes, **comprehension** and **expression** (oral and, where appropriate, written) are obviously primary, since both are necessary for interaction.

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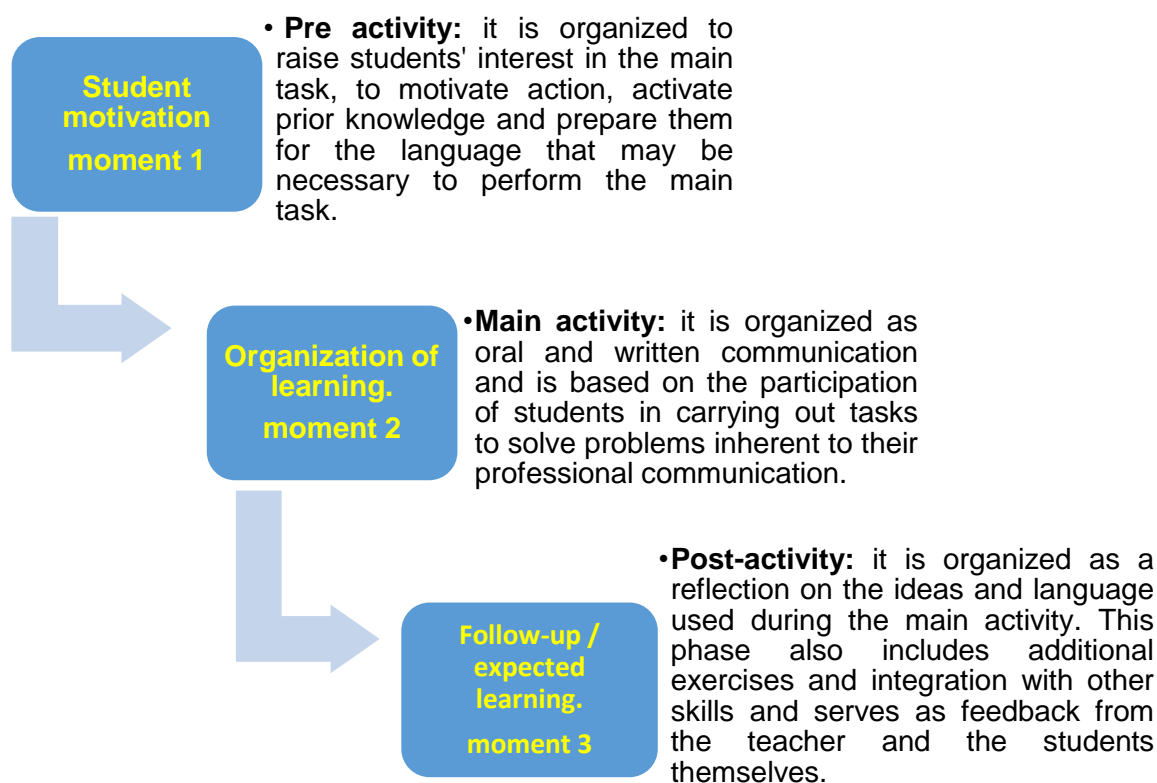


Figure 2.2. Moments in which the English class is organized

This type of structure allows the development of linguistic competence in the student, which is put into operation with the performance of different language activities. involving **understanding**, expression , interaction , or **mediation** (specifically, interpreting or translating). Each of these types of activities is made possible in relation to texts in oral or written form, or both. As processes, **comprehension** and **expression** (oral and, where appropriate, written) are obviously primary, since both are necessary for interaction.

Use of this structure includes silent reading and attention to the media. They are also important in many forms of learning (understanding the content of a course and consulting manuals, reference works and documents). Expression activities play an important role in many academic and professional fields (oral presentations, studies and written reports) and are given a certain social value (the assessments made of what has been presented in writing or of the fluency in the articulation of oral presentations).

The teaching service through the network can be carried out through the different *asynchronous communication tools* (v.gr. email, discussion forum and FAQ) and *synchronous* (v.gr. chat, videoconference and digital whiteboard) that the platforms of *E-learning* usually incorporate. Among the former, e-mail stands out, as it is the most widespread means of tutoring over the Internet. The arrival of Web 3.0 in the Dominican Republic brought with it new methodological training needs for teachers in the public education system, including the commitment to a pedagogical model based on a student-centered teaching-learning paradigm and the that teachers change their role to become cognitive companions, going from being a transmitter of knowledge to a facilitator of it. In this way, the functions of the teacher are adjusted to the new needs and potentialities around him and where he ceases to be seen as the main source of information, since now all this information is easily accessible through Web 2.0. Thus, in this new model, students cease to be mere receivers of content to play an active role in the teaching-learning process, participating, collaborating, exchanging experiences with their classmates and building their own knowledge (García, 2016).

Evaluation of the Teaching Resources Available on the Web

The evolution of the Web demands the continuous advancement of skills in students and the flexibility of educational institutions to respond to new trends, coming from lifelong learning (*LifeLongLearning; LLL*). *Web 2.0 favors access to lifelong learning, but* the integration contained in the proposed methodology, as a result of research, focused on the development of linguistic skills in

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English as a foreign language, contemplates new ways of organizing the entry and treatment to learning objects and contents, as well as the adaptation of teachers to their use in teaching .

The incorporation of information and communication technologies into educational practices has caused controversies about the technological skills that teachers must achieve in the different training processes, especially due to the need to use, apply and produce resources for the web. Web 2.0 offers the teaching of English as a foreign language possibilities in the design and implementation of teaching-learning proposals as an integral part of education, which implies the adoption of new teaching methodologies that seek to enhance the cognitive development of students. and language skills.

Technology has historically affected education and affects more every day. Personalized learning and its universalization as great challenges of educational transformation, as well as the satisfaction of learning in non-cognitive skills, the acquisition of attitudes and learning by doing, demand the intensive use of technologies.

Within the context of teaching second languages, it is also important to mention that despite the fact that this is currently the underlying proposition in relation to the development of communication skills, teaching practice is conditioned by several factors such as: the "methodology of the book " that is used in classes because it is the safest way for the teacher not to move away from the contents of the study program, the nature of the exams, the teaching working conditions and the administrative factors, especially those related to time and the number of English hours (Córdoba, 2011).

In order to adequately and effectively introduce Web 2.0 in the educational field, the methods and strategies that structure the teaching-learning process must be modified, since they cannot continue to respond to the traditional expository approach. The teacher must play a role as facilitator of learning and the students must take a more active role (García, 2016). But the evaluation and the choice made of the digital tools and materials to be used in the classroom must also be modified. Given this need, e-rubrics were designed and adapted to assess the quality and suitability of digital educational resources, and at the same time offer them the opportunity to discover the didactic possibilities offered by this type of tool as a means of evaluation. . Teaching resources and materials are crucial in any computerized learning system. There are different types of resources: texts, video and audio clips, interactive simulations, software of different types and with different objectives, among others, each of which serves as a means through which the acquisition of knowledge or the development of skills is carried out. skills. In general, all the media that facilitate the process in an integral way are assumed as resources and didactic materials in this research, with common functions such as being a valuable vehicle for learning, a support for the development of learning strategies and for the elevation of student motivation (Cabero, 1990)

The evaluation of teaching resources and materials is especially important in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language, since there is an avalanche of resources and materials on the Internet with very different levels of quality and pedagogical design.

The quality of teaching resources and materials depends on many factors that have to be taken into consideration, such as:

- Informative and training content (tasks with operational objectives, grouping by skills, levels and thematic areas).
- Level of adaptation to the contents, skills and learning objectives.
- Language adequacy level, publication style.
- Organization of text, graphics, multimedia and elements of interaction between them.
- Authorship data, updating, grammatical and spelling correction.
- Quality of the audiovisual environment.

Evaluating the resources from this initial perspective allowed, in the present investigation, a more inclusive evaluation from the pedagogical and technological point of view of the resources.

Pedagogical Point of View

Based on pedagogical criteria, the evaluation of the resources aims to facilitate the choice of content that can be used in the classroom.

- Materials or resources that can be used directly in the multimedia classroom, without the need for editing or prior preparation.
- The materials can be used with some type of support from the teacher, such as, for example, the preparation of a glossary, the use of brief extracts, among others.
- Only usable by the teacher as a source of materials, since the content needs to be edited and adapted to the level of learning.
- Meta-pedagogical material for teachers of English as a foreign language.

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- Sources of extracurricular information, usable by teachers and students in the framework of tasks and projects. The teaching-learning process includes three main areas:
- **Contents:** extension, structure and depth, vocabulary, grammatical structures, examples, simulations and graphics. The contents must be significant for the students and be related to learning situations and problems of interest to them.
- **Activities :** type of interaction, duration, motivational elements, error correction and help messages, levels of difficulty, itineraries, progression and depth of the contents according to the learning carried out (pre-exams to determine the initial knowledge of the users).
- **Communication environment:** screens, navigation system, navigation map.

Technological Point of View

From the technological point of view, the evaluation of resources is given by their **effectiveness** in facilitating the achievement of learning objectives, taking into account various functional and technical aspects.

- **Ease of use and installation.** In order for the resources to be really usable, they need to be nice, easy to use and self-explanatory, so that users can use them immediately without having to read the manuals exhaustively or take long prior configuration tasks. An online **help system** will solve any doubts that may arise.
- **Versatility** (adaptation to various contexts). Another good feature of the resources, from the perspective of their functionality, is that they can be easily integrated with other teaching aids in the different training contexts.

The rubrics have normally been used as instruments and techniques for evaluation, and although as a methodology they have been applied for various objectives, levels and teaching modalities, their most widespread use has turned out to be directed towards evaluation by competencies (Montero & Cebrián, 2014), it should be noted that for the creation of educational rubrics there are dozens of applications that facilitate the creation of these in this case we use a rubric developed by the Complutense University of Madrid, which aims to evaluate and validate the digital tools used to enhance the teaching methodology for the development of the linguistic competences of the English language as a foreign language.

All these requirements are applied during the implementation process in the experimental phase, which are used with the greatest rigor, so that the application of the model yields the expected results through the *COLIMPI ENGLISH CLASS blended course*, in order to be able to determine the results and verify the viability and the innovations that this project would contribute to the public education system of the Dominican Republic. It is noteworthy that the integration of new technologies into the educational system in the teaching-learning process is of great interest to the Ministry of Education of the Dominican Republic, for the promotion of technological and scientific knowledge as established in the General Education Law 66 -97, as well as in the ten-year education plan 2008-2018 (Ministerio de Educación de la República Dominicana, 2013). Therefore, it is certain that this research will have a great impact on education in the 21st century in the Dominican Republic. Teaching resources and materials are crucial in any learning system. In fact, most of the interaction between the student and the Web, as well as the actual learning experience, takes place through these resources.

Not all teaching materials found in virtual environments for the language teaching-learning process take into account all the agents involved in the training process and have the requirements to interact in an environment of this type (hypermedia materials with possibility of different learning itineraries, consideration of learning styles and rhythms). For this reason, it is convenient to adapt to the context and design the resources that are required for the development of linguistic competences, attending to the needs of the student. That is to say, there must be a coherence of the materials with the teaching action that will be carried out, with the functionality of the environment and with the relationships that can be triggered in it. The most difficult thing is to properly use the possibilities offered by didactic materials and telematic tools to achieve a more significant learning than traditional didactic materials can facilitate.

Organization and Classification of Resources

The organization and classification of resources and teaching materials for the English language teaching-learning process that are scattered on the Internet in a CVR simplifies search tasks with the consequent saving of time for teachers and students, allowing access to the themselves through google classroom or intranet.

The Virtual Resource Center was configured as a space on the network specially designed to offer students and teachers the greatest facilities to know and use the available resources and the production of others, facilitating interaction and collaborative work. It also provides information services and facilities for collaborative work, resource management and exchange between them.

The work that is done with the resources in it includes:

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- The evaluation and validation of the resources that currently exist on the network through research and debate on each of them.
- The registration, classification, cataloging and ordering of resources.
- The selection of resources according to the needs and characteristics of the institution and users.
- The evaluation of the effectiveness of the resources used and the production of didactic materials.

In the classification of teaching resources and materials in the CVR, the following criteria were taken into account:

- **Contents** (the different speech acts that a foreign language contemplates)
- **Recipients** (criteria considered in the linguistic levels of the Common Framework of Reference for Languages, previous knowledge).
- **Structure** : tutorial (linear, both closed or open), database, simulator, tool.
- **Media that integrates** : conventional, hypertext, multimedia, hypermedia, virtual reality.
- **Educational objectives**: general, for specific purposes, for education, science and technology).
- **Socio-cognitive activities** that it activates: observation, memorization, evocation, understanding, interpretation, comparison, relationship (classification, ordering), analysis, synthesis, reasoning (deductive, inductive, critical), divergent thinking, imagination, problem solving, expression (verbal, written, graphic...), creation, exploration, experimentation, metacognitive reflection, assessment.
- **Type of interaction** that it fosters: cognitive, reconstructive, intuitive/global, constructive.
- **Error handling** : tutorial (controls the student's work and corrects it), non-tutorial.
- **Psycho-pedagogical bases** of learning: behaviorist, constructivist, cognitivist, socio-cognitivist.
- **Function in the didactic strategy** : train, instruct, inform, motivate, explore, experiment, express, communicate, entertain, evaluate.
- **Design**: learning-focused, teaching-focused.

The **descriptors** selected to facilitate the search and management of resources were the following:

Format Descriptors: Software, Video, PowerPoint Presentation, Image, Web Page, Word Document, PDF Document, Audio (Sound files: mp3, wav, midi).

Skill Descriptors: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Translation, Mixed.

Level descriptors : Beginner, Intermediate, Superior, Advanced.

Methodology descriptors: approaches, teaching-learning theories, methods, styles, strategies.

Language component descriptors : Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Phonetics and Phonology, Stylistics.

Thematic descriptors: Didactics, History of the English language, English as a global language, Lesson plans, Evaluation, Playful literature, Humour, Songs, Virtual reality games.

This research provides a wide and updated selection of websites for learning the English language with the description of its main characteristics to facilitate the work of teachers when selecting and providing resources.

Adaptation, Design of Teaching Materials and Configuration of the Teaching-Learning Environment

Many of the didactic materials found on the Internet cannot be used directly in the classroom, as they are not always adapted to the technological environment in which they are going to be used, to the specific learning objectives of the students to whom they are directed, or to a pre-established theoretical and methodological conception.

Not all teaching materials found in virtual environments for language teaching take into account all the agents involved in the training process and do not always have the requirements to interact in an environment of this type (materials with the possibility of different learning itineraries, consideration of learning styles and rhythms).

That is to say, there must be a coherence of the materials with the teaching action that will be carried out, with the functionality of the environment and with the relationships that can be triggered in it. The most difficult thing is to properly use the possibilities offered by didactic materials and telematic tools to achieve more significant learning than traditional didactic materials can facilitate. Below is a table with advantages and disadvantages of learning in that century.

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Table 2.1. Characteristics of traditional training Vs training based on communication and information technologies

Traditional Training	Training based on ICT
Part of a knowledge base and the student must adjust to it.	Allow students to go at their own pace of learning.
Teachers determine when and how students will receive instructional materials.	It is a training based on the concept of <i>training at the time it is needed (just-in-time training)</i> .
It starts from the basis that the subject passively receives knowledge to generate innovative, critical and investigative attitudes.	It allows the combination of different materials (auditory, visual and audiovisual).
It tends to rely on printed materials and the teacher as a source for presenting and structuring information.	With a single application, a greater number of students can be served.
Tends to a linear model of communication.	Knowledge is an active process of construction.
Communication basically takes place between the teacher and the student.	It tends to reduce the training time of people.
Teaching takes place preferably in groups.	It tends to be interactive, both between the participants in the process (teacher and students) and with the content.
You can prepare to develop in a time and place.	It tends to be carried out individually, without this meaning the renunciation of collaborative proposals.
It takes place at a fixed time and in specific classrooms.	It can be used in the workplace and in the time available by the student.
Tends to temporary stiffness.	It is flexible.
We have a lot of experience in its use.	There is little experience in its use.
We have many structural and organizational resources for its implementation.	We do not always have the structural and organizational resources to put it into operation.

Font: Own elaboration, based on publications by Cabero and Llorente (2013).

This methodology proposes the use of a mixed teaching-learning environment for the development of the linguistic competence of students at the pre-university level. Mixed in the sense that a virtual learning environment such as googleclassroom is integrated with the preparation of activities both online and face-to-face for the development of certain skills that are not yet achieved with the support of technology.

The incorporation of laptops and tablets as the main technological resource and the communication processes established through it allow the creation of so-called virtual teaching-learning environments.

"A virtual learning environment is made up of the means to drive or transport teaching resources and a communication strategy that allows the student-teacher and student-student relationship. The design of a learning environment on the Web is a task that goes beyond the creation of learning materials for a specific objective, since it is supported by an infrastructure to direct resources and sustain communication processes". (McLoughlin, 1998)

"A Virtual Learning Environment (EVA) is a symbolic-educational representation, based on network technology and Web support, which includes various information presentation tools, allows synchronous and asynchronous interrelation, between all components of the community educational". (Rodríguez-Ardura, 2001) "A virtual teaching/learning environment (EVE/A) is a set of computer and telematic facilities for communication and information exchange in which teaching/learning processes are developed. In an EVE /A interact, mainly teachers and students". (Gisbert and others, 1998).

EVA Characteristics

- Communicative learning environment. There is a clear consensus among researchers in this field regarding the contribution that telematic tools provide to produce communication between students based on joint work in the development of communicative tasks, focusing them more on the development of fluency and spontaneous language than on correctness or knowledge of grammatical form.
- Interactivity, which allows dialogic communication between students, between students and the teacher or tutor, as well as student-computer interaction.
- Diversity of ways to access, manipulate information and take control of the learning process becoming active participants in it.

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- Variety in the types of information displayed and in the types of interaction in which the student communicates with the system.
- Multimedia presentation of teaching materials that allows combining textual, graphic, image, animation and video representation as integrated elements that develop a skill or theme.
- Flexibility, expressive capacity and non-sequentiality in the selection and presentation of content.

It was decided to use a Web environment because it allowed the integration of tools and the development of teaching materials so that any teacher can use it without having great programming knowledge.

The Pedagogical Space

- Learning content: Multimedia content from hypertext structures. The content of the course was generated using *DreamWeaver* as the main authoring tool and using selected teaching materials in the Resource Center and in general from materials that are freely accessible on the Internet. The course was prepared as an independent unit with integrated communication tools, but in the event that there is a manager, its content can be used using the evaluation possibilities and the tools that integrate it. There is a balance between textual information and the use of other resources such as audio, video and sound, with ample possibilities for interaction within the course content itself.
- Evaluation: Diagnostic and formative evaluation tools were used, so that the student receives immediate feedback and can guide the students' activity within the learning environment.
- Communication: The communication facilities operate at several levels: one-on-one communications in personal consultations with the teacher to clarify doubts and in communications between students; one-to-many communications through readings, exercise statements, general recommendations, among others, and many-to-many communications in debates, simulations, brainstorming, among others.
- Learning monitoring: Facility built in the environment that allows the teacher to monitor the course of the student's activity in the learning material and that reports the student's performance in the environment in general.

In the field of synchronous communication tools for a foreign language such as English, there are chats, where students and the teacher can establish tutorial schedules in a "virtual room" of the course, intended for this purpose, and simultaneously exchange messages (written or sound, depending on the available equipment) that help in resolving doubts, problems, among others. The videoconference requires adapting the curricular contents to the medium; know information presentation strategies; develop and use teaching support materials and make use of appropriate teaching strategies in this environment. According to experts, preparing a class via videoconference takes three times more time than a traditional class. Both tools can be complemented with the use of the digital whiteboard, shared screens that are very useful for making demonstrations, exemplifying theories, illustrating processes, among others, with the possibility that the teacher and student can simultaneously write their contributions and discuss topics that they consider to be of interest. (Berrocso & Del Carmen, 2008).

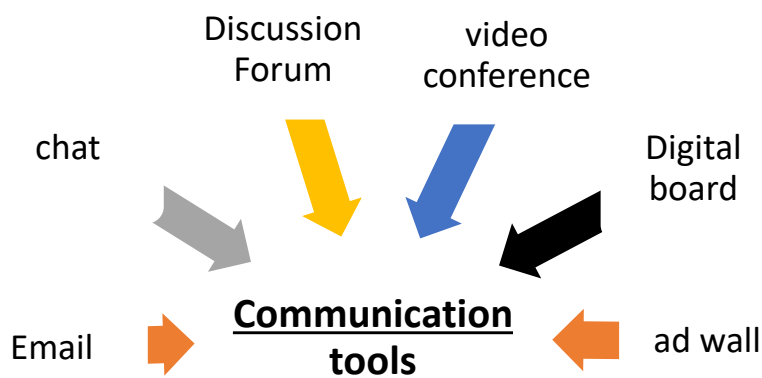


Figure 2.3. Proposal of communication tools that contemplates the methodology methodology

Another asynchronous communication tool is the discussion forum. Both the teacher and the students can send messages to the forum to make queries, clarify doubts that are either addressed to anyone in general in the course who reads the message, students, teachers, other classmates, etc., or You can specify in the message to whom the question or query is addressed. They

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constitute the ideal environment for participation in work activities, for carrying out collaborative learning activities in which each one exposes their ideas, gives their opinion, criticizes or listens to the contributions of others (Berrocoso & Del Carmen, 2008).

COLIMPI ENGLISHCLASS

semi-classroom course for the development of the linguistic competence of the English language of the students of the pre-university level

The design of the COLIMPI course is based on the theoretical conception assumed in the research that allowed the definition of the general characteristics of the teaching-learning process and of the class-type of English as a primary didactic unit, of the selection of resources and materials using *GOOGLE CLASSROOM* as a platform. This is a free educational platform where teachers and students can interact virtually, helps teachers quickly create and organize assignments, make comments efficiently, and easily communicate with their class students, who can also do their jobs virtually. It integrates Google Docs, Drive, and Gmail to help teachers create and collect paperless assignments. Also provide direct feedback in real time to each of the students.

The fundamental elements of the didactic design of the course are:

- The general objective and the specific objectives of the course.
- The space-time dimensions (modality).
- The organizational and didactic structure.
- The design and presentation of the content (system of face-to-face and online learning activities).
- The evaluation system.
- The paradigm of communication and interaction.

The **general objective** of the course is the development of the linguistic competences of the students of the pre-university level from A1 which is the lowest linguistic level to the B2 level which is the upper intermediate level of the Common Framework of Reference for Languages MRCL using technology as a tool to support learning.

The **specific objectives** of the course are aimed at students being able to:

- Understand the global and specific information of oral and written messages in the English language in the context of situations generated from multimedia resources and computer networks.
- Apply techniques to achieve a successful communication of ideas, providing information for a variety of authentic objectives, with an adequate selection of vocabulary and grammatical structures.
- Analyze, synthesize and evaluate the different types of reading materials to perform various tasks related to the professional profile through logical and critical cognitive strategies.
- Produce written messages in the various situations that are created in real life and through technology
- Reflect on the functioning of the linguistic system in communication, with real speakers (as is often the case with new technologies),
- Use autonomous learning strategies and reflect on their own learning processes.
- Develop learning autonomy impossible to achieve in the context of the traditional class, in which all students perform the same task simultaneously.
- Perform group tasks sharing the use of the same computer or through telematic communication tools.
- Access to diverse materials that constitute sources of information and exposure to authentic language that allow knowing different cultures and ways of life.
- Maintain a critical attitude towards the information accessed through networks.

The course has a modular structure . A modular structure was selected because it allows a better organization of the contents and the integration of the communication tools in it. The course integrates modules for each of the basic skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking) with a thematic module related to the professional profile of the students and that integrates all the skills. A support module was also added with grammatical materials, glossaries and dictionaries and a module for exercises and complementary practice. Access to the CVR and the communication tools is done directly from any module or activity that is being developed in it. The module was conceived as the organizational structure and basic didactic unit of the course. Although in each module emphasis is placed on the development of speech acts and the communicative functions of a foreign language, these are developed interrelated with the others in the task system.

The module as a basic didactic unit in the course has the following structure:

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The lessons are structured in such a way that there is a balance between communicative functions and grammatical and lexical forms, providing a complete input (*comprehensible input*), so that the level of challenge is always a little beyond the capacities of the students. The skills are developed within the framework of the three phases of the cognitive act: pre-activity, activity, post-activity.

The evaluation system in each module is carried out as follows:

- An online entry exam to find out the starting level of the skill or topic that will be covered in it.
- A final online exam to assess the achievement of the objective reached in the development of the skill or specific topic of the module.
- A system of face-to-face and online activities, which can be individual or group, and which combine the use of telematic communication tools (chat, forum, email and CVR), which are designed according to the specific objectives of each module to control and evaluate the evolution of the student's zone of proximal development and of which an evaluative control is carried out.
- An integrating face-to-face activity, which requires both the use of the knowledge and the skills developed in the module through role plays, debates or round tables, etc. and where communication tools are used in the preparation and analysis phases of activities.

Organization and presentation of content

The course is developed entirely in English to maximize the benefits to the student. Grammar and vocabulary are taught in the context of performing authentic listening, reading, writing, and speaking tasks. Technology is used as a tool to develop and strengthen communicative language skills in English as a foreign language.

Each of the modules is developed from the consideration of the following methodological and didactic principles:

Listening Comprehension Hearing Module

Hearing as a communicative skill . Listening activities develop in the student the ability to listen in contexts as close as possible to those of the real world, as well as to use these skills to receive information from the speech heard.

Listening to Authentic Materials . The speech for the listening activities is "authentic", that is, produced by native speakers; or produced by native speakers for teaching purposes but with all the features of natural speech in English.

Hearing as an integrated skill. Audition is rarely done for the sole purpose of listening. Generally people listen and talk, listen and read, listen and write. This is how it integrates with other communication skills.

Activities for Listening Development in the Course

Listening exercises : repeated listening with spaces to complete the heard text, click on vocabulary or grammatical structures used in the text, listen and do, draw, mark, dramatize, answer questions, infer from the text, sequence the order of the speakers, listening and matching (texts, graphs and drawings), filling in gaps in the text (closeprocedure), completing outlines, charts, selecting true or false sentences, predicting the continuation of the text, commenting on the text with personal associations, reasoning, selecting details, transferring information to a table or graph, etc.

Pre-audition activities: These are preparation activities for the audition. They can be varied tasks: the teacher offers some general information, the students can read something relevant to the audition, discuss a related topic, answer questions, write about the topic, consider the language that will be used, among others.

Audition Activities: Refers to what the students do during the audition. The goal is to help students develop the ability to extract information while listening to the text. Other tasks can be: listen to the text and decide which image represents the story, listen and complete a table, listen and select the items not mentioned from a list, listen and mark the sentences that follow the text as true or false, listen and fill in the blanks in the text, correct the printed version of the text, among others.

Post-audition activities: They are done after the audition process is complete. The most common form is the comprehension check. Another objective is to know the reason for the incomprehension of the text heard. It is also used to expand knowledge about the subject or the language of the text heard.

Oral Expression Module

Oral expression as an interactive, meaningful and informational activity: Speech is the ability to send oral messages as an integral part of oral conversation.

Teaching of the different genres of speech. There are different genres of oral conversation (typical forms of oral performance in typical settings with highly predictable characteristics): description (telling details to an active interlocutor), narration (telling the development of facts or events), reasoning (telling the development of one's own thought), identification (talking about tastes

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and preferences), language-in-action (doing things and talking), comments (opinions and points of view), service encounters (buying and selling products and services), debate and discussion (search for solutions and defense of personal points of view), learning (use of language in learning) and decision making (working on the selection of appropriate decisions).

Activities for teaching oral expression: They are organized in a framework of three phases:

Oral pre-expression: Activation of schemes and language, motivation of the speaker, preparation of the idea.

Oral expression: role plays, problem solving, storytelling, games, socializing.

Post-speaking: Reflection on the activity, emphasis on language, emphasis on ideas, integrated skills.

The pre-speaking activity is used to prepare students for the core activity. Schema activation is the use of students' prior knowledge about the topic that is relevant to the main activity. Questions, images and texts can be used for this purpose. Brainstorms are held to generate ideas in groups before the main activity. Motivation increases when the communicative problem and the ways to solve it are clear.

In the activity **during oral expression**, students solve the communicative problem and produce in the language as a result of role plays, problem solving, socialization and communicative games.

Post-speech activity provides opportunities for students to analyze the language and ideas produced, as well as ways to make communication more effective. An important part of the post-speaking activity is the development of integrated communication skills, for example, reading-speaking, listening-speaking, speaking-writing tasks, etc.

communicative exercises

For oral expression, they are organized as information transfer (extracting certain information from non-verbal forms, for example a table, a map, a graph). Another type of exercise is the completion of information (the information is directed from the person who has it to the person who lacks it) and can be in the form of a puzzle (each student has only a part of the information that is part of a whole and which must be united through oral communication).

reading module

Reading is a visual cognitive process to extract information from writing through the understanding of the written text, the processing of information and the establishment of a relationship with the existing experience.

Reading can be text-directed (the text is interesting), **task -directed (the text is read** because of the academic task facing the student), and goal-directed (the text is a step toward a goal that is out of bounds) . of the reading).

Activities for teaching reading

Pre-reading: Schema activation, motivation creation, language preparation.

Reading: Text completion, sequence of events, restoration, search for relevant and irrelevant information, matching tasks, among others.

Post-reading: Extraction of information, summaries, sharing of information.

Exercises for teaching reading: extraction (extracting information from the text by answering questions or other deduction tasks), completion procedures (filling in spaces in the text), sequencing of parts of the text (restoring the logical order of a jumbled text), match (headings or passages in the text), text restoration (restoring the text from fragments), find irrelevancies (find and delete sentences that are logically irrelevant in the text), summarize (summarize essential information from the text or several texts), comment (reader response to the text).

Writing Module

Writing is a communicative skill to send, store and retrieve information with the help of written symbols.

The process of teaching writing includes "familiarization with similar writings", "creating written discourse" and "the possibility of sharing written texts in the group".

Activities for teaching writing

Pre-writing: Activation of schemes, motivation for writing, preparation for the language, familiarization with the format of the text to be written.

Writing: Write from notes, conclude with a given sentence, write from a sentence or piece of writing, follow a plan, follow a format or record, write to state how to solve a problem.

Post-writing: Reflection on spelling and reasoning errors, possibility of sharing what is written with the group, editing with tutoring.

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2.15 Activities for teaching reading

Pre-reading: Schema activation, motivation creation, language preparation.

Reading: Text completion, sequence of events, restoration, search for relevant and irrelevant information, matching tasks, etc.

Post-reading: Extraction of information, summaries, sharing of information.

Exercises for teaching reading: extraction (extracting information from the text by answering questions or other deduction tasks), completion procedures (filling in spaces in the text), sequencing of parts of the text (restoring the logical order of a jumbled text), match (headings or passages in the text), text restoration (restoring the text from fragments), find irrelevancies (find and delete sentences that are logically irrelevant in the text), summarize (summarize essential information from the text or several texts), comment (reader response to the text).

INTERACTION AND COMMUNICATION PARADIGM

In the course, the resources allow the establishment of a participatory-communicative action, providing ample options for access to information and great simplicity in the ways of communicating interactively with the content, with the teacher and with the rest of the group.

1) The teacher selects and presents the materials, organizes the online and face-to-face activities

- ✓ Design the course content: class systems, help systems.
- ✓ Design, apply and grade exams and surveys (optional feedback).
- ✓ Select complementary materials in the CVR for the development of the activities.
- ✓ Match the online discussions to the activity topics in the lessons.

2) Students interact with the materials

- ✓ They search the content or index pages of the course.
- ✓ They consult glossaries.
- ✓ They conduct exams and interactive exercises.
- ✓ They visit external references in the CVR.
- ✓ They carry out all the interactive activities designed in the classes within the course.

3) The teacher receives the answers from the students

- ✓ Via email
- ✓ In the chat room
- ✓ In the discussion forum

4) Students interact with other students and with the teacher

- ✓ They participate in the Discussion Forum and Chat Room on selected topics.
- ✓ They read the messages of their classmates and the teacher.
- ✓ They carry out information searches in the CVR in work teams.
- ✓ They share and build resources for group presentations through the group work tools in the CVR.
- ✓ Summarize authentic information in preparation for individual and group face-to-face activities.
- ✓ They take on a different personality.

5) The teacher monitors and evaluates collaborative activities.

- ✓ Post and read messages in the Discussion Forum and Chat Room.
- ✓ Makes language corrections in all messages received through communication tools.
- ✓ Suggest supplementary materials and assignments in the CVR according to the individual difficulties of the students.
- ✓ Monitor or moderate the discussions in the integrative face-to-face activities, the chat and the forum.
- ✓ Controls (tracking) the activities developed by the students in the course (number and quality of interactions produced through participation in the forum and chat, development of activities in the lessons).
- ✓ Print chat and forum reports and correct them.

GENERAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE COURSE

In general, the course environment was designed in a friendly way that allowed students to :

- Know the general elements of the program of the subject English as a foreign language B2: description, objectives, content (system of knowledge and skills), methodology, structure or index, evaluation system, calendar.

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- Know any other information of interest for the development of the course
- Know your level of initial development of skills (diagnostic tests).
- Communicate with the professor for doubts and suggestions about the course.
- Engage with other students to share and discuss ideas and learning tasks in pairs or groups.
- Have access to supplemental materials or links to resources available outside of the course.
- Save your coursework and assignments in your personal or group folder, as well as post your work for other students and the teacher to see.
- Ask and find answers to your questions and concerns in the course.

In the course teachers can

- Access student folders to view their work.
- Publish information or links of interest to students.
- Communicate and interact synchronously or asynchronously with all students in the course to answer questions and offer assistance.
- Follow the student's performance throughout the course to assess the development of their communicative competence and their general participation.
- Define the entry level of students to the course.
- Answer the most frequently asked questions by students about the course.
- Communicate synchronously or asynchronously with all students.
- Evaluate the execution of the tasks in the modules.

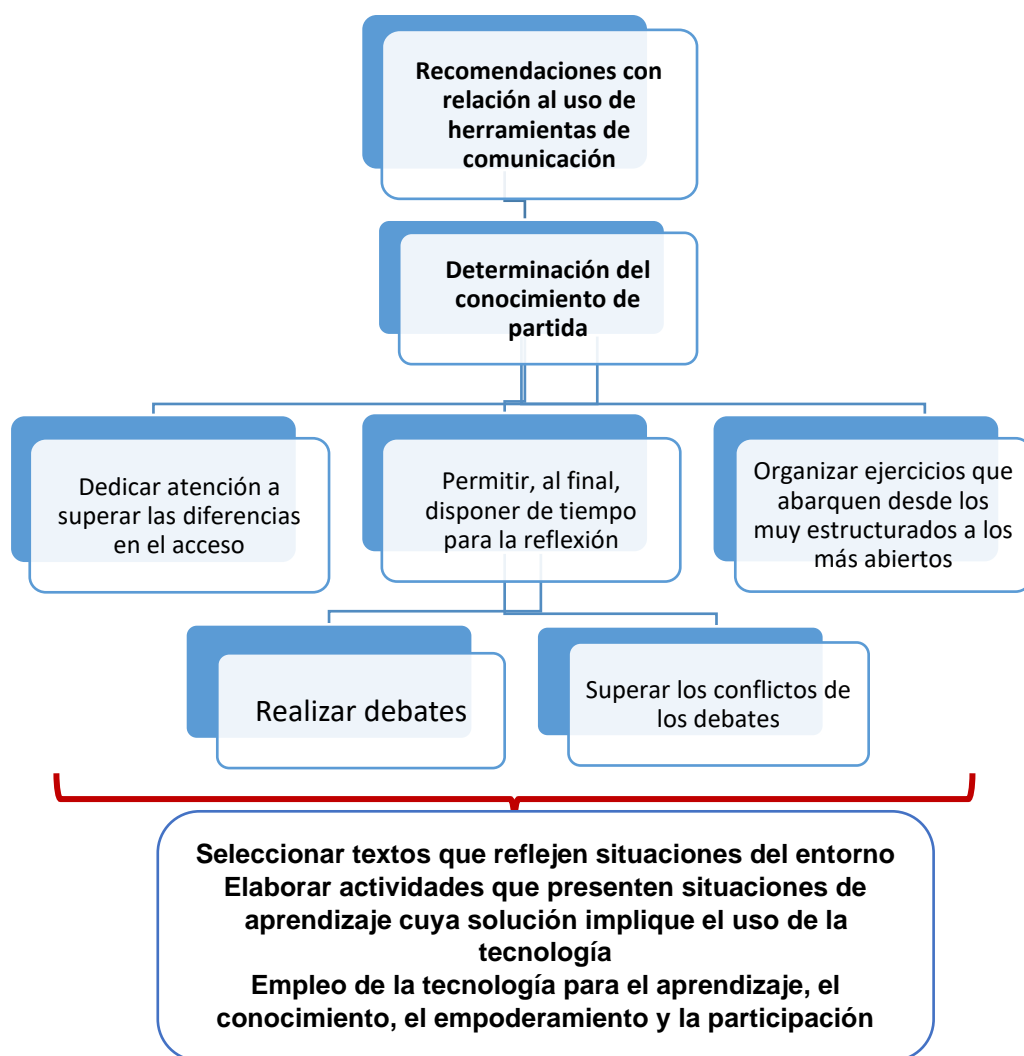


Figure 2.3. General scheme of the methodology for the development of linguistic competence in the process of learning English as a foreign language with the integration of technology

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➤ Aspects on the functioning of the methodology

- ✓ **Overcome differences in access.** For the purpose of forming a community and for the purpose of effective collaboration it is very important that students have access as similar as possible to the shared conversation. Students who make contact online later than others are faced with an established community where they find it more difficult to engage in ongoing learning experiences. It would be better for everyone to start together.
- ✓ **Overcome the conflicts of the debates.** Since the groups that are formed can be very heterogeneous, the first priority should be to build a sense of community through carefully structured exercises in which the starting differences between the students are not so obvious.
- ✓ **Organize exercises ranging from highly structured to more open.** It is advisable to offer maximum structure and support at the beginning of the educational experience, to gradually move towards greater freedom and student-centered learning at the end of the course.
- ✓ **Allow time for reflection at the end.** It is advisable to dedicate a specific period of time, for example at the end of the course (it could be the last week), for a discussion of what has been learned and how it has been learned. This period could also provide feedback on the effectiveness of different aspects of the course.
- ✓ **Discussion.** Provide an environment for social interaction in which people feel at home. The main difficulties in the development of these experiences occur in the field of the social dimension. This does not mean that other factors, such as software design or access, are less important, but their effect on course success is mediated by the social process of forming and supporting a collaborative learning community.
- ✓ **Guarantee** the use of technology for learning, knowledge, empowerment, and participation.

THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS

Generating, analyzing and understanding the configurations of environments for online teaching and learning necessarily implies recognizing their enormous intrinsic complexity, associated with the range of uses of these technologies, their diversity and the heterogeneity of criteria used to describe and classify them. (Sánchez & Coll, 2010).

As elements that are taken into account in the virtual environment, based on the work of Sánchez & Coll (2010), they are:

- 1) The preparation of the technological resources to be used: computers, computer networks, information support and format, platforms, content management systems, virtual classrooms, institutional repository, among others.
- 2) The use of educational tools and resources such as: multimedia materials, videoconferencing, simulations, electronic boards, email, mailing lists, newsgroups, instant messaging, among others.
- 3) The synchronous or asynchronous nature of the interactions.
- 4) Keep in mind the educational aims and objectives that are pursued and the conceptions of learning and teaching on which they are based.

It can be seen that teachers are increasingly advancing in the process of integrating new technologies in their classes, but this progress is sporadic, gradual and unstructured. They find it difficult to determine a finished format that brings together the characteristics and advantages of blended learning. In the Dominican Republic, specifically in the public education sector, a blended learning modality, also known as blended learning, has not been implemented, or blended learning, fundamentally due to teachers' weaknesses in working in this environment, the lack of adequate educational resources for work, and the existence of few tools to guide work in the aforementioned educational modality.

With the insertion of ICTs in training processes, the teaching activity begins to become more technical, however face-to-face practices in virtual environments also began to be reproduced, even teachers sometimes limited ICTs only to the use of computers and the Internet in the classroom. classroom, without proposing a change in roles, skills or expectations of the training process (Caicedo, Alzate, & Avello, 2014)

That is why the use of ICT in education does not necessarily promote the development of skills, learning or knowledge; This is only achieved if there is a didactic and pedagogical orientation that guides the work of teachers and students in the development of the educational teaching process with the support of ICT. For this reason, in the present investigation, a methodology based on ICT is developed to contribute to the development of linguistic competence in the process of learning English as a foreign language at the pre- university level .

According to Marín, Vázquez, Llorente and Cabero (2012), Learning and Knowledge Technologies (**TAC**) are introduced as a redirection of ICT that focuses more on **training** than on information, on **knowledge** as a result of training processes. collaborative,

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in virtual environments that facilitate the sharing of materials and feedback in the learning process (Marín, Vázquez, Llorente, & Cabero, 2012).

With the appearance of TACs, important improvements are achieved in virtual education platforms, in educational resources and in learning objects, which contributes to improving the quality of the teaching processes that are offered with the use of technologies (Pinto, Díaz, & Alfaro, 2016). This helps that the uses given to technology are not only to ensure mastery of a series of computer tools.

ICTs and TACs are complemented by empowerment and participation technologies (TEP), which are technologies that facilitate collaboration in an environment of interaction, reflection and joint construction of learning (Vidal, Martínez, Nolla, & Vialart, 2015). With TEPs, knowledge is contextualized, which makes it adapt to the training needs of the participants. The author of this research has taken into account this evolution in the proposed methodology for the transition from ICT to TAC, and from these to TEP, which makes it necessary to adequately prepare teachers to have greater skills to better use technology and educational materials to better prepare students

Therefore, the configuration of the virtual environment is a topic of high priority for this research since it helps the development of the relationship between students, teachers, teaching materials and the strategies used for the development of the teaching-learning process of the language. English as a foreign language, as well as the enhancement of linguistic skills in the area. For this, it is essential to prepare teachers in the use of Web 2.0 so that they can offer their students learning opportunities supported by Web 2.0, to use them and to know how they can help student learning.

Educational environments configured from ICT can be analyzed by crossing two axes related to the distinctions between synchronous and asynchronous (Coll, 2010), on the one hand, and between information technologies and communication technologies.

CONCLUSIONS

- The realization of transformations in the educational teaching process, which includes changes in the pedagogical conceptions and the educational practices that are proposed as a result of the developed research, are basic in the use of technology for the development of linguistic competences in the English language from early ages
- The integration of technology in the proposal is specified in a methodology that achieves an interaction between the specific didactics in the teaching-learning process of the English language in pre-university, ICT and modern techniques of management and use of information and knowledge.
- The teaching methodology oriented to the teaching of the English language in pre-university corresponds to the current trends offered by the scientific literature, which constitutes a high priority for pre-university education in the Dominican Republic.
- The proposed methodology constitutes an important instrument to guide teachers in their preparation, because as it was verified in the investigation there are many deficiencies in this sense, with which they will be better prepared to develop linguistic competences in pre-university students, which is essential. . The plan of activities proposed in chapter 3 responds to this need.

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