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LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH A PARTICIPATORY AND COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENT IN STUDENTS FROM RURAL SCHOOLS

**IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING THE CARE AND
MANAGEMENT OF THE VOICE OF THE TEACHERS OF THE
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AT THE REGIONAL UNIVERSITY
CENTER OF COCLÉ YEAR 2023**

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Learning English through a Participatory and Collaborative Environment in Students from Rural Schools

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ABSTRACT

The present work covers the teaching and learning of English through the stimulation of a participatory and collaborative environment. Its main objective is the implementation of a strategy that enhances the learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) by creating the environment above mentioned. The paper explores the levels of participation and collaboration in English lessons by means of a diagnostic study that includes students from Eight Year of E.G.B to Third Year of B.G.U. and teachers of English. Effective techniques to develop such type of learning are also discussed. The results derived of the application of the strategy are debated as well.

Keywords: collaborative, english, strategy

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RESUMEN

El presente trabajo abarca la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del inglés a través de la estimulación de un entorno participativo y colaborativo. Su objetivo principal es la implementación de una estrategia que potencie el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) mediante la creación del entorno antes mencionado. El artículo explora los niveles de participación y colaboración en las clases de inglés mediante un estudio diagnóstico que incluye estudiantes de octavo año de E.G.B. a tercer año de B.G.U. y profesores de inglés. También se discuten técnicas efectivas para desarrollar este tipo de aprendizaje. También se debaten los resultados derivados de la aplicación de la estrategia.

Palabras clave: colaborativo, inglés, estrategia

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INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign language at present, in particular English, has become a social need for all individuals. The 21st Century has brought a rapid and continuous development in all spheres of human activity. It has witnessed a significant increase of technological and scientific contributions that have radically been inserted and transformed humanity. It is practically impossible to succeed in this modern world without being aware of the every-day information that is produced and disseminated.

The previous facts demand the use of a common language for the mutual understanding of individuals and the access to updated sources of information containing the description and explanation of such advances. On this respect, English appears to be this mutual language. Ilyosovna (2020) refers that it is spoken as a first language for over 350 people. The author also states that such language is viewed as a second one for more than 430 persons. Such issues have raised English to the status of an international language (also recognized as lingua franca). This rank is due to its ample use in a significant number of human activities such as medicine, internet, diplomacy, aviation, tourism, science among others.

Consequently, mastering English is crucial for the insertion of any person in this highly competitive modern world. Though the acquisition of this communicative competence passes, first of all, for the personal interests of each individual, it is also a responsibility to all educational institutions to offer possibilities and access to the study of English and in doing so, use proper strategies to facilitate the learning of this language.

As part of this process, and also as a result of the development reached in the 21st Century, collaboration among people is essential. This social ability is nowadays one of the most productive sources to generate not only new knowledge, but also manners of interaction that promote respect, tolerance, acceptance and help. Therefore, one productive way to learn English and develop educative influences on students is the creation of a collaborative environment through which all learners have the chance of participating and playing a decisive role in obtaining common goals.

The bases for the creation of this environment relies on the fundamentals of collaborative learning (CL). Yang (2023) considers that this kind of learning is a challenge since it becomes not a simple transmission of knowledge from teachers to students but a social process in which all subjects work together. It is a mutual interaction among participants to give solution to a problem (ibídem).



Warsah et al (2021) recognizes that CL has had impacts on critical thinking skills in different subjects of study. They focus their work on examining the impact of CL in those skills while addressing Islamic culture. Such work reflects that the use of this type of learning is ample and diverse and that can be used for educational purposes. Chowdhury (2021) has also studied the topic related to CL. The author highlights its usefulness for fostering learners' autonomy during the teaching-learning process. In this work, it also emphasized the point that CL promotes interaction among a learning group within which all its members are responsible for their own learning while accepting and appreciating their classmates' skills and contributions.

In the particular way of the teaching-learning process of EFL, the application of CL is widely present. Srinivas (2019) reveals the importance of CL for the learning of English and illustrates the best practices for using it in a classroom. He also offers tips for teachers and students for the implementation of such learning. Abdel-Al Ibrahim (2023) examines how CL impacts on reading anxiety, reading motivation, and reading comprehension of Iranian as EFL learners. He uses a preliminary and a post test to determine the influence of CL on the aspects above mentioned. The results show positive outcomes on the students who received the influence of CL-based instruction.

Purnomo et al (2023) also cover the use of CL in foreign language teaching. They focus on the teaching and learning of grammar through different phases. The results of the study concluded that students involved in CL are more active and enthusiastic than the others that did not have the influence of such kind of learning.

The analyses presented in previous pages show that CL has a significant role in the teaching-learning process in general. Its application covers diverse subjects of study and has proved to be a useful tool to promote participation and academic improvement.

The use of CL, therefore, in the teaching of EFL is not an exception of the above mentioned. The bibliographical review shows that it is applied in numerous areas of foreign language learning. Among those sections, the teaching of formal aspects of English as well as the development of the sub-competencies of the communicative competence have received the benefits of CL.



The present research explores the use of CL to create a favorable environment for the learning of English in students from rural schools in Chone. A preliminary exploration about the level of communicative competence of those students shows that they do not reach the expected levels conceived in the official syllabus. One of the aspects that emerges as cause is the insufficient use of CL as a pedagogical alternative that involves students in participatory and active performance in the lessons. It is also noticed that teachers of English from those schools have limited resources to put into practice the fundamentals of CL to enhance the learning of this language in their particular professional environment.

The situation described above leads to the establishment of the pedagogical need of providing a new strategy sustained in CL that promotes a more participatory and active role of the students during the process of foreign language learning. The scientific idea to defend is the following: the implementation of a strategy based on CL will contribute to the improvement of the learning of EFL in students of rural schools in Chone.

The sample is formed by 25 students from 8th year of E.G.B to 3rd year of B.G.U. Such sample comprises 13 female subjects and 12 male ones. Four teachers of English who directly interact with those students were also participants of the research.

The proposal included in this work contextualizes the scientific results related to the topic to the particular context of rural schools. Students from those schools usually do not have all optimal conditions, either material or associated to human resources, to learn English. These facts demand that, whenever possible, they should receive the influence of pedagogical tools which with a minimum of resources facilitate their learning process.

The investigation takes place in the Unidad Educativa 26 de septiembre in Chone Cantón. It is viable since it has been approved by the officials of such institution.

Literature Review

In general terms, CL is considered as an interactive learning environment in which students learn from each other by means of sharing ideas, taking collective decisions and maintaining a constant communication among them (Strebe, 2018). According to Lee (2014), it demands students' participation and interaction in groups, not only to learn a certain content but also to manage their social relations.



From the previous sources, it can be deduced that creating a CL environment increases the potentialities for learning faster than working individually since learners are exposed to different perspectives about the same problem. This gives them the opportunity to critically analyze the situation under discussion, take their own position and confront it with the rest of the members of the group. This activates regulatory mechanisms of the personality of the students in terms of respecting others' opinions, accepting different perspectives about the same issue and using a flexible and strategic communication. The previous assertion is sustained by Bell & Kozlowski (2010) who argue that social interaction is key in CL. Qureshi (2021) claims that such interaction brings about cognitive changes from which all students profit.

Though CL is usually associated to a face-to-face interaction, the development of technology and the challenges brought by specific situations (like COVID-19) has opened new doors for the application of this kind of learning. Studies developed by authors like Pozzi, Manganello and Persico (2023) reveal that CL is used by Italian teachers in different ways: face-to-face, blended settings as well as online environments. This is an aspect to be taken into consideration since the use of computer collaborative learning can become a motivating factor to develop students' interactions. The extensive use of Internet, the possibilities to access it and the devotion which students of any age pay to this technological achievement are factors to be considered while using CL.

The use of CL has been widely introduced in foreign language lessons. In the specific case of English, Noor Aileen et al. (2016) propose a model of CL to be applied in English classrooms in Malaysia. They sustain that while using CL students do not feel isolated or alone since they receive social support during the learning process. They add that students share and work towards a common goal and consequently are empowered and motivated not only about their own learning but also about their peers'. Melek (2018) investigates students' and teachers' position towards the use of CL in English lessons. The results show a positive disposition on the students to work on groups. On the contrary, teachers feel reluctant to use such type of learning due to the problems that arise in relation to classroom management and the amount of noise that is produce.

The results above mentioned confirm that students sense that working with their peers is a positive influence for them to learn better and establish social relations with the other members of their class.



The outcomes obtained from teachers reveal an existing authoritarian position (still prevalent in some environments) for the development of their lessons. Though it is fact that CL may bring noise, movement and up to certain extend disorganization in a class, a well-planned set of activities and proper orientations may control students' interaction. The teachers' role is to mediate the process of learning more than creating an exhaustive climate of disciplinary control. Updated approaches related to foreign language teaching consider that interaction and participation in the class bring more positive influences than negative ones.

The suitability of CL for teaching EFL is also demonstrated by Alahdal (2019). His paper explores the effectiveness of CL in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia. His findings, collected from students and teachers, expose that both students and teachers believe that CL is one of the best approaches for learning a foreign language.

One element that has had a direct impact in learning is the use of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Digital development has had a profound effect in everyone's life. Such progress has radically changed the way in which students communicate. They are an online population, network users through computers, TV and mobile phones (Baloul, 2023). The previous study reveals that ICT play a vital role for supporting CL (ibídem). His outcomes also demonstrate that the implementation of ICT in the classroom promotes a better language performance and enriches learner's vocabulary. Lipponen (2002) substantiates that ICT, in particular computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL), enriches peer interaction and group work. The author also affirms that technology, along with collaboration, facilitates distribution of knowledge and expertise among the members of a learning community (ibídem).

The integral analysis of the sources included in this paper sustain that CL is a particular way of social interaction from which learners profit during the process of learning EFL. The participants involved in this environment usually engage more actively and pursue not only individual goals but also common objectives as members of a class.

The nature of language learning itself demands such kind of interaction. The development of the communicative competence in EFL requires that learners take a central role in the process. The exchange of information, the filling-in of fact gaps, the presentation and questioning of points of view



imply collaborative work. Students, then, learn not only from the inputs they get from their teacher and classmates but also from the achievements and difficulties of their peers. Accordingly, the creation of a collaborative environment in the class brings countless opportunities for practicing the foreign language. Anxiety and fear to make mistakes are reduced since confidence and respect are gained in CL situations.

METHODOLOGY

The research is of a mixed character since it combines qualitative and quantitative research methods. It is also an applied investigation because it explores a practical problem that emerges from the teaching-learning process of EFL in the context of rural schools in Chone, Manabí.

The point of departure is a bibliographical review of specialized sources related to CL, in general, and those associated to such type of learning in the teaching and learning of EFL. The review establishes the fundamentals of the present investigation.

After this, an exploration about the current state of art of the use of CL in English lessons in rural schools in Chone was developed. The sample consisted of 25 students from Eight Year of E.G.B to Third Year of B.G.U out of a population of 205 participants. It also included 4 teachers. Such sample was selected at random in order to give all subjects equal opportunities to participate in the study and guarantee an objective collection of information.

Data collection was carried out by means of the following methods: a survey (Annex 1) directed to evaluate the motivation of students to develop learn English in a collaborative environment and the type of interaction that prevails among students while doing the activities oriented by teachers. A survey was also applied to teachers (Annex 2). It focused on determining the level of knowledge they had in relation to CL. It also studied what methods, techniques and procedures they use to favor CL in their lessons. This very same survey collected information about the training teachers have received in relation to CL. The third method used for data collection was the application of an observation guide to 7 English lessons. It provided information about the motivation of students to develop CL activities and the pedagogical tools used by teachers to favor CL in their lessons. The results derived from these observations also served to contrast the opinions gathered by means of the two surveys previously applied.



After analyzing all the results collected, a strategy was elaborated to offer a pedagogical solution to the difficulties found during the exploratory study. Such strategy is based on the use of CL to foster the learning of EFL in a participatory environment. The preliminary criteria about the validity and actual possibilities of implementation of the strategy were obtained by means of the application of a pre and a post test to the sample selected. On this sense, 12 students received the influence of the strategy and the other 13 were assumed as a control group to compare the outcomes derived from the application of the strategy.

RESULTS

The results derived from the application of the survey to students are the first ones processed. The analysis of them appears below.

Table 1
Survey Applied to Students (questions 1-5)

Questions	Data collected
Q. 1 Importance of English	23/25 (92%) Yes. The most relevant argument for the positive answers is based on the productivity of English to get a job and live somewhere else. 2/25 (8%) No.
Q.2 Type of interaction that prevails in English lessons	20/25 (80%) Individual work 5/25 (20%) Pair work
Q.3 Preference to learn English	15/25 (60%) Individual Work 10/25 (40%) Pair work
Q.4 Systematic interaction with peers to learn English	16/25 (64%) systematic interaction is irrelevant to learn English. Such number of students argues that individual study makes them feel more comfortable and proficient. 9/25 (36%) believe that such interaction may be profitable for them
Q.5 Possibilities of CL to improve students' learning	5/25 (20%) Yes 6/25 (24%) No 14/25 (56%) Sometimes

The results described in Question 1 evidence that students support their viewpoints from a very practical perspective. From this, it can be inferred that students' aspirations is to find new living and working contexts instead of those existing in the community in which they live at present. Though learning English brings this opportunity, other aspects, as cultural development and respect to diversity are not among the goals of such learners.



The integral analysis of the results of this survey leads to conclude that students are not frequently exposed to opportunities to work in a collaborative environment. As a consequence, they do not assume that CL is an alternative to improve their command of the English language.

The results of the survey applied to teachers reveal that they consider that CL may help their students to learn English better (all teachers agree with that idea). They assume that such environment is good for exchanging ideas and knowledge. They all also respond that CL may favor a positive group dynamics. However, their answers are limited to essential aspects of CL such as exchange of ideas and knowledge. Though that is an important factor, other fundamentals of CL are obviated. No reference to establishment of social relations, self-regulation, common and mutual responsibilities, taking collective decisions and maintaining assertive communicative were provided.

In relation to what pedagogical tools they use in their lessons to promote a CL environment, all four teachers assure that they prefer pair work since working in groups may be disrupted in their lessons. As it was analyzed during the Literature Review, this is one aspect that may affect the use of CL in the classroom. However, that is not a sufficient argument to disregard group work and other organizations for creating a CL environment. Proper planning and design of activities may help to overcome such possible disruptions.

Finally, all teachers expose that the training they have on using CL in their lessons is basically empirical. They agree that they have not been involved in any official training about the topic.

The results obtained by means of the observations to English lessons are summarized in Table 2. In general terms, the results observed in the pedagogical practice are consistent with the regularities reached in both, the survey applied to students and the one developed with the teachers of English.

Table 2
Results Derived from the Observations Carried Out

Indicators for Observation	Data collected
Frequency of use of CL activities	Low frequency prevailed and it is restricted to the development of oral expression.
Pre-disposition of students to develop CL activities	Students evidence poor encouragement to get involved in this type of activities. They feel more comfortable facing activities in an individual way.
Type of motivation to develop CL activities	Extrinsic. Students accepted to do the activities since they are oriented by the teacher but feel reluctant in many occasions to work following a pair work organization.

CL methods, techniques and procedures used	Basically, pair work for activities concerning oral interaction. Few or none activities are observed for the training of other abilities.
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After processing all the data, it is concluded that CL needs to be approached in rural schools in Chone from a different perspective. Based on the results, a strategy was elaborated. It is conceived for teachers, as a way of updating what they know about CL and being able to introduce it in their professional practice in a proper way. From this perspective, teachers are users of the strategy and their students become beneficiaries of it. The strategy is directed to enhance the creation of a CL environment by means of which learners develop their communicative competence in EFL. It is assumed as a set of actions that teachers plan according to the particular context in which the teaching-learning process takes place. It does not only consider the particular interests, needs and expectations of students but also institutional and social demands of such context.

Due to the nature of the teaching-learning process of EFL the strategy includes activities of different types such as: audiovisual activities (use of videos and audio texts), oral activities (oral presentations, round tables, and role playings), written activities (construction of paragraphs, emails, short letters, among others) and technological (use of virtual platforms, computer programs and softwares). As it can be deduced from the previous enumeration of activities, the strategy is applicable for the development of all language abilities: oral expression and interaction, reading and listening comprehension and written production (writing). This position widens the traditional perspective of CL in the lessons of English in the rural schools that were explored in Chone. The strategy is structured as follows:

Phase One: Diagnosis of the dynamics of the class

This phase determines the types of interaction that prevail in the class. On this sense, teachers should explore students' personalities and limit the existing kinds of interaction in the class. Based on the results, they should decide to give priority to pair work, small group work or group work.

Though learners may prefer one or another, teachers should logically combine all forms in which CL may take place. It is not only a matter of preference but also a decision that should favor social interaction among all members of the class. Students are more than simple apprentices; they are social beings and should learn to interact properly in any kind of context and with any person.



The diagnosis should consider the following aspects: type of communication that prevails among students (impulsive, authoritarian, assertive, etc.), academic performance and willingness to work in a collaborative way. It is recommendable to include in a group (or pair) students of different academic level. This may establish a mutual interchange of ideas by means of which slow students can profit from an advanced one and the latter may reinforce his/her knowledge and develop the feeling of being of help for his/her classmates.

Phase Two: Design of the CL activities to be developed

This is a crucial moment in the process of creating a CL environment. The objectives of each activity should be clearly determined, not only in academic terms but also concerning the social abilities students should reach. The activities should be directed to the communicative learning of the English language. This means to be able to exchange ideas in a particular context and use the corresponding communicative functions for each situation. Such communicative orientation must not disregard the analysis of the formal aspects of the language. They constitute a necessary step in the process of learning. Formal elements should be viewed in terms of a basic moment for identifying and selecting the most suitable ones to accomplish a certain communicative purpose.

Since the use of CL is not limited to the development of oral abilities, the activities should very varied and motivating. They should generate interest to solve them and the need to work collaboratively to reach the desired outcomes. The typology of activities associated to CL is very ample. The present strategy will provide some to illustrate how they can be used in English lessons.

Activity One: Project handling. Students are organized in small groups and oriented to develop a practical project to be presented to the whole class. Such projects may include: creation of an English Bulletin Board where key aspects related to the contents they are studying should be included, the creation of an English Club by means of which the groups write down their suggestions to improve the learning of English, etc.

Activity Two: Solving a Problem. Learners gather in pairs and are given a communicative problem they should solve such as: how to guide someone to get to a certain address (it may be accompanied by a visual support like map), how to explain a foreigner the geographical distribution of their country, what to do in case an earthquake occurs in their living area, etc.



Activity Three: Dictogloss. Students come together in groups and listen to a brief recording. Each member takes down notes trying to collect all the exact information contained in the recording. Once the first listening is concluded, they exchange the notes they take and all together write a final draft trying to be as close as possible to the original recording they listened to.

Activity Four: Creating an Informatic Tool for Learning (Webpage, PowerPoint presentation, or any other than demands the use of computers). Small groups of students are organized and oriented to create an informatic product about a topic of interest for the whole class (dangers of drug addiction, countries whose first language is English, consequences of alcohol abuse, etc.). The product must include English words and expressions and be enriched with pictures or any other artistic design.

Activity Five: Likes and Dislikes. Pairs are organized and given a written material (a book, magazine or a text). Each member should read it carefully and tell his /her peer the points he/she likes or dislikes about the given document. Discussions about the points expressed may come out during the interaction between the two students. The time assigned for reading the material may vary depending on its length and complexity. It can be oriented as an extra-class activity (extensive reading) or as in-class activity (/intensive reading).

Activity Six: What's the video about? Learners are grouped in teams to watch a video that reflects a conversation between/among people. It will be played without any audio. Once the projection is over, students will elaborate the possible dialogues of the characters on the video, based on their non-verbal expressions. Each team will dramatize the dialogues they elaborated to the whole class. After all teams make their presentations, the video will be played once more. This time audio will be available so that each team can compare how close or far the dialogues they elaborated are from the original audio.

Phase Three: Application of the CL activities

In it, teachers should act as a guide or moderator. They should provide students with the necessary freedom to generate solutions to the activities oriented. They may also offer recommendations, when needed, and intervene only when they detect that interaction between/among students is misleading in relation to the goals of the activity or it is sustained in undesirable ways of communication. Teachers should encourage students to discuss the possible ways in which the expected outcomes of the activity can be attained. They should generate a responsible attitude on all students, making them be aware of



the fact that success or failure of the group depends on the efforts and contributions made by each of its participants. At this point, members of the group should generate an environment where anxiety, embarrassment and shyness are lessened. Confidence about the relevance and importance of everyone's ideas should be recognized and encouraged under the bases of respect and tolerance. This is essential to have students of different levels cooperate to reach a common goal (Hedge, 2000).

Positive feedback should be elicited from all members of the group when they present their ideas. Negative behaviors and attitudes are not to be tolerated. In case they come out during the development of the activity, they should be analyzed by means of reflexive positions that lead to the understanding that they are counterproductive to the achievement of the common goals of the activity.

Phase Four: Assessment of the activity developed and feedback

After completing an activity, teachers should focus on the analysis of it. They may consider not only the resulting outcome but also the process followed to get to it. The inquiry is centered on the quality of the completion of the activity and if the planned objectives are reached. A crucial aspect of this phase is the critical examination of the strengths and weaknesses that emerged during the development of the activity in relation to the levels of cooperation that each member of the group shows. The identification of the causes for problems should guide the discussion. The group should provide suggestions to overcome those difficulties and unanimously agree on the steps to follow to improve their functioning as a collectivity.

Public rewards are to be highlighted for the accomplishments obtained during the solution of the activity. This will reinforce the existing strengths and encourage students to consider CL as a significant tool to enrich their learning of English.

Though assessment is fundamental at the end of each activity; it should not be restricted to this final moment. Teachers can document the progress of each group and provide a systematic feedback to all members of the group. This will provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their mistakes and take adequate decisions to solve them in the process.

After the elaboration of the strategy, it was partially implemented in the pedagogical practice. The implementation consisted of the application of a pretest to all 25 students that were taken as the sample of the investigation. From those 25 students, 12 were selected as random to be influenced by the



application of the strategy.

The results of the pretest reveal that all students have similar levels of command of the English language and that they prefer to work individually and not to be involved in CL activities.

The results derived from the application of the posttest expose that the level of communicative competence of those students receiving the influence of the strategy is significantly higher than those that are not included in the implementation (45% higher in relation to the control group). A noticeable enrichment of their active vocabulary is observed, as well as a more reasonable selection of communicative functions for the situations out which the English language is used.

The tendency to feel comfortable and satisfied with this new perspective of learning English, in a CL environment, is also prominent on the 12 students undergoing the application of the strategy. They evidence great satisfaction in giving and receiving help and assistance from their classmates, in contributing to the attainment of common goals and giving and obtaining feedback from their peers.

They also show low levels of anxiety and shyness and consequently take more active roles in their work than they used to do before engaging in the CL activities developed. Activities that included ICT are strongly accepted by the students and elicit the appearance of intrinsic levels of motivation and for collaborative work.

The implementation of the strategy also widens the social area of relations of the students. Since they were selected at random, most of them had had no previous interactions. The CL activities that were implemented make possible to strengthen social relations among students. Such interactions are characterized by respect and tolerance to diversity in culture and opinion.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in this work are consistent with the studies of Pozzi, F., Manganello, F., and Persico, D. (2023), Abdel Al Ibrahim, K.A. et al. (2023), that reveal the importance of enhancing the creation of a CL environment by means of which learners develop their communicative competence in EFL. This work also coincides with the findings of Hornstra et al. (2015), who states that CL leads to learners' autonomy and shapes learning environments, improving their motivation towards learning. Such positions from those authors is corroborated by means of the strategy presented in this research. After the application of it, it is observed that the levels of motivation, the learning proficiency in English



and the establishment of richer social relations is significantly higher on the students who receive the influence of the strategy.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper reviews the fundamentals to foster a CL environment in the context of rural schools in Chone. It details the current state of art of the implementation of such type of learning. On this direction, it is detected that students from those institutions do not feel motivated to work in a collaborative way and that they do not consider profitable to get involved in CL activities to improve their English language communicative competence. The scarce preparation of teachers, from the theoretical and practical points of view, comes out as another cause for the extrinsic motivation on the learners to take CL as an alternative to improve their language proficiency and enhance their social relations in the class.

The strategy elaborated is conceived for teachers, as a way of updating what they know about CL and being able to introduce it in their professional practice in a proper way. It is also directed to enhance the creation of a CL environment by means of which learners develop their communicative competence in EFL. Consequently, it is deduced that applying proper CL activities and techniques can increase the levels of communicative competence of EFL in rural schools in Chone.

The author of this paper recommends replicating the study, widening the sample of it to collect more data and accordingly obtain new empirical evidences about the validity and feasibility of application of the strategy included in this paper. This could lead to enrich or modify the proposal made in the investigation. It is also suggested to design a regular system of upgrading for teachers by means of which they explore new practical CL activities, techniques and methods. Such system will enhance their pedagogical competence for the teaching of EFL.

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