

**Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of  
Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the  
Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning  
Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba**

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July 14, 2022



## Acta de presentación de Requisito Final de Graduación

Sesión del Tribunal Examinador celebrada el día **jueves 14 de julio de 2022**, con el objeto de recibir el informe virtual de los estudiantes **Jocelyne María Brenes Prendas B51232, Paula Isabel Monge Zelaya B54555, Esteban Antonio Sanabria Mora A85895**, quienes se acogen al Reglamento de Trabajos Finales de Graduación bajo la modalidad de Seminario de Graduación para optar al Título de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés.

M.B.A. Mainor Aguilar Moya	Presidente del Tribunal
Lic. Jennifer Solano Mata	Directora del Trabajo Final de Graduación
Mag. Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga	Miembro del Tribunal
Lic. Katherine Rojas Madriz	Miembro del Tribunal
Mag. Alejandro Jiménez Tassara	Representante de la Carrera de Enseñanza del Inglés

### ARTÍCULO 1

El presidente informa que el expediente de los estudiantes, **Jocelyne María Brenes Prendas B51232, Paula Isabel Monge Zelaya B54555, Esteban Antonio Sanabria Mora A85895** contienen todos los documentos de rigor. Declara que los postulantes cumplen con todos los demás requisitos del plan de estudios correspondiente y, por lo tanto, se solicita que procedan a hacer la exposición.

### ARTÍCULO 2

Los estudiantes **Jocelyne María Brenes Prendas B51232, Paula Isabel Monge Zelaya B54555, Esteban Antonio Sanabria Mora A85895** hacen la exposición virtual de su trabajo final de graduación titulado: *"Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba"*.

### ARTÍCULO 3



Terminada la disertación, los miembros del Tribunal Examinador interrogan a los postulantes durante el tiempo reglamentario y, una vez concluido el interrogatorio, el Tribunal se retira a deliberar.

**ARTÍCULO 4**

El Tribunal considera el trabajo final de graduación satisfactorio y les confiere la calificación de .....  
**Aprobado**.....

**ARTÍCULO 5**

El presidente del Tribunal comunica a los postulantes el resultado de la deliberación y los declara acreedores al Título Profesional de Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés.

Se les indica la obligación de presentarse al acto público de juramentación, al que serán oportunamente convocados.

Se da lectura al acta que firman los Miembros del Tribunal Examinador y los postulantes, a las 17:00 horas.

Se aclara que la Mag. Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga no estuvo presente durante la deliberación.

M.B.A. Mainor Aguilar Moya

Presidente

Lic. Jennifer Solano Mata

Directora Trabajo Final de Graduación

Mag. Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga

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Over the years, classwork has been considered as one of the key elements of class mediation and learning evaluation regardless of the teaching approach used in the Costa Rican public education system regulated by the Ministry of Public Education (from now on, "MEP"). In the communicative approach shaped in the 1980s and 1990s, for example, classwork was conceived as a task with an emphasis on content rather than form that aimed for students to be able to communicate in class using the content studied (MEP, 2017). More recently, this has been redefined with the incorporation of the Action-Oriented Approach (from now on AOA) as the basis for the newest English curriculum at MEP. According to MEP (2017), this new curriculum based on the AOA states that classwork activities must seek for students to practice the language in a meaningful way for successful real-life task completion. Classwork should favor the performance of tasks around moments, actions, and products that are vivid, defined, and concrete for the students. Therefore, former classwork activities such as grammar handouts, completion of book exercises, and other non-action-oriented tasks are no longer considered valid techniques to assess classwork. In other words, when performing tasks in a class mediated with this new AOA-based curriculum, "the learner is not speaking or writing for the teacher or pretending to speak or write to another person, but rather speaking or writing in a real-life context for a social purpose" (MEP, 2017, p. 26).



As previously mentioned, this shift from communicative to action-oriented language teaching requires the design and implementation of concrete, meaningful and relevant real-life situations for students to demonstrate their English language abilities through tasks, but also needs the application of new ways to assess the completion of those tasks. This implies that now teachers need to implement ways to assess classwork that match with the AOA's principles and at the same time make sure they comply with the current MEP's guidelines for the assessment of this evaluation component. In this respect, the current 2021 blended learning model fostered by MEP as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the regular evaluation components and has put aside the historical percentage weight that classwork had always had. This means that even though classwork continues being part of the dynamics of class mediation, it no longer adds up to the final grade of the students. Classwork has therefore become a formative component that helps students to master the units and themes under study and be able to complete the autonomous work that they are assigned, which is called self-study guides (from now on GTAs). In addition, according to MEP (2017), it is required that students cooperate with one another when performing action-oriented tasks, as they are social agents of a vivid, real-life context. Social interaction is currently constrained due to the social distance that must be kept in class where students must keep a distance of 1,8 meters from each other (MEP, 2021), which hinders the completion of these tasks, and, consequently, their assessment.

### **Problem**

Given the implementation of the new English curriculum, its implications in the assessment process of action-oriented classwork, and the current blended learning

context, this project revolves around evaluating the application of MEP's classwork assessment guidelines in a selected high school context. For this project, the term "evaluation" present in its title must be understood as the action of critically examining the implementation of something by collecting and analyzing information about it such as characteristics, processes, and outcomes (Patton, 1987). In this case, that "something" corresponds to the application of the mentioned MEP's guidelines in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT. Further justification for the selection of this group and class can be found in the Methods section. Moreover, Patton (1987) claims that "evaluation can help identify areas for improvement and ultimately help realize goals more efficiently" (p.16). Therefore, this project will serve for the authors to identify possible action items to improve the process of classwork assessment at LEBT, by first understanding the *status quo* of this process in the participant group, the implications of assessing action-oriented classwork in it, and whether or not that assessment is being compliant with the MEP's current guidelines for action-oriented classwork assessment, particularly when assessing oral production and oral comprehension tasks.

To summarize, this research project intends to evaluate the application of MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba (from now on LEBT).

### **Justification**

In all public Costa Rican high schools, the new English curriculum based on the AOA has been used since 2017. This is the case even in 2021 when a blended learning

model is taking place due to the health emergency caused by COVID-19. However, although it has been five years since this new English curriculum started to be implemented and, thus, the AOA started to gradually replace the previous communicative approach, almost no studies have dealt with the implementation of the AOA itself in these public high schools. In this respect, it is expected to count on even fewer studies that delve into the evaluation of the MEP's guidelines for assessing action-oriented classwork, especially not in the current blended learning context where classwork is no longer a graded component in either face-to-face or online lessons.

Although the blended learning model fostered by MEP in 2021 does not keep the same graded evaluation components and percentage weights that the previous face-to-face learning model had, classwork continues to be essential to assess as students need to be able to complete their current evaluation components successfully, which should be action-oriented tasks involving the creation of a product as they perform them, and the teachers need to support and mediate those educational intentions. In the words of Picardo et al. (2014) referring to action-oriented classwork,

not only the specific outcome but also the process that leads to the final result is important for communication in the language classroom: this involves a step-by-step organization, learners' activation of strategies and competencies, consideration of the 27 "Educating for a New Citizenship" setting and social forms, as well as materials and support (p. 39).

Hence, face-to-face classwork assessment in this context serves to help and guide students to complete their two major evaluation components, which are the self-study guides (from now on "GTAs") which corresponds to 55% of the final grade, and the

summative assessments (at least two) that represent the remaining 45% of the final grade (MEP, 2021).

In summary, this research is relevant as the new English curriculum based on the AOA has especially impacted how classwork must be assessed, and the current blended learning context may hinder the assessment of action-oriented classwork in face-to-face lessons. It is also original as no previous studies in the country had addressed the subject under study when this research was performed. Therefore, the research students addressed this current phenomenon from the standpoint of thoroughly studying and understanding the implications of assessing action-oriented classwork and how that assessment may or may not be compliant with the MEP's current guidelines for face-to-face classwork assessment when assessing oral production and oral comprehension tasks. This resulted in findings that could serve as a start point to recommend possible practices for classwork assessment in Listening and Speaking classes at LEBT and also in similar contexts in the country, all of which sufficiently justified the endeavor of performing this project in the second semester of 2021.

## **Background information**

### ***New English Curriculum at MEP: Origins***

In 2016, MEP implemented a change in the approach to the teaching of English in public elementary schools and high schools. The Communicative Approach, used for more than 30 years, started to be gradually replaced by the Action-Oriented Approach (AOA). This change responded to several facts according to MEP authorities. First, as 21st-century learners, students required an updated curriculum that would help them

acquire and develop the needed skills, knowledge, and abilities to use the language to truly communicate, especially in their own contextualized realities. Second, through anecdotal reports from teachers and students as well as statistics on students' acquisition of English, MEP found enough proof to claim that students were unable to communicate in English after 12 years of learning this language in elementary school and high schools. Evidence for this claim is found in Cerdas (2016) who states that only one-quarter of Costa Ricans speak fluent English, and also in statistics from the MEP that state that 77% of the public academic high school students have an A2 level of English (Cordero, 2019), which is a beginner level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Given the advent of new communication technologies and globalization, the MEP adopted the AOA because students need to be able to communicate properly in global contexts and face the challenges of an interconnected world. According to Purpura (2016), this becomes crucial when it comes to finding a job in the mid or long term, which is one of the ultimate goals of academic schooling. This corresponds to the third reason why MEP implemented this new curriculum.

According to López (2018), some of the main issues that the implementation of the Communicative Approach had were “the misconceptions of the teaching of grammar, the overuse of reading comprehension to train students to pass the standardized test and the lack of understanding that each student is different in terms of particular needs, strengths and weaknesses” (López, 2018, p. 1). Although this study was published in 2018, the MEP authorities had realized that a new English curriculum was needed to overcome the alarming statistics of students not being able to become

independent users of the language, which was always the goal in the Communicative Approach. Learners needed an updated curriculum that reflected the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to succeed in language learning, which gave room to the implementation of a new English Curriculum. Nowadays, with the application of the AOA in public schools and high schools, the English lessons “have acquired a more interactive and sociocultural dimension involving an active attitude of learners towards their learning process” (Kaliska, 2016). This means that students are social agents in the process of language learning; therefore, they now need to be exposed to real-life situations in which they can use the language (MEP, 2017, p 15)

### ***Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at MEP***

**SARS-CoV-2 Health Crisis.** On March 6th, 2020, Costa Rica registered the first COVID-19 case according to the Ministry of Public Health of the country. Shortly that month, MEP gave instructions to close all school and high schools’ doors and switch their education model to a 100% virtual learning modality. Some weeks after, on April 13th, the return of the school year was scheduled within the framework of distance education, under a strategy called *Aprendo en casa* (I learn at home). Within this strategy, students were required to work on and complete GTAs in all subjects and connect to class virtually using Microsoft Teams, the official platform adopted by MEP, for clarifying their doubts and receiving explanations from the teachers on the topics under study. This strategy mediated by technology allowed the continuity of the school year in all MEP institutions (MEP, 2021, p. 3). The need for teachers and students to use technological resources was emphasized in that strategy, taking into consideration their connectivity and use of electronic devices.

**Blended Learning Model for the 2021 School Year.** In 2021, the scheme has changed as the virtual learning modality implemented in 2020 is not the only option. Currently, a new strategy called *Estrategia Regresar* (“Come Back Strategy” in English) is taking place. This is a strategy that combines face-to-face classes with virtual work. That is to say, the MEP institutions find themselves in a blended learning context where students can attend classes *in situ* and/or online via Microsoft Teams (MEP, 2021). Parents can decide whether their children attend face-to-face encounters at the school’s facilities or only virtual ones (or both if needed). MEP highlights that for the blended learning model to function, all parties (students, teachers, families, and principals) must play active roles as key actors for its successful implementation. Students and their parents are asked to be responsible for their learning, and teachers are reminded of their needed commitment to contributing with their professional experience to support their students and help them achieve the educational goals in their subjects (MEP, 2021, p. 10).

**Pedagogical Mediation Scenarios for Blended Education.** The first scenario corresponds to face-to-face encounters at school. MEP (2021) explains that this scenario allows the connection of the members of the educational process who coincide in time and space for a class, which means both students and teachers are in the same physical place and at the same time to interact during class time. Given the protocols concerning social distancing measures, schools are required to reduce by approximately 30% the number of students per classroom (MEP, 2021, p.8). MEP points out that face-to-face encounters in this blended learning model are important as the in-person lesson mediation from teachers allows for greater depth of interaction with

their students, which helps promote the creation of social and cultural ties and foster collaboration spaces in learning for the development of skills (p. 10). The second scenario corresponds to the virtual or online encounters via MEP tools. Online lessons are taught using the Microsoft Teams platform mostly, but other digital means supporting the mediation are allowed and fostered (MEP, 2021, p. 11). For the implementation of both scenarios, teachers must assign GTAs (weekly, biweekly, or however the institution demands it) to their students for their development within the class and out of it. These guides must be accompanied by other resources such as audio, videos, or tangible materials that allow the student to build knowledge (MEP, 2021, p.12). Therefore, the materials that the teacher's choices play a key role since they have to help students internalize the target contents and topics being studied.

**Roles of Educational Participants in Pedagogical Mediation for Blended Education.** With the blended learning model and the context of its implementation at MEP, the roles of the teachers, students, families, and principals in and out of class are highlighted. The teacher needs to plan activities and strategies to facilitate knowledge acquisition and to help students engage with the contents. Besides, the teacher considers the reality of the students to maintain constant communication with the family and legal guardians, and promotes, if necessary, the activation of the Early Warning (MEP, 2021, p. 33). This indicates that even though students are sometimes at home or in school, teachers need to be mindful of them; also, warn parents if an adverse situation happens with their children in the teaching-learning process. Thus, the role of the teacher goes beyond the class; teachers need to be aware of students' realities and how they can impact their lives. Students, for their part, assume an active role by



learning from others and themselves (teachers - students - family - community) “aiming to improve their ability to carry out teamwork, be more flexible, responsible, creative, have availability to share life and educational experiences, communicate effectively and assertively, according to their possibilities in the educational setting they are in” (MEP, 2021, p.34). As mentioned before, students need to be responsible and committed to completing the tasks they are assigned. Consequently, students have to be constantly aware of their learning process, and if they consider that they need to improve; they need to inform the teacher to be guided. The third participant corresponds to the student’s family. The role of families is that of regulating the time of media exposure that students have, providing them emotional support, listening to them, and being aware of the content that they consume on the Internet (MEP, 2021, p. 35). Finally, the role of school principals is vital in the current blended learning context. Principals are in charge of forming groups, creating suitable schedules, regulating the permanence of people in the educational center by following the sanitary protocols, among others (MEP, 2021, p. 2021). Principals must also perform the delivery of food provisions to the students’ families as school cafeterias are not functioning to avoid exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

## **Objectives**

### ***General objective***

To evaluate the application of the MEP’s guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT.

**Specific objectives**

1. To describe the assessment process of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT.
2. To analyze the application of the MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT.
3. To determine if the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT is compliant with the MEP's guidelines for classwork assessment, as well as possible action items to improve the application of these guidelines.

**Research question**

How is the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork being performed in the Listening and Speaking class of the 9-1 group at LEBT in the current 2021 blended learning context?

**Theoretical Framework**

For the implementation of this research project, some key concepts were reviewed and defined as they are used to explain the current situation at LEBT when it comes to action-oriented classwork assessment in the current blended learning context. Some relevant theories that give room to the research problem were also addressed

and documented. Finally, although very few studies on this research field have been performed, some were reviewed and summarized in this section to give support to the present research on former efforts made in related fields of study. This theoretical framework is, therefore, divided into three sections: Definition of Terms, Theories, and Previous Studies.

## **Definition of Terms**

### ***Assessment***

For this research, it is paramount to define the concept of *assessment* that will be used throughout the document. The Cambridge Dictionary defines this term as the act of judging or deciding the amount, value, quality, or importance of something, or the judgment or decision that is made (Cambridge University, n.d.). For its part, the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) states that assessment is a systematic process of documenting students' progress to improve their learning process. For the context of this research, two types of assessment are fundamental to also be defined: formative and summative (Cambridge University, 2001).

### ***Types of Assessment in the New Ninth-Grade English Curriculum***

The CEFR defines *formative assessment* as an ongoing process of gathering information on the extent of strengths and weaknesses of students, which the teacher can use to model their course planning and give feedback to learners (Cambridge University, 2001). Formative assessment is often used in a very broad sense to include non-quantifiable information from questionnaires and consultations. Summative assessment, by its part, sums up attainment at the end of the course with a grade. It is not necessarily a proficiency assessment. Indeed, a lot of summative assessment is

norm-referenced, fixed-point, achievement assessment (Cambridge University, 2001, p.186).

The new English curriculum for ninth grade also explains two other types of assessment: diagnostic assessment and implicit assessment. The diagnostic assessment is conceived as “the starting point to develop the communicative competence. It also detects learners’ needs and areas of intervention for assistance. It looks backwards rather than forwards” (MEP, 2017, p.57). Implicit assessment, for its part, is based on the classroom interaction that could exist between students and the teacher. It is known as spontaneous assessment that aims at measuring the level with which “the learner performs the proposed tasks, what he/she does in reality, and what is the learners potential. It is implicit because the teacher implements it at all times.” (MEP, 2017, p.57).

### ***Curriculum***

According to Braslavsky (2003), a curriculum can be understood as the description of what, why, and how students should learn in a formal class. The curriculum “defines the educational foundations and contents, their sequencing in relation to the amount of time available for the learning experiences, the characteristics of the teaching institutions, the characteristics of the learning experiences, in particular from the point of view of methods to be used, the resources for learning and teaching (e.g. textbooks and new technologies), evaluation and teachers’ profiles.” (Braslavsky 2003). In the case of the present research project, the new English curriculum was designed by MEP using the AOA as its basic approach.

### ***Approach and Method***

According to Richards & Rodgers (2001), an approach is “a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning and describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught” (p.19). This definition is also supported by authors like Anthony (1963) who says that an approach encompasses the theories about language and language learning that are inputs for defining practices and principles for teaching content. On the other hand, Anthony (1963) claims that a method is “an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, all of which is based upon the selected approach” (p. 19). In simple words, authors agree with the fact that “approach” is a broader concept in comparison to “method” being the former the theory and the latter the level at which such theory comes to practice. The approach in the current blended learning model corresponds to the Action-Oriented Approach (AOA).

### ***Blended Learning***

For Beríritu (2020) as cited in MEP (2021), blended learning is a model that provides flexibility by combining strategies, methods, and resources in a face-to-face and remote way; that is, it allows the combination of environments (physical and virtual classrooms), times (synchronicity and asynchronicity) and resources (analog and digital) for the acquisition of knowledge and the development of student competencies (p. 9).

### ***Prioritized Basic Learnings Template (PAB)***

Given the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, MEP requested all school levels and modalities to prioritize the basic learnings to be acquired by students in 2020

and 2021, to guarantee the right to education for students and propitiate feasibility for those learnings to be worked in a distance education modality in 2020 and a blended learning model in 2021. Therefore, both the Department of Basic High School General Education and the Department of Diversified Education asked teachers and local advisors of the different regions around the country who teach English in ninth grade to base their mediation strategies on these prioritized learning templates that were known as PABs and implemented ring the second period of 2020 and the complete 2021 school year.

### ***Self-Study Guide (GTA)***

MEP (2021) defines a self-study guide or GTA as a didactic tool designed by teachers, that allows students to develop competencies required for the accomplishment of their learning goals. GTAs include the steps that learners need to follow to come up with the proposed activities by themselves without the need for teachers to be present. They constitute a source of evidence from which the teacher collects information about the students' learning achievement. Hence, the teacher can make decisions on how to help students. Given the current situation, GTAs are also used as instruments to collect and analyze information from students about their achieved goals and the difficulties they may be facing in their learning process.

In the context of the blended-learning model implemented in 2021, MEP (2021) determined that the GTA must be the instrument to mediate both face-to-face and virtual classes. Since students were likely to attend both modalities of class or only one, four moments of interaction were defined for the creation of all GTAs. The first one is called

Connection, which was conceived as a moment to establish all possible connections between students' previous knowledge, experiences, interests, emotions, and the new learnings that would be built up (MEP, 2021). The second one is called Collaboration, which was understood as a moment to communicate and clarify doubts, go deep into knowledge fostering, and reinforce skills and abilities that have already been acquired by students. Clarification was conceived as the third moment of the GTA in MEP (2021) and consisted of creating the proper space for effective communication and participation in the process of construction of knowledge through interaction between students, the teacher, students' family, and their community. Finally, the fourth and last one that must be part of the GAT is Construction/Application. It intends for students to use what they have learned and put it into practice in the solution of problems and other specific situations, to demonstrate their mastery of the learnings (MEP, 2021).

### ***Summative Assessment Instrument***

According to MEP (2021), the summative assessment instrument is defined as the organization of techniques and their respective varied activities proposed by the teacher. Because of the mediation for combined education, these instruments must not correspond to a test (p. 17). With this being said, because of the conditions in which education is being held this year, there will not be evaluated written tests during the year.

### **Theories**

The main theories surveyed in this research revolve around the theoretical components of the new English curriculum at MEP. That includes the fundamentals that give room to the curriculum as well as the theoretical bases that support its application

and, particularly, the bases that mark how to assess action-oriented classwork. To understand the implications of assessing classwork within the new English curriculum as well as the guidelines for assessing action-oriented classwork themselves, it is necessary to understand the origins of that curriculum and the inputs it takes from previous and current approaches implemented in the English subject at MEP.

### ***The Communicative Approach***

This is the preceding approach to the current AOA. Since it was first conceived as such in the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (also known as the Communicative Approach) has served as a referent for the language teaching practice around the world. The changes in the British language teaching tradition dating from the late 1960s, and the increasing interdependence of European countries were the triggers for the conception of this approach. Back then, applied linguists identified the need to focus on communicative proficiency rather than on mere mastery of structures to learn the language. Consequently, the Communicative Approach has the main premise that learning a language happens when students communicate real meaning; they do it through the acquisition of communicative competence (Richards, 2006). In terms of oral skill competence, this approach includes the following aspects of language knowledge, per Richards (2006):

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions.
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication).



- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)
- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (p. 3)

**The Roles of Teachers and Learners in the Communicative Approach.** The type of classroom activities proposed in CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) implies specific roles in the classroom for teachers and learners. Learners participate in cooperative classroom activities rather than individualistic tasks. Students must be able to work with peers and do group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher for a model (Richards, 2006). Regarding teachers, they are expected to assume the role of facilitators and instructors. The teacher has to develop a different view of learners' errors and her/his role as a facilitator of language learning. He/she should neither stand as a model for correct speech nor as an inquirer of error-free sentences from students. Therefore, in this approach, it is expected from teachers to foster the following in class:

- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.
- Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence.
- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.

(Richards, 2006, p.13)

**Communicative Approach and Classwork.** In a Communicative

Approach-driven classroom, activities are characterized by trying to produce meaningful and real communication at all levels. As a result, there may be more emphasis on skills than systems, lessons are more learner-centered, and there may be a use of authentic materials (British Council, n.d.). The communicative approach to teaching prompted a rethinking of classroom instructing methodology. Since this approach holds communicative purposes, such as making requests, giving advice, and making suggestions, classwork activities emphasize pair and group work. Richards (2006) claims that, through completing activities in this way, learners obtain several benefits:

- They can learn from hearing the language used by other members of the group.
- They will produce a greater amount of language than they would use in teacher-fronted activities.
- Their motivational level is likely to increase.
- They will have the chance to develop fluency. Teaching and classroom materials today consequently make use of a wide variety of small-group activities. (p. 20)

***Task-Based Approach***

The AOA, the basis of the new curriculum, takes direct inputs from the task-based approach, and, therefore, it is worth understanding its foundations. By the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s, a new approach was born as an evolution to the communicative approach: The Task-Based Approach. Prabhu (1987) established task-based learning (TBL) in Bangalore, Southern India. Prabhu believed that learners

might learn more efficiently when the focus of their minds is more on the task, rather than on the language they are using (Prabhu, 1987). In Task-Based Language Learning (TBLL), learning is fostered through performing a series of activities as steps towards a successful task realization. By working towards task fulfillment, the language is used immediately in the real-world context of the learner, making learning authentic. In this respect, task-based practitioners claim that the language needed for completing a task is not pre-selected and given to the learners. Instead, it is drawn from the learners with the help of the facilitator to be able to complete the task. There are three stages of a task-based activity: pre-task, task, and post-task.

**Task-Based Approach and Classwork.** A variety of games, role plays, simulations, and task-based communication activities can be used to support Task-Based classes. According to Flores et al (2014), these typically are in the form of one-of-a-kind items: exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication practice materials, and student-interaction practice booklets. In pair-communication materials, there are typically two sets of material for a pair of students, each set containing different kinds of information. Sometimes the information is complementary, and partners must fit their respective parts of the jigsaw into a composite whole. Others assume different role relationships with the partners (e.g., an interviewer and an interviewee). Still, others provide drills and practice material in interactional formats Flores et al (2014),

Tasks are usually assessed in a formative way through corrective feedback during the performance of a task. Sheen (2003) argues that Task-Based Language Teaching requires that any treatment of grammar in classwork assessment takes the

form of quick corrective feedback allowing for minimal interruption of the task activity.

Also, since students are asked to work in groups for performing the tasks, this requires the teacher to carry out a variety of roles including those of manager and facilitator of communication during students' performances, but also the traditional roles of corrector and provider of the new language.

This approach serves as the foundation for the AOA, which is to be explained herewith.

### ***The Action-Oriented Approach***

Being the official approach that the new English curriculum is based on, the AOA implies a task-based approach to language teaching and learning. According to Kaliska (2016), in this approach, students involve themselves intensively in the process of acquiring the language, as they become aware of their own needs and abilities. Students "learn by doing, by interacting with other learners (Vygotsky's theory) and by exploring independently the sociocultural reality of a foreign language" (Kaliska, 2016, p. 29). The AOA has a process in which the student develops his or her skills to acquire a language. Throughout this process, students are considered "social actors in a social learning environment and develop linguistic and pragmatic skills besides communicative skills" (Kaliska, 2016, p. 30). As stated previously, learners need to be exposed to specific scenarios in which they become social actors so that they can use language to communicate efficiently in the given scenarios and at the same time improve their skills. Moreover, Delibas and Günday (2016) state that an "actor means a person performing and animating some duties. Since foreign language is learned through some duties and

actions as well, it handles the learners as (social) people who should perform tasks” (p. 146). Those tasks are similar to the ones that individuals accomplish in their daily lives.

**Acquisition process when using Action-Oriented Approach.** Regarding the acquisition process, Delibas and Günday (2016) affirm that:

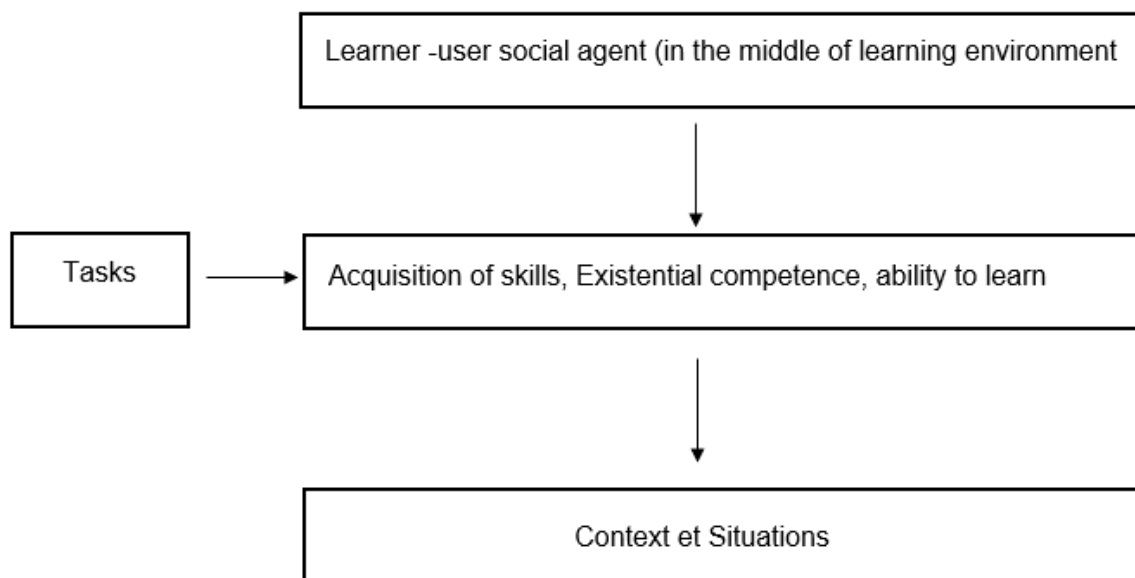
Learning and acquisition are implicit or deliberate modifications in the subconscious and conscious mind that occur with the help of the skills and knowledge applied to fulfilling a task. When these facts are taken into account, the subconscious mind must be active in this action-oriented approach” (p. 146).

As stated above, the process of acquiring a language involves the conscious and unconscious parts of the learner’s brain. Those parts work together when students are completing a task in the target language. This is the mechanism of the brain; however, “language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication” (Krashen, 2009, as cited in Delibas and Günday 2016, p. 146). Even though learners can realize that they are communicating, they cannot perceive what is happening in their minds, nor the procedures teachers do to achieve the objectives.

**Student’s and teacher’s role in the Action-Oriented Approach.** Piccardo (2010) explains that “the AOA is visibly linked to constructivism in terms of the diverse learner autonomy, intercultural awareness, and grammar” (p. 26). He also says that “the action-oriented approach implies a real shift in paradigm from one of knowledge and disjunction to one of competence and complexity” (p. 28). In the AOA, teachers are decision-makers, mentors, and mediators. The teacher has to identify the students’

needs and proficiency levels to provide accurate scenarios and tasks for learners. They are not the center of the class as “teachers are the facilitators and guides for the students in the learning process” (Delibas and Günday, 2016, p. 147). Students, on their part, make decisions about their learning and construct it every day. In the AOA, the learner and user of the language are not separate entities; students learn to then use what they have learned in complex activities that boost communication and action performance. By completing action-oriented tasks, the student not only builds his or her knowledge but also connects the new information with the previous knowledge in a scaffolded fashion with the help of the teacher (Delibas and Günday, 2016, p. 147). Students are considered social agents who are members of society involved in tasks to carry out different tasks that are not only related to language, but they are related to real-life scenarios (Delibas and Günday, 2016, p. 148). Figure 1 shows how the AOA works:

**Figure 1**  
*Components of Action-Oriented Approach*



*Note:* This is an adaptation of the figure of components of AOA contained in MEP, 2017, and it comes from Pecheur (2010) as cited in Delibas and Günday, 2016, p. 150. From “Action-Oriented Approach In Foreign Language Teaching” by M. Delibas and R. Günday, 2016, Participatory Educational Research (PER), p. 150

In the schema, the social agent who gets involved in a learning environment uses his or her knowledge, skills, and abilities when performing tasks. Examples of this environment are the classroom, home, or a shopping center. The learner is autonomous as a language user in this social environment but collaborator as a social agent (Delibas and Günday, 2016, p. 151). Therefore, every skill and piece of knowledge get together to perform a task, and any place can be a learning environment as long as the acquirer carries out a task, and the learner plays two roles, one as autonomous and the other as a collaborator.

### ***The New English Curriculum***

As previously stated, in 2016, MEP set the goal of transforming the teaching of English across Costa Rica through an action-oriented approach to teaching and learning. To do that, it created a new English curriculum that puts aside the Communicative Approach and embraces the AOA. With this new English curriculum, MEP intends that students graduate from high school holding a B1 band according to the Common European Framework for References. The B1 band is the category in which learners can be independent users. B1s, according to the CEFR:

Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst traveling in an area where the language is spoken, can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest, or pertinent to everyday life, can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar, or of personal interest. (Cambridge University, 2001, p. 24)

The new English curriculum is adapted for satisfying the needs of students to become active members of the job market, for which they must learn this language to find opportunities, employment, and also to become part of the economic reactivation of the country (CINDE, 2018). In this respect, according to MEP (2003):

The new English curriculum was written within the principles stated both in our Constitution, the Educational Law, and in the Educational Policy “Towards the 21st Century” to help the students face life and work situations which require an average command of English, with the desire that this preparation will allow them



to participate actively into the challenges of the global economy for the benefit of the country (p. 5).

According to the MEP (2017), the education for a new citizenship envisions learners as active agents of change who can:

- Use knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond school contexts.
- Express their own points of view.
- Practice peaceful conflict resolution and search for democratic solutions.
- Harmonize social and economic development and environmental sustainability.
- Be aware of a global world where national borders have become more diffused.
- Use ICTs and access to knowledge networks as tools for communication, innovation, and proactive social service. (pp. 6-7)

Based on these principles, MEP highlights three philosophical trends that function as the foundation of this new curriculum: rationalism, humanism, and constructivism. These three philosophical trends teach students how to learn, how to do, and how to live in society. According to the MEP (2017), learners must be responsible members of a world community and become producers (instead of consumers) of knowledge (p. 19). Furthermore, with the new curriculum, the MEP takes the CEFR as a basis for defining the English students' levels (bands) and incorporates some of its principles into the theoretical foundation of the curriculum.

To achieve this transformation goal, the MEP created a teacher guide to support the teaching practice of teachers implementing this new curriculum, starting in 2017 with the guide for seventh grade. Today, there is already a teacher guide for the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

**Teacher's Guide: Fundamentals.** This document which was created by MEP to help teachers in their duty to implement the new curriculum contains a range of resources and key elements to assist them in the four following stages (proposed by Patrick Moran, a respected authority in language teacher education):

- Knowing about: By understanding the concepts and principles of the curricular English teaching and learning reform.
- Knowing why: By internalizing the purpose of the English reform as a response to contributing to the formation of the new citizen that the country requires.
- Knowing how: By developing and implementing the action-oriented learning tasks when designing lesson plans, assessment instruments, and follow-up actions to best serve learners.
- Knowing oneself: By reflecting upon and reviewing their personal beliefs and teaching practices. (MEP, 2017, p. 4)

This teacher guide is complemented by the online digital resources and professional development opportunities that MEP has implemented since 2017. The guide has a section devoted to assessment and classwork, which is explained in the following section.

**Assessment and Classwork Fundamentals.** According to this guide, assessment in the new English curriculum:

Is based on what the social agent is able to do in real-life situations or scenarios and the process he/she requires to develop competencies. Authentic assessment is favored. The acquisition and refinement of general and communicative competences is a continuous process, both at school and in the world beyond the school. (MEP, 2017, p. 14)

In this teacher guide, each unit includes a scenario, four themes, an enduring understanding statement, an essential question, the goals to be met, the pillars of learning, the mediation strategies, and the assessment strategies which go hand in hand with the integrated mini-project. The assessment strategies are given to the teacher in each theme of the unit to use in his/her planning. For example, the following is one of the assessment strategies (for oral comprehension) suggested in the guide for the theme *Hello, Hi there, Hey, Bye* in seventh grade: *L.1. identifies basic greetings, farewells, and common expressions of politeness*. Although it seems that the teacher guide provides everything for the teacher to apply in class, there is something it does not provide as it depends on the teacher and the process he or she has fostered and followed in class: the indicators and pieces of evidence. MEP (2017) says that the teachers must include the specific indicators and evidence under each one of the assessment strategies suggested.

**Guidelines for the Action-Oriented Classwork Assessment.** According to the teacher guide and the new English curriculum, the assessment must be authentic,

which means that the assessment task must simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting, and the socio-cognitive, socio-affective, socio-cultural, and linguistic demands upon the learner will be similar to the one of a speaker in a target language setting (MEP, 2017). The guide also states that the *what* of assessment involves being clear about the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes (learn to know, learn to do, learn to be, and live in community) that learners have to develop as established in the curriculum goals or *can-do performance descriptors*. This implies that the assessment will mainly be performance-based. Learners are required to demonstrate through integrated-skills tasks within a domain, scenario, and theme, specified knowledge, skills, and abilities using the target language. Assessment can also be a discrete point, which implies the use of selected-response tasks to isolate and measure discrete units of grammatical knowledge, which encompasses grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge -form, meaning, and use (Purpura, 2014, p. 9).

MEP (2017) in the teacher guide states the following sequence to implement a class activity and how it should be assessed:

1. The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions.
2. Teachers should ensure learners know how to use strategies through teacher scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and individual practice.
3. Learners have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the task. It could be an audio recording with the instructions and the pronunciation of the words and phrases needed.

4. The task could involve the integration of listening and speaking or reading and writing and is given to students individually, in pairs, or in teams.
5. The learners complete the task together using all the resources they have.
6. They rehearse their presentation, revise their written report, present their spoken reports, or publish their written reports.
7. The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary. The learners consciously assess their language performances (using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance).
8. Teachers assess performance, provide feedback in the form of assistance, bring back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provide additional pedagogical resources to learners who need more practice.
9. At the end of each unit, learners develop and present Integrated Mini-Projects to demonstrate mastery of the unit goals.
10. The enduring understanding and essential questions are central to articulating the three learnings: learn to know, learn to do, and learn to be and live in community. The Integrated Mini-Project is an opportunity for students to integrate these three learnings into a single task.

In addition, the guidelines provided by MEP (2017) tackle the pedagogical implications of assessing communicative competences in the classroom. It claims that these implications encompass aspects such as:

1. Selecting the goal(s) or can-do statements and linguistic skills.

2. Determining the type of task the learner has to perform in real life within the theme and scenario of the unit, e.g., introducing someone, greeting someone, giving personal information.
3. Selecting a task that will allow the learner to demonstrate what they can do.
4. Selecting the indicators and performance levels (criteria) that will be used to assess the performance of the learner during the task.
5. Determining the technically designed instruments to assess the learners' performance to obtain expected evidences.
6. Recognizing the impact of associated factors to learners' achievement or performance (e.g., socio-economic condition, personal disposition, motivation, parent support, teacher expectations).
7. Informing in advance and discussing with students the criteria that will be used to assess the task so they know what is expected and can assess their own performance as well (MEP, 2017, 58)

**Assessment Tools.** In terms of assessment tools, the guidelines propose tools such as analytic and/or holistic scales, rubrics, progress indicators, and checklists as they help obtain valid and reliable qualitative and quantitative data about students' learning and performance.

**Self-Assessment and Co-Assessment.** The teacher guide proposes a self-assessment instrument that allows teachers to know if the students are meeting the goals after each lesson or task. That instrument is shown in figure 2.

**Figure 2**  
*Self-Assessment and Co-Assessment*

<i>Learner Self-Assessment</i>			
<i>I can...</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>In progress</i>
Recognize when someone greets me.			
Greet others.			
Identify, pronounce, and indicate the meaning of all the vocabulary (including social language) for the week.			
Show how I have worked with others this week.			

*Note.* Self-assessment chart provided in the ninth grade English curriculum. From MEP, 2017.

In this respect, teachers may, according to the MEP (2017), adapt this instrument to measure class activities' completeness and assess whether their students are meeting the goals proposed in each assessment strategy. In addition, the new curriculum proposes a co-assessment process, especially after oral and written comprehension exercises. Students are supposed to reflect on their process of learning (metacognition) and also peer-review the progress of their classmates to provide them with feedback to improve.

**Assessment in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context.** As explained in previous sections, the current context emphasized two major graded components: the GTAs and the summative assessment strategies. However, to assess classwork formatively (that is the only way in which it is expected to be assessed), the same

guidelines included in the English curriculum are the ones to be applied as no new curriculum or syllabus was created for this blended learning context.

## **Previous Studies**

### ***Implementation of the Action-Oriented Approach in Turkey***

Other educational entities around the world have switched from various approaches to the AOA. In a study carried out in Turkey, they started to think that to become more efficient in the target language (English), they needed a change. One of the main reasons to start implementing this approach is explained as follows:

In 2006, a new curriculum change was proposed with process-oriented approaches introducing the importance of learning situations and realizing how learning takes place in order to help the learners to gain the ability to manage their own learning which leads to learner autonomy. (Ministry of National Education (MoNE) 2006, as cited in Yeni-palabiyik and Daloglu, 2016, p. 45)

Regarding this study, “it was placed with a qualitative paradigm with a case study approach. Specifically the study adopted an Exploratory Case Study...” (Ministry of National Education (MoNE), 2006, as cited in Yeni-palabiyik and Daloglu, 2016, p. 45). Four EFL teachers were the participants of the study. Through follow-up interviews and document analysis, the data were analyzed. Some of the most important findings indicated a variation in teachers' instructional practices ranging from traditional to constructivist. Even if factors such as the presence of instructional materials and facilities of the school influenced the implementation, this study indicated that the teacher is the main factor in the effective delivery of any imposed change. Besides, the



positive influence of proficiency in subject-matter knowledge and curricular knowledge to achieve coherence between the intended and delivered curriculum was revealed. The results showed that providing ongoing support and including teachers in the process of curriculum development helped to promote the effective implementation of the curriculum innovation. (Ministry of National Education (MoNE) 2006, as cited in Yeni-palabiyik and Daloglu, 2016, p. 45). This is similar to the MEP's argument to change from the Communicative Approach to the AOA. This can be an example of how different entities have moved from one method to the other.

### ***Impact of the CEFR on Teaching and Assessment at Bonn and Gottingen***

#### ***Universities***

This study focuses on the application of the CEFR in the teaching and assessment of languages in two German Universities: Bonn and Gottingen. Its results indicate that in terms of the implementation of the CEFR, particularly regarding the AOA, there is a significant amount of work to be done regarding the teacher's training to ensure a more consistent application of the approach. In addition, the study revealed that an effective aspect that improved the implementation of the AOA was the use of books with a greater action orientation. However, it is also true that much remains to be done in terms of increasing the authenticity of materials to better meet the action orientation and to improve students' motivation.

Regarding assessment, this study showed that teachers seemed not to be familiar enough with the CEFR and, therefore, not familiar enough with its implication in testing. More training seminars and workshops on the CEFR and AOA were

recommended by the authors of this study. Another aspect of assessment that appears to need improvement is the focus of tests and examinations. They were proven to be a mixture of *ability* and *can-do* approaches, which Bachman (2000) recommends being separated. The study points out the necessity of increasing the assessment literacy of teachers and doing so with high priority. Finally, the assessment must reflect the interactive, AOA to language teaching developed in class, so bureaucratic constraints of the two institutions studied in terms of exam regulations which still force teachers to apply non-action-oriented tests must disappear.

***Study on Experiences on Assessment of Language in a CEFR -Action-Oriented - Environment at OISE University of Toronto, Canada***

This study summarizes the perspectives and ideas of experienced teachers who have assessed their students considering the CEFR. Those teachers were interviewed in terms of effective assessment strategies as well as the challenges they faced when trying to assess correctly. The main findings of the study are presented as follows:

- Responsibility can be shared: teachers are not the only ones in charge of assessing anymore. Learners share this responsibility to a greater or lesser extent.
- Assessment can support and foster learning: Assessment is no longer seen as the final moment of a process but rather as a fundamental pillar of the learning and teaching process.
- Learning the language in AOA is more than learning just language: the action orientation of the teaching-learning process has to be reflected in the way

students are assessed. There must not be impairment in terms of the way goals are met in class and how they are assessed.

- Freedom of adapting: teachers need to be able to adapt, change, customize, and even create with complete freedom in the AOA environment to meet their students' needs. This also applies to assessment for making the process as effective as possible.

### ***Evaluating and Redesigning a College Assessment System to Close the Loop***

This study conducted in the United States highlights the importance of assessment activities and how they affect students positively or negatively. Allen (2004) as cited in Hamill (2015) summarizes the process for assessing effectively into six basic steps: (1) Develop learning outcomes; (2) check for the alignment between the curriculum and learning outcomes; (3) develop an assessment plan; (4) collect direct and indirect evidence of student mastery of the outcomes; (5) use results to improve the program (i.e., close the loop); and (6) routinely examine the assessment process itself and make adjustments (p. 36).

As the author claims previously, it becomes necessary to assess students by following an accurate process that fosters learners to use their abilities and know the outcomes of their performance in a given task. True change in institutions of higher education can only come about by providing access to assessment data to allow for evidence-based decision-making. This means moving away from the typical unidirectional dissemination of assessment findings to collaborative efforts that are both top-down and bottom-up (Elton 2003; King, Hawe, and Wise, 1998; Kuh and Hinkle, 2002, as cited in Hamill, 2015, p. 37). The quotation confirms that the traditional way of

assessing does not benefit students because it cannot provide opportunities for students to maximize their collaborative skills.

### ***Studies on How to Analyze an Assessment System***

It is crucial to start as Walvoord (2010) as cited in Hamill (2015) explains “that campuses start by tracking how assessment data moves from the units in which they are generated into the highest level of the system where institutional decisions are made” (p. 39). Consequently, professors need to know the entity’s regulations and established process; in this way, Walvoord (2010) as cited in Hamill (2015) states that “most institutions discover that their difficulties lie not in data generation, but in how the data are used, or closing the loop” (p. 39). Thus, teachers can help institutions to overcome their weak assessment areas to move forward regarding the way they assess learners. In brief, the author concludes that there are three key aspects that proper assessment should have:

1. Adequate leadership (Diamond, Gardiner, and Wheeler 2002; Lick 2002, as cited in Hamill, 2015).
2. Provision of resources (Southwell et al, 2010, as cited in Hamill) and
3. Widespread training of staff, faculty, and administration. This must include an evaluation of where and when communication about assessment data occurs.

Ultimately, campuses must expand their messages about assessment findings to wider audiences so they can begin to transform their culture (Hamill, 2015).

This section has reviewed the concepts and theories within which this research is framed. It has also reviewed literature (previous studies) on action-oriented classwork assessment in international contexts. Some of the main discussed themes in this

theoretical framework were: the proceedings that led to the creation of the new English curriculum and its guidelines to assess action-oriented classwork, the theoretical foundations of the AOA, the current blended learning context at MEP, and previous studies on AOA's classwork assessment. The takeaways from this section lie in the fact that MEP has made considerable efforts not only to implement the new English curriculum, but also to establish guidelines for assessing all tasks performed in class, and more recently, in the blended learning context arising as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding previous studies, because of the relative newness of this research topic and the unprecedented blended learning model at MEP, almost no prior research on the assessment of action-oriented classwork was found in the context of Costa Rica. However, some international studies surveyed in this section showed that different countries around the world have experienced positive changes when assessing oral and listening skills in a context where the AOA was present, which serves as a point of reference for the implementation of this research project. Thanks to this thorough review of concepts, theory, and previous studies, the researchers concluded that the present research project will be worked as a case study aiming to evaluate the application of MEP's guidelines for action-oriented classwork assessment in the selected ninth-grade group at LEBT, which is explained in detail in the Methods section. Moreover, the investigators aim to set a standard for classwork evaluation using the MEP guidelines and motivate further investigation of English classwork evaluation.

## Methods

### Context

This research project corresponds to the final work of the research students for obtaining the degree of *Licenciatura* in English Teaching at the Paraíso Campus of the University of Costa Rica. The research was carried out following the requirements and processes of the graduation modality called Final Graduation Project. In this respect, the Final Graduation Project consists of a theoretical and practical activity that has the purpose of identifying a problem, analyzing it, and proposing a solution for it in an institution or company. The investigators performed this project at the Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba (known as LEBT) in the current blended learning context and the MEP's come-back-to-school strategy (*Estrategia Regresar*) as a response to the COVID-19 emergency. LEBT is one of the 17 bilingual experimental high schools in Costa Rica and is located in Barrio Tomás Guardia, Cartago Province, Turrialba, Costa Rica. It has a population of 250 students and counts on 2 groups per grade. This high school was chosen to be the sponsor of this project for several reasons. Firstly, it is a bilingual institution where students take 14 to 25 English lessons a week depending on the grade, starting with 14 in seventh grade. Therefore, communication in English is not an issue for most of them according to Ernesto Vargas, the academic coordinator at LEBT. Secondly, because of the current MEP legislation for bilingual experimental high schools, these institutions must emphasize the teaching of English, for which they are required to divide the English subject into three: Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing, and English Literature (MEP, 2006). This is particularly important to this research because it focuses on evaluating the application

of MEP's guidelines for oral comprehension and oral production classwork, and this high school has a dedicated Listening and Speaking subject where this was performed more specifically than if it had been performed in a general English class. Finally, this institution is applying the newest English curriculum, and, consequently, the Action-Oriented Approach in all grades even in the current blended learning context framed in the *Estrategia Regresar*, which is not the case of all high schools. Finally, since this is a bilingual experimental high school, the Listening and Speaking/Reading and Writing subjects work with half of the number of students belonging to the group, which made the fieldwork manageable and feasible. The University of Costa Rica issued the approval letter for the research to be conducted at this institution, and LEBT also accepted that the research students develop their project in the institution, both of which can be verified in appendix 5 of this document.

### **Subjects of Study**

The research project was performed in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1. Therefore, the subjects of the study were the Listening & Speaking teachers of 9-1, and their twenty-five students who attended regular face-to-face classes in the 2021 blended learning context at LEBT. Originally, this class was composed of ten lessons per week, but with the implementation of the blended learning model, that number was reduced to four per week: two face-to-face lessons and two virtual lessons. This group and teachers were chosen based on the fact that ninth-grade students in this high school had been taught using the newest English curriculum since it started to be implemented in the institution. In addition, even though tenth and eleventh grade groups were, in theory, more experienced with AOA-based classwork than ninth grade groups,

the former had been affected in the past by long strikes, COVID-19 class cancellations in 2020, the implementation of a troublesome virtual model also 2020, and the learning curve of teachers using the AOA for the first time when it was implemented. All of this is believed to have affected their exposure to real action-oriented activities, particularly when it comes to classwork. Therefore, ninth-graders were the most suitable population for this research. Regarding the fact that only one ninth-grade group was part of the study, this is so because this research responds to the case study research method which focuses on a specific system or group as explained in the Research Methods subsection. In addition, LEBT counted only two ninth-grade groups, and including the other group may have resulted in a conflict of interests with the research students as one of them was its teacher.

All participant data was collected during the second semester of 2021, and an informed consent form was obtained from the cooperating teachers, and her students' parents were sent a communication explaining the intention of the research, the role of their children, the student researchers and a statement indicating that no pictures or videos showing students' faces would be taken. These consents can be found in the Appendices section of this document.

### **Research Approach**

As Cresswell (2009) states, "in planning a research project, researchers need to identify whether they will employ a qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed approach" (p. 21). This research project will be based on a qualitative approach as this approach involves aspects such as "emerging questions and procedures, collection of data in the participant's setting, data analysis, ... and the researcher's interpretations of the



meaning of the data” (Cresswell, 2009, p. 4), which are all meant to be part of the methods for this study to lead to results. Similarly, Mertens (2009) states that the qualitative approach examines the reasons why and how humans make decisions (p.5), which is relevant for this research as it revolves around the assessment of action-oriented classwork in the context of the subjects of study. Furthermore, since this investigation is intended to evaluate the application of the classwork assessment guidelines defined by MEP in the current blended learning context in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 at LEBT, a qualitative research approach suits it better than a quantitative one, given that qualitative methods allow the researchers to explore ideas and experiences in depth taking into consideration the problem being studied, personal experiences of the researchers, and the subjects of study (Cresswell, 2009, p. 21), not just numeric data to prove or discard a hypothesis. Additionally, according to Cresswell (2009) “we conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study” (p. 48). For all these reasons, the investigators of this project concluded that the research must have a qualitative approach since it intended to evaluate the application of guidelines for assessing action-oriented classwork, and for this, they would need to witness the dynamics of the classwork assessment process in the selected group, collect data from it, and listen to the participant teachers’ experiences when assessing classwork in the current blended learning context using the newest English curriculum and the Action-Oriented Approach.

### ***Research Methods and Design***

This research is a case study that evaluates the application of MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production in a single ninth-grade group (9-1). According to Cresswel (2013), "a case study is an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program, group or system in a real-life context" (p. 21). With this being said, the project matches the characteristics of a case study because the investigators aim to evaluate the guidelines during a real-life scenario of one specific group during the English Listening and Speaking class in the blended learning context at LEBT. In addition, there are several characteristics that this research project shares with the case study qualitative method. In the words of Yin (2003) "a case study design should be considered when the focus of study is to answer how and why questions" (p. 42). Through this case study, the research team aims to investigate the specific implementation of classwork assessment guidelines of the newest English curriculum in the blended learning context. Given the fact that the AOA is the basis of this English curriculum, and is currently being taught through a blended learning context for the first time, a lot of "why" and "how" questions are going to be answered, especially the research question that reads: How is the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork being performed in the Listening and Speaking class of 9-1 group at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba in the current 2021 blended learning context? Moreover, Yin (2003) states that in a case study the researchers cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study (p. 42). The researchers focused on observing a real English class scenario in which the

participants of the study participate in the regular Listening and Speaking English class without changing their conduct. Finally, Yin (2003) emphasizes that one of the most important characteristics of the case study is that the researchers “cover contextual conditions because they believe that they are relevant to the phenomenon under study” (p. 43). Consequently, the research team believes that this research framed in the current 2021 blended learning context being implemented for the first time in a MEP bilingual experimental institution is going to serve as a basis and become a pioneer in further studies about action-oriented classwork assessment.

### ***Instruments***

The first instrument used in this project to collect data was the non-participant observation. In this type of observation, the researcher can perform different roles. Cresswell (2013) states that the “non-participant” observer is “a researcher that is an outsider of the group under study, watching and taking field notes from a distance. He or she can record data without direct involvement with activity or people” (p.167). In this case, this corresponds to the role of the investigators as they performed observations *in situ* to the Listening and Speaking face-to-face lessons of group 9-1 to collect relevant information for describing the dynamics of the action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork without interfering with the dynamics of the lessons being observed. They are all “outsiders” as none of them teaches that 9-1 group. The group was observed for as long as it took for the class to study one out of the four themes that compose the English scenario being studied in their face-to-face class. That theme was Micro Cultures: Global Dimensions. No virtual lessons were observed as current 2021 regulations from MEP prohibited so because it would have been impossible to

determine if the observers complied with those regulations (no recording of lessons, screenshots, etc). In addition, since no curriculum or syllabus for the current blended learning context was created by MEP (it continues to be the same as for regular face-to-face classes), no particularly compiled guidelines for assessing classwork existed in the virtual component of the blended learning model.

In regular conditions, studying a theme of a unit typically takes one to two weeks according to the new English curriculum. However, since students are now attending face-to-face classes split into two subgroups, the observations took place for at least a month as stated in the timetable of this project in its Appendices section (see appendix 7).

The second instrument that was used to collect data in the fieldwork was the semi-structured interview for the participant teachers. According to Williams (2018), the semi-structured interview “employs a blend of closed and open-ended questions, often accompanied by follow-up whys or how questions” (p. 493). The investigators interviewed the Listening and Speaking 9-1 group’s teachers. The purpose of interviewing them was to gather information to know about their experience implementing the AOA approach in oral comprehension and oral production classwork and their perspectives on the application of the MEP’s guidelines for the assessment of that classwork. The instrument for the teachers’ interview can be found in the Appendices section of this document (see Appendix 2).

Once the researchers collected the data from both class observations and the teachers’ interviews, a checklist instrument was used to analyze those data as stated in the Data Analysis section of this methodology. This is an instrument created by the

researchers that compiles all the criteria that action-oriented classwork assessment must include, and it was derived from the MEP's guidelines for assessing classwork in the new English curriculum as well as from orientations for the blended learning model outlined in the *Estrategia Regresar*. Employing this instrument, the researchers were able to analyze if the activities are being assessed following those guidelines or not and why. This instrument can also be found in the Appendices section (see appendix 4).

Finally, this investigation counted on professional input from Alfredo Ortega, MEP's English national advisor who is an expert on the principles and fundamentals of the application of the newest curriculum based on the Action-Oriented Approach in public high schools. He was interviewed, and his input was used as the basis for the present investigation regarding the best practices and guidelines for classwork assessment in an AOA class, particularly in the current blended learning context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba. For his part, the English National Advisor provided recommendations for the participant teachers to assess action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork complying with MEP's guidelines in the current blended learning context. The semi-structured interview instrument used to collect this MEP's expert's inputs can be found in the appendices section as well (see appendix 3).

### **Triangulation**

The information gathered from the class observations and teachers' interviews were used to describe the application of the MEP's classwork assessment guidelines followed by the participant teachers in their AOA classes at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba. First, this process was described as-is, and then the information

was analyzed to determine how compliant with the MEP guidelines these classwork assessment processes are being developed. In order to determine what guidelines were or were not being followed, a checklist instrument was used. This instrument was created as a compilation of classwork assessment guidelines from the MEP when using the AOA as well as good practices stated in the ninth-grade English curriculum, which can be found in the appendices of this document (see appendix 4).

Once the information about the as-is process of classwork assessment was documented and analyzed, the inputs from the MEP English National advisor were collected via interview as stated in the instruments section of this methodology. This served the purpose of explaining possible reasons why some of the classwork assessment guidelines may not be followed. The English National Advisor provided advice on further practices to assess classwork in the current blended learning context, which was conjugated with the theory reviewed for this investigation and previous studies that have been conducted on similar scenarios to offer recommendations to the participant teachers.

### ***Findings***

As the main objective of this research is to evaluate the application of MEP's guidelines for ninth-grade teachers' assessment of classwork at LEBT, the ultimate goal of this research was to report how compliant or non-compliant with these MEP's indications was the assessment of oral comprehension and oral production classwork in their face-to-face classes. With these inputs, the researchers were able to provide recommendations to the teachers on how to apply the classwork assessment guidelines in their contexts. Those recommendations were derived from the data analysis

performed (as explained in the previous subsections in this chapter) and were fueled by the theory reviewed for this investigation. Regarding theoretical foundations, the proposed recommendations took into consideration the outcomes of previous studies conducted in foreign schools that have successfully overcome the challenge of assessing classwork and implementing the AOA successfully.

### ***Data analysis***

Cresswell (2013), states that in the process of data analysis, “the researchers build detailed descriptions, develop themes or dimensions, and provide an interpretation from their own views or perspectives in the literature” (p.184). For this investigation project, the researchers analyzed the data collected in light of the theory, previous studies, experts’ findings, and MEP guidelines included in the theoretical framework section of this research. This led the researchers to describe the current assessment process of oral comprehension and oral production classwork carried out by the participant teachers (Listening and Speaking 9-1 group’s teachers). Also, it allowed them to explain how the classwork assessment was carried out in this English class and the current blended learning context. Furthermore, analyzing the facts shown by the instruments along with the literature served as a basis to determine how compliant with the MEP’s guidelines for classwork assessment was the oral comprehension and oral production classwork assessment in the selected ninth-grade group.

**Data Analysis Tools.** To accomplish the first specific objective, the data retrieved from the observations were analyzed using maps of activities and explanatory paragraphs. The maps showed in a graphic manner the activities performed by the teachers in the class observed, particularly those when oral comprehension and oral

production classwork assessment took place. These maps were complemented with descriptive paragraphs to provide details of the most important happenings of the class observed as well as of the assessment process performed. The semi-structured interviews with the teachers also fueled the development of the first objective. These teachers' inputs were summarized and structured in argumentative paragraphs as a way to complement the description of the current classwork assessment process and to disclose the points of view of teachers regarding the process' status quo in the blended learning model context. For the second specific objective, the classwork assessment checklist instrument was the main source for analysis. Based on it, the analysis of the application of the MEP guidelines for assessing classwork was carried out, and a summary table indicating which guidelines are followed and which ones are not is provided. This analysis was complemented by a section or argumentation that leads to the third objective's results. Finally, for the third specific objective, based on the previous two objectives' results, and the inputs from the interview with the English National Advisor from MEP, it is determined if the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class is compliant with the MEP's guidelines for classwork assessment. Recommendations to improve the application of these guidelines are also provided as part of the objective's results.

The following chart summarizes the methodological road map to attain the objectives of the research project. It shows the subjects of study from whom the information was retrieved, the instruments that were used to collect the data, and the data analysis tool which describes how the collected information was examined.



**Figure 3***Data Analysis Summary*

<p><b>First specific objective:</b> To describe the assessment process of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba.</p>		
<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Subject of Study</b>	<b>Data analysis tool</b>
Non-participant observation to 9-1	Teachers and students	Map of activities and descriptive paragraphs
Semi-structured interview to the 9-1 group's teachers	Teachers	Summary tables argumentative paragraphs
<p><b>Second specific objective:</b> To analyze the application of the MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba.</p>		
<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Subject of Study</b>	<b>Data analysis tool</b>
Checklist to analyze the application of MEP's guidelines in the context	Teacher and students	Summary table and argumentative paragraphs

**Third Specific Objective:** To determine if the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT is compliant with the MEP's guidelines for classwork assessment, as well as possible action items to improve the application of these guidelines.

Instrument	Subject of Study	Data analysis tool
Semi-structured interview with Alfredo Ortega, national English advisor from MEP	English National Advisor	Summary Expository paragraphs

*Note.* This was elaborated by the researcher students based on the research's objectives and methods.

## Results

The following results section encompasses the analysis of all the information collected from the observations and interviews with the subjects of study of this research in light of the theory reviewed in the theoretical framework and the inputs from Alfredo Ortega, English National Advisor from MEP. The results disclosed from this analysis provided insights to the research question to understand how the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork is being performed in the Listening and Speaking class of 9-1 group at LEBT in the current 2021 blended learning context, and if it is compliant with the guidelines proposed by MEP. A detailed description of the assessment of oral comprehension and oral production classwork in

group 9-1 is provided in this section, which corresponds to the development of the first objective of the research project. Moreover, a thorough analysis of the classwork assessment process being carried out in the 9-1 Listening and Speaking class is performed to address the second objective of the study. Finally, the section below approaches the third objective of the study by delving into whether the classwork assessment process in the ninth group at LEBT is compliant with the classwork assessment guidelines from MEP, and provides recommendations to the teachers to improve the feasibility of this endeavor.

### **Results from Objective 1: Description of the Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork Assessment in the Listening and Speaking Class of group 9-1**

#### ***Instruments***

To describe how the action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork assessment was carried out in group 9-1 in the Listening and Speaking class at LEBT, the researchers conducted non-participatory class observations as well as a semi-structured interview with the 9-1 group's teachers. Before visiting group 9-1's classes, the researchers informed students' parents by email about the visits and the intention of observing their children in the class (see Appendix 6). No informed consent from students' parents was required for the observations to take place as it does not fall into any of the categories that require so according to the Ethics and Scientific Committee of the University of Costa Rica for Research (see appendix 10).

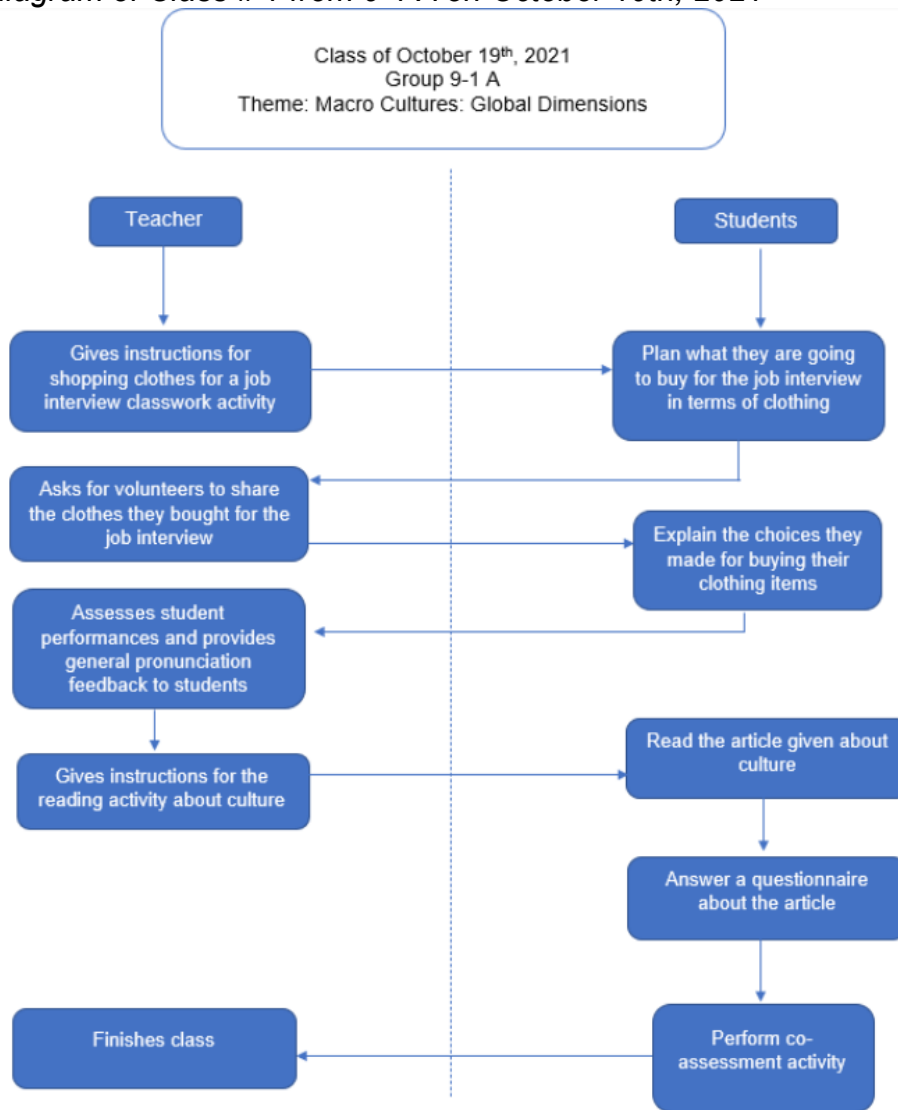
**Instrument # 1: Class Observations.** The main purpose of the observations

was to compile the most relevant events that took place in the Listening and Speaking lessons observed by the researchers in Group 9-1 at LEBT, particularly from the perspective of oral comprehension and oral production classwork assessment. The number of classes observed was determined based on the research's methods. As stated in the instruments subsection of the methods chapter, group 9-1 was observed for as long as it took for the teachers to cover one out of the four themes that compose the English scenario being studied. In this case, four classes were targeted to be observed between October 19th and November 9th, 2021, which were the number of classes that the teachers estimated as required for covering the theme called "Macro Cultures: Global Dimensions" belonging to the "Cultural Diversity and Connections" scenario contained in the PABs (MEP, 2021). However, out of those four classes, the researchers were able to observe only three of them as for the last class, no student attended and, therefore, no face-to-face encounter was possible to observe.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic became an issue in our country, group 9-1 used to take the Listening & Speaking class in two subgroups: 9-1 A and 9-1 B, as it is regularly the case for Bilingual Experimental High Schools (MEP, 2006). With the implementation of the Estrategia Regresar in 2021 explained in the Theoretical Framework, this division was kept with the exception that, for face-to-face classes, only one of those subgroups attended per week. That is to say, in week "A" only 9-1 A attended the face-to-face encounter while in week "B" only 9-1 B did. As a result, the researchers were able to observe two classes from the 9-1 A subgroup and only a class from the 9-1 B subgroup. Class # 1 from 9-1 A.

The observations to 9-1 A took place on October 19th and November 2nd, 2021. In this first class, ten students were present. The following map of activities shows the sequence and dynamics of the class that took place on October 19th, 2021, including the moments of classwork assessment:

**Figure 4**  
*Activity diagram of Class # 1 from 9-1 A on October 19th, 2021*



*Note:* This activity diagram reflects the classwork assessment flow followed in the 9-1 face-to-face class taking place on October 19th, 2021 at LEBT

This class started at 12.10 pm. The teacher indicated that the pre-listening activity had already been performed. Then, as displayed in Figure 4, she proceeded to give the instructions for the next activity which consisted of simulating going shopping for clothes for a job interview and asking students if there were any questions. The teacher stated that they had 10 minutes to perform the activity. For this activity, students were given some fake money (two hundred dollars) and they were required to plan what kind of clothes they would buy if they had to prepare for a job interview. They also had to choose among these occupations: doctor, lawyer, and computer programmer. After ten minutes, the teacher asked if they finished the activity, and since they finished it, the teacher asked for volunteers to present what they had planned for the interview. The students raised their hands one by one to say their answers out loud; they were actively participating. They explained the reasons why they selected each piece of clothing and where they would buy them. At the end of the activity, the teacher took some minutes to provide some feedback about pronunciation and subject-verb agreement.

For the next activity, the teacher gave instructions and asked if there were any questions. The students had to read an article about culture and answer a given questionnaire. The students had fifteen minutes to read and complete the questionnaire. To assess the activity, the teacher selected a student and told him that he was going to be the leader. His role was about asking the other classmates their answers and he indicated along with the class if the answers given were correct or incorrect. The class finished at 1.45 pm.

***Action-Oriented Classwork Assessment in Class # 1 from 9-1 A.*** As stated in the observation checklist used to compile information from the class observed (see

Appendix 1), the classwork assessment elements observed in class are presented in Figure 5 below. A thorough analysis of these elements as well as the MEP guidelines for classwork assessment is presented in the results section for Objective # 2.

**Figure 5**

*Basic Classwork Assessment Elements Observed in Class # 1 from 9-1 A*

<b>Classwork Assessment Element</b>	Yes	No	NA	Comments
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.	X			
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.	X			Yes, she assigned a person to lead an assessment activity
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.		X		
The students consciously assess their language performance with a given instrument (self-assessment)		X		
The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.	X			

**Class # 2 from 9-1 A.** The following map of activities (Figure 6) shows the sequence and dynamics of the class that took place on November 2nd, 2021, including the moments of classwork assessment:

**Figure 6**  
*Activity diagram of Class # 2 from 9-1 A on November 2nd, 2021*



*Note:* This activity diagram reflects the classwork assessment flow followed in the 9-1 face-to-face class taking place on November 2nd, 2021 at LEBT



Before the class started, the teacher greeted the students. Then, she explained that they were about to study different cultures around the world. She gave instructions for the guessing activity and projected them on the board. She also asked if there were any questions. For this activity, the teacher projected pictures on the board about different traditions, and the students had to guess what these traditions involved. The first picture was about some men jumping over some babies on the floor. The second picture showed a bride and a broom dancing on some broken dishes. The third picture showed the Indian festival that consists of throwing some colored powder at each other. The last picture portrayed some Amazonian people putting a boy's hands in a honeycomb full of bees. After they saw the pictures, the teacher asked what the individuals in the pictures were doing, why, and what they represented. For this activity, the teacher asked for volunteers and students raised their hands to actively participate. Then, the class discussion started. The students shared their ideas on what they thought was the most amazing tradition, why, and if they would participate in any of them. If they had no clue as to what the traditions represented, they asked the teacher and she explained those. After the class discussion activity, she projected a video (once) about cultures and gave the instructions for the fill-in-a-chart activity based on the video and asked if there was any question. The students had 10 minutes to complete the activity. They filled in the chart in which it was required to classify the tradition and the country as stated in the video. After the ten minutes given, the teacher asked for volunteers, and students shared their answers. The class finished at 1.40 pm.

***Action-Oriented Classwork Assessment in Class # 1 from 9-1 A.*** The classwork assessment elements observed in class are presented in Figure 5 below, and

they were taken from the checklist instrument used to compile information from the class observed (see Appendix 1). A thorough analysis of these elements as well as the MEP guidelines for classwork assessment is presented in the results section for objective # 2.

**Figure 7**

*Basic Classwork Assessment Elements Observed in Class # 2 from 9-1 A*

<b>Classwork Assessment Element</b>	Yes	No	NA	Comments
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.		X		
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.	X			
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.		X		
The students consciously assess their language performance with a given instrument (self-assessment)		X		
The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.	X			

**Class # 1 from 9-1 B.** The only observation performed to 9-1 B took place on October 26<sup>th</sup> as no student attended the one scheduled for November 9<sup>th</sup>. In this class, only one student was present. The following map of activities shows the sequence and dynamics of the class, including the moments for assessment:

**Figure 8**  
Activity diagram of Class # 2 from 9-1 B on October 26th, 2021



*Note:* This activity diagram reflects the classwork assessment flow followed in the 9-1 B face-to-face class taking place on October 26th, 2021 at LEBT.

The class started at 12.10 pm. with the teacher providing the student with a handout that he claimed was the warm-up activity. Using this handout, which was a matching exercise, the teacher presented new vocabulary that was going to be used during the class. The teacher also scaffolded vocabulary words the student had previously learned with some that could be new. For the main activity, the teacher played an episode of the American sitcom Friends. The student watched it for the first time in English with English subtitles. After seeing the video, the student had an online quiz to fill in. The questions were related to it. The teacher checked the student's performance through the computer. The quiz's evaluation process consisted of the teacher checking all the correct answers, and replaying the parts of the episode where the student made a mistake. The class finished at 1.30pm.

The researchers intended to perform a fourth observation of a face-to-face class, which would be the second one for 9-1 B. However, even though they came to LEBT to observe it, no student attended. According to the teacher, all students were absent because they were close to beginning the summative evaluation instruments and attendance was not mandatory, which made them decide to stay home working on the instruments.

***Action-Oriented Classwork Assessment in Class # 1 from 9-1 B.*** The classwork assessment elements observed in class are presented in Figure 8 below, and they were taken from the checklist instrument used to compile information from the class observed (see Appendix 1). A thorough analysis of these elements as well as the

MEP guidelines for classwork assessment is presented in the results section for objective # 2.

**Figure 8**

*Basic Classwork Assessment Elements Observed in Class # 1 from 9-1 B*

<b>Classwork Assessment Element</b>	Yes	No	NA	Comments
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.	X			The teacher and the student discuss the answers to the quiz together. He asks the questions out loud, and the student answers them. The instructor asks additional questions and encourages her to answer.
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.			X	It does not apply because there was only one student.
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.		X		
The students consciously assess their language performance with a given instrument (self-assessment)		X		
The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.	X			

**Instrument # 2: Interview with the Teachers.** The following section outlines the findings of these interviews which were performed separately, that is, one teacher at a time.

***Perspectives from 9-1 Teachers on the Assessment of Classwork in Group***

**9-1.** Besides observing the two 9-1 subgroups in face-to-face classes, the researchers also conducted a semi-structured interview for the group's teachers to elaborate on how was oral comprehension and oral production classwork being assessed in the current 2021 blended learning model, and if it took as a basis the guidelines for classwork assessment provided by MEP as part of the new English curriculum and the *Estrategia Regresar*. As it can be seen in Appendix 2, the interview contained nine content questions that were intended to serve as a means to gather information from the teachers' experience working with the AOA and especially with assessing oral comprehension and oral production action-oriented classwork in the current 2021 blended learning model. The following are the five subtopics that the nine questions were grouped into. Per each subtopic, the perspectives of both teachers are stated based on their oral answers to the questions.

***Experience Assessing Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork.*** The Action-Oriented Approach on which the current English curriculum is based started to be implemented at LEBT in 2017. This means that teachers at LEBT have been using the new curriculum in ninth grade since 2019 when MEP released it. For the 9-1 A's teacher, the way in which the AOA operates does not differ much from the way English was taught at LEBT before it came out. According to

her, the experience for students was positive when it comes to listening exercises in class as they can work on a pre-listening activity in which they can listen for the first time and for the second time before actually completing any exercise. Also, she considered this new curriculum very thorough as it devotes a session to pronunciation per week. On the other hand, she claimed that it had been really challenging to find materials for the themes that the curriculum includes, even on websites where teachers used to find audio tracks and activities before.

For his part, the 9-1 B's teacher used the words "useful" and "successful" when he talked about the action-oriented oral comprehension and production classwork being assessed in class. He also mentioned that time and resources are a huge concern at MEP. Additionally, he spoke about the lack of interest that students show in virtual lessons. This is because it was not mandatory for students to turn on their cameras or participate in classwork activities. He mentioned that another issue is the fact that graded classwork assessment is not part of the evaluation within the blended learning model. Finally, he stated that despite all these factors, there are still ways in which listening and speaking skills were promoted. For instance, he mentioned that it was easier and more convenient to work with students' oral comprehension skills over oral production skills.

***Classwork Assessment in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Model.*** As stated in the theoretical framework of this research, classwork was not a graded evaluation component for students during 2021 due to the evaluation being based on GTA completion (55%) and summative assessment strategies (45%) (MEP, 2021). The

9-1 A's teacher points this out when the research students asked her to describe how the oral comprehension and oral production classwork was carried out in the 2021 blended learning model. In this respect, she claimed that this had been really difficult to perform in the blended learning model, mostly because in face-to-face classes, social distance must be kept, and that prevented students from working in teams effectively (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021). However, despite the difficulty, she pointed out that she would bring oral activities for students to perform in face-to-face encounters such as interviews, role plays, individual video recordings, discussions, round tables, debates, etc, depending on the student level. She stated that she would foster the assessment of these activities in the form of peer correction, self-assessment with a checklist for them to auto-grade their performances in oral production, and she would also provide feedback to the students once their presentations were over. In addition, she claimed that the GTAs for this group were designed for students to work on listening exercises and not on oral production, which allowed them to work the oral production competence during the face-to-face encounters and the synchronous sessions on Microsoft Teams. The assessment of those exercises was performed as part of the evaluation of the GTAs, and feedback was provided by her on open items and by Microsoft Teams itself on cloze and multiple-choice exercises (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021).

For his part, 9-1 B's teacher mentioned that regarding classwork in the current blended learning model some of the activities that he proposed were: Kahoot quizzes, class discussions, videos, or short documentaries that could confirm that students were



understanding the class's topics. He also reinforced the difference between the virtual and the face-to-face environment. Another technique that this teacher used in his classes was having them record and upload audios in which they narrated something they saw. For example, they could be required to react to a video.

***Tools and Resources to Assess Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork.*** Besides Microsoft Teams which became the official technological tool to mediate virtual encounters and to function as a centralized spot for class communications, 9-1 A's teacher claimed that students have been asked to record videos and create other technology-based products, but that many of them had been unable to hand them in as they were not fully familiar with video platforms or how to record podcasts, etc. Many of them did not even have a good internet connection at home, which made it really difficult to use technology in synchronous classes. In face-to-face encounters, she explained she would resort to observation, formative assessment, co-assessment, and in face-to-face class, sometimes resources such as role-playing (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021).

For his part, 9-1 B's teacher mentioned that he likes technology a lot. Therefore, his assessing classwork tools were Kahoot, quizzes, and the use of their digital notebook. He also stated that co-assessment is something that he had not promoted a lot because of the unidirectional environment that virtual lessons hold. However, he acknowledged that some tools permit this interaction. For example, the feature of "rooms" in Teams is where students have class discussions and the teacher encouraged them to self-monitor their pronunciation and that of their peers.

***The Role of the Self-Study Guide in Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork.*** Just as the *Estrategia Regresar* states, the GTA is the sole instrument used as the basis for class mediation (MEP, 2021). In this sense, 9-1 A's teacher stated that in 9-1 A, the assessment of oral comprehension activities is based completely on the GTAs and that they were mostly composed of listening exercises. According to her, GTAs fostered students to self-assess their work as they would always include a self-regulation matrix and a self-assessment chart that they would need to complete. Also, she explained to the researchers that GTAs were usually short as they could not take students more than one hour to complete. Based on their score, teachers could certify if students were achieving the goal and identify what students may require a make-up GTA to compensate and review the contents. However, "the information collected in GTAs is not entirely reliable because it is well known that some students sometimes even pay someone to complete their GTAs, other students commit plagiarism, so the assessment that we perform using GTAs may not be as accurate" (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021).

For his part, the 9-1 B's teacher said he likes self-study guides. He stated that even though the creation of these guides requires a lot of time, they simplify his job a lot. Students were assigned the self-study guide weekly and they work it through Microsoft Forms. In this way, the teacher could keep track of their performance. On the other hand, a drawback of the implementation of these guides, according to him, is that students who received virtual classes normally had the exact same information in the

guides. He stated that it was very common for students to copy and share their answers with their classmates.

***Assessment Guidelines for Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork and their Current Applicability.*** Since this research ultimately revolves around the evaluation of the application of MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork, the participant teachers were asked to share their thoughts regarding those guidelines and how they are applicable or not applicable in the current blended learning context. The 9-1 A's teacher stated that there was a good intention behind those guidelines and the new English curriculum in general. However, she admitted it was really complicated to put them into practice as "we do not have either the conditions or the time to do this. We do our best to prioritize the contents for students to at least learn the basics to make it to more complex levels" (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021). On the other hand, she acknowledged that the way the guidelines proposed assessing students was really complete and constructive as they conceived assessment to not only occur at the end when the final product is created but from the very beginning and throughout the process. According to her, they favor the process of application of what students learn in everyday activities and conversations such as how to get a conversation started with a peer or friend. They represent a very integral way of assessment that the new programs propose (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021). Regarding their applicability in the current 2021 blended learning model, she considered that most of them are not applicable as "time does not allow for

us to follow a normal classwork process”. She stated, however, that in face-to-face encounters, the guidelines apply more than in virtual encounters because “at least we get to see the students and can be more vigilant of the assessment process”(C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021).

For his part, the 9-1 B’s teacher believes that guidelines would have worked if they had been compliant with what the MEP administration had in mind when they created the blended scenario. Also, he stated that every school is different. In this particular school, he states they have a decent, nice, and comfortable environment. However, their students do not show up. Attendance was very low in 2021. He claimed that it did not make sense for them to come to class not because the class is boring, but because they have realized that coming to class does not represent a single point in their final grade.

By means of the development of this objective, it was possible to describe the status quo of the classwork assessment in 9-1 when it comes to action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production tasks. Thanks to the inputs provided by both teachers as well as the class observations performed, the research students came to the conclusion that the AOA is being used by the teachers in their classes even within the blended learning model taking place in 2021. In fact, both teachers agreed that the AOA is an approach in which skills like oral comprehension and oral production can be promoted. Nonetheless, the pandemic affected the evaluation process, and that was reflected in the classwork assessment. They also coincide that the difficulty of implementing this approach and the new curriculum in the blended learning model is

high and that the skill that was most feasible to work in face-to-face encounters was the oral production. This was verified in the class observations as most of the classwork activities that took place during face-to-face interactions were related to oral production while in general, according to the teachers, the oral comprehension skill was favored mostly in GTAs and virtual work. Finally, both teachers agreed with the fact that the guidelines for classwork assessment issued by MEP are not applicable for the most part in the blended learning model, which is analyzed in depth in objective # 2 in the following pages.

**Results from Objective 2: Analysis of the application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1**

The analysis of the application of the MEP guidelines for assessing action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork was carried out based on the classwork assessment checklist instrument (see appendix 4) which compiles all the guidelines that this process should follow in the current blended learning model at LEBT. As explained in previous sections, these guidelines were obtained from the official ninth-grade English curriculum, and the official pedagogical orientations for the blended model outlined in the *Estrategia Regresar*. By means of this instrument, the researchers were able to analyze each of the guidelines in light of the way the classwork assessment was performed in the lessons observed.

***Instruments***

**Instrument # 3: Checklist to Analyze the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production**

**Classwork.** The following section outlines the findings of the application of the guidelines for assessing action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in 9-1 A and B in the Listening and Speaking lessons observed.

**Class # 1 From 9-1 A.** In this class, two classwork activities were performed by the students and both of them were assessed by the teacher. As previously shown on Figure 4, those two activities were 1) shopping for clothes for a job interview, and 2) responding to a questionnaire about a culture article. The following analysis approaches these classwork activities in light of the twenty guidelines for classwork assessment that compose the checklist instrument. As explained in the Theoretical Framework, these guidelines are divided into three groups: Pre-classwork guidelines, during classwork guidelines, and post-classwork guidelines. Therefore, this analysis encompasses the three groups of guidelines herewith.

*Pre-classwork Guidelines*

**1. Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.** As it can be verified in the description of the events that took place in Class # 1 from 9-1 A in the Results section, the teacher did not provide any indication to students on how they were going to be assessed. The lack of criteria based on which the performance of the classwork activities would be assessed is incompatible with the pedagogical implications contained in the English Curriculum (MEP, 2017) from which this guideline was compiled. Those implications state, as explained in the Theoretical Framework of the

research, that for assessing communicative competencies in the classroom, teachers must “inform in advance and discuss with students the criteria that will be used to assess the task so they know what is expected and can assess their own performance as well” (MEP, 2017, p.58).

It was also not observed or heard in Class # 1 that the teacher commented with the students on the actional outcome that they were supposed to achieve with the activity. This contradicts the theory of the AOA contained in the new English curriculum from MEP, as it says that when it comes to implementing the curriculum in any class activities, teachers should consider that their students “are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real-life contexts meaningfully” (MEP, 2017, p.31).

**2. The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.** The teacher provided instructions to the students on the two classwork activities performed in class, just as it was collected as evidence in the observation instrument in appendix 1. The teacher also made sure that the students understood these instructions before starting to work on the activities by means of asking them to repeat the instructions out loud, which coincides with what the English curriculum states when it highlights that “in spoken interaction, students are expected (...) to check comprehension of tasks given by the teacher” (MEP, 2017, p.51). However, no indication as to how they would be assessed was provided, which goes against the pedagogical implications for teachers to assess communicative competencies that claim that the teacher must “select the indicators and performance levels (criteria) that will be used to assess the performance of the learner during the

task” (MEP, 2017, p.58). This non-compliance with the guideline could be attributed to the fact that the activity was not a summative one, but the English curriculum foundational theory claims that the four types of assessment (diagnostic, formative, implicit/spontaneous, and summative) “allow for the support of learners in the classroom and provide cumulative evidence for a final score” (MEP, 2017, p.58); hence, it is not only for the summative assessment that the teacher should use indicators or criteria to assess performance.

**3. The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.** The new English curriculum defines “enduring understanding” as a synthesis of what is expected for the learners to understand along with the didactic units (MEP, 2017, p.211) and “essential question” as “a question which fosters understanding and critical thinking to help learners transfer their learnings to a new context.” (MEP, 2017, p.211). In this respect, the general mediation principles contained in the new English curriculum state that the teacher must start each theme of a unit’s scenario with learning goals, an essential question (...), and the enduring understanding (MEP, 2017, p. 42). In the case of Class # 1 from 9-1 A, the teacher did not perform this action, which also made it impossible to check if the students understood the essential question and enduring understanding.

**4. The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).** According to the orientations for the pedagogic mediation in the blended learning model implemented by MEP in 2021 as part of the *Estrategia Regresar*, teachers have been instructed to use the PABs to develop their mediation activities and



not the entirety of the English content program. The intention behind this guideline is that the teachers focus on the learnings that are pertinent and relevant for the students to learn (MEP, 2021, p. 12). In class # 1 from 9-1 A, the theme studied belonged to the PABs. The theme was “Macro Cultures: Global Dimensions” which was part of the “Cultural Diversity and Connections” scenario (MEP, 2021) as described in objective # 1.

**5. The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of the teacher’s scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.** Oxford (2003) cited in MEP (2017) defines learning strategies as “specifications, behaviors, steps or techniques such as seeking out conversation patterns or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task –used by students to enhance their own learning” (p. 54). They are, in essence, specific behaviors or thought processes that students use to enhance their own language learning (MEP, 2017, p. 2014). In the case of Class # 1 from 9-1 A, the teacher modeled the process of how to buy clothes at a store to prepare for a job interview and referred to the activity performed in the last class which served as language input for it. The teacher also fostered the individual practice as the activities mentioned were performed individually, and then presented in public. It was clear that students had also been given previous chances to use the cognitive and compensation learning strategies as it was common to hear them say “teacher, how do you say \_\_\_ in English” during their presentations.

**6. The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.** Although the

teacher mentioned that the students had listened to some language inputs that could be useful for the shopping for clothes activity, those language inputs were not at their disposal in either written or oral form. No vocabulary or useful expressions were provided to the students to scaffold their spoken production or to provide answers to the article-based questionnaire. This goes against what the English curriculum states in the assessed activities: “the teacher should bring back useful words and phrases to learners’ attention, and provide additional pedagogical resources to the learners who need more assistance.” (MEP, 2017, p. 44).

The previous six guidelines analyzed correspond to the pre-classwork set of guidelines contained in the checklist instrument to be evaluated in this research Results section. Figure 9 below summarizes which of the guidelines were followed in Class # 1 from 9-1 A and which ones were not.

### Figure 9

*Summary Table of the Pre-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.		X	
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X	
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities being assessed.		X	
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).	X		

5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher’s scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.	X		
6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.		X	

*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

### *During-classwork Guidelines*

**7. The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.** The new English curriculum highlights that the classroom assessment in an action-oriented class involves discrete-point tasks and performance-based tasks. The former corresponds to “selected-response tasks to measure discrete units which encompass grammatical, semantic and pragmatic knowledge form, meaning and use” (MEP, 2017, p. 57) while the latter encompasses “demonstration of specific knowledge, skills and abilities using the target language, through integrated-skills tasks within a domain, scenario, and theme” (MEP, 2017, p. 57). In this respect, it can be stated that the oral production activity about shopping for clothes for a job interview is a performance-based task as it allowed the students to perform a task that they could need to perform in the real life. This activity was observed to foster the assessment for learning conceived as “a cognitive and behavioral process, which shows what the learner is capable of achieving with the language.” (MEP, 2017, p.57). However, even though the questionnaire activity had a component of oral production as it was checked orally, it falls into the category of discrete-point tasks as it did not have a performance-based orientation. This

non-performance-based orientation goes not only against the English curriculum AOA foundations but also against the recommendations from MEP compiled in the *Estrategia Regresar*, specifically in the orientations for the pedagogic mediation within the blended learning model. In those orientations, it is claimed that “teachers will have to take advantage of the face-to-face interaction and the depth that it allows for creating social and cultural bonds, as well as learning for the development of skills and collaboration” (MEP, 2021, p.13).

**8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).** According to the new English curriculum and its AOA foundations, a task can be conceived only if it implies “an action motivated by a goal or a need, whether personal or generated by a learning situation, leads to identifiable outcomes, combines different competences and activities, and emphasizes real-life situations related to learners’ communication needs” (MEP, 2017, p.33). In the case of the oral production activity performed in class, it can be claimed that it is an actional and authentic task as it demands students to go beyond the classroom setting. In addition, it was generated by a learning situation proposed by the teacher. In the case of the questionnaire completed by the students, however, it was not an action-oriented task as it does not coincide with the definition of an action-oriented task provided in the new English curriculum that reads: “Purposeful act set in a context that learners could face in everyday life in a variety of situations” (MEP, 2017, p.210). This one was mostly a task conceived from a Communicative Approach perspective in which “the task was seen as classwork, with an emphasis on content rather than form” (Nunan, 2004 cited in

MEP, 2017).

**9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening.**

Regarding this guideline, since students did not perform any oral comprehension activity in class, it was not possible to observe if the sequence proposed by the new English curriculum was followed. Hence, this guideline could not be analyzed and was set as not applicable as shown in Figure 10.

**10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.** Just as in guideline # 9, this one was not able to be analyzed as no oral comprehension activity was performed in class.

**11- In oral comprehension activities, audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).** Just as in guidelines # 9 and #10, this one was not able to be analyzed as no oral comprehension activity was performed in class.

**12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.** In this first class, the teacher and the students followed all the steps of the sequence required for oral production activities in the new English curriculum. To begin with, the teacher provided the students with the resources to be used in the activity (fake money, for example), which coincides with what the English curriculum proposes to be done in the planning step. Students organized and rehearsed their presentations individually during the given time and asked the teacher for help when needed. Once

they were ready, the teacher instructed them to deliver their presentation in front of the class.

**13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.** Per the new English curriculum, the “monitoring and assessment of the communicative competence is a key feature of the syllabus to provide evidence of language and non-language learning” (MEP, 2017, p.59). It was observed in class that the teacher asked the students if they had any questions while creating the oral production, and motivated them by approving their shopping choices beforehand. The teacher would also take advantage of the time to help them with pronunciation and also vocabulary, which ratiocinates with what is stated on the orientations for pedagogic mediation when it says that “the constant monitoring from the teacher on their students allows him/her to make timely decisions to provide the support needed to each student” (MEP, 2017, p.24).

**14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.** As it was defined in the Theoretical Framework of the research, a self-study guide or GTA is the sole instrument to be used in the 2021 blended learning model to mediate both the face-to-face and the virtual classes. According to MEP (2021), the GTA “as a didactic tool for the pedagogic mediation represents a strong source of evidence to compile valuable information on the levels of achievement of students towards the expected and non-expected learnings” (p. 24). In the case of Class # 1 from 9-1 A, it was observed that students did not have their GTAs with them in class or were asked to use them. The teacher for her part did not resort to its use either. Therefore, although it was claimed by the teacher

that the students did use the GTA for autonomous asynchronous work at home (information retrieved from the interview with the teacher that can be verified in the Results of objective # 1), this instrument was not used for the mediation of the class or classwork assessment.

**15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities.** As explained in guideline # 14, since the self-study guide was not used during class, this guideline could not be evaluated.

The previous nine guidelines analyzed corresponds to the during-classwork set of guidelines contained in the checklist instrument to be evaluated in this research Results section. Figure 10 below summarizes which of the guidelines were followed in Class # 1 from 9-1 A and which ones were not.

**Figure 10**

*Summary Table of the During-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.	X		
8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).	X		
9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group			X

feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening			
10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.			X
11- In oral comprehension activities, audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).			X
12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.	X		
13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X		
14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.		X	
15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities.			X

Note: Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

#### *Post-classwork Guidelines*

**16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.** Regarding this guideline, once students said they were done with the oral production assignment, the teacher provided them with the needed time for rehearsal. Therefore, it can be claimed that this guideline was followed according to what the English curriculum suggests when it says before delivering oral



productions, students should rehearse by practicing the dialogues, role-plays, or conversations (MEP, 2017, p.52).

**17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.** It was observed by the research students that while the students were delivering their oral productions regarding going shopping and buying clothes for a job interview, the teacher provided pronunciation feedback both at the moment of delivery and after they were done. The teacher highlights the pronunciation of tricky words such as “shopping”, “clothes”, and “money” and brings them to the attention of students by asking them to repeat them out loud. The teacher also showed some pictures on the internet that represented the vocabulary being asked by the students, which does justice to the orientations for pedagogic mediation when it comes to ICTs as they claim that “if equipment and connectivity allow it at school, ICTs can be used to take advantage of the multiple didactic resources that MEP has made available such as radio, TV, social media, etc” (MEP, 2021, p.16).

**18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.** According to the new English curriculum, by using technically designed instruments for self and co-assessment such as a descriptive scale with the guidance of the teacher, the learner can assess his/her own performance. In addition, this curriculum theory also highlights that “learners consciously assess their language

performances using rubrics, checklists and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance.” (MEP, 2021, p.44). In this respect, even though there was certainly an opportunity for co-assessment when each student delivered their presentation (the teacher would ask everyone for feedback for the presenters), they did not count on any instrument with which they could either self-assess or co-assess someone else. Interestingly, the teacher claimed in the interview with the research students that self-assessment was mostly included in GTAs and that students did not take seriously the task of self-assessing (C. Díaz, personal communication, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021).

**19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to measure the outcome of students.** The new English curriculum highlights that one of the pedagogic implications of classwork assessment is that the teacher should “determine the technically designed instruments to assess the learners’ performance to obtain expected evidence” (MEP, 2021, p. 58). However, for the oral production activity developed in class, the teacher did not count on any instrument to assess the students. It was observed that she took notes on a blank notepad, but she did not use a technically designed instrument to record pieces of evidence of their students’ performances.

**20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs.** Since no instrument was used to measure or assess the outcomes of the oral production activity, this guideline cannot be analyzed.

**Figure 10**

*Summary Table of the Post-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.		X	
17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X		
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X	
19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance.		X	
20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs.			X

*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

**Class # 2 from 9-1 A.** In regard to this class, there were three classwork activities in which students participated. Two of them were assessed by the teacher. It was shown previously in Figure 6 where we can see that the first activity consisted of a guessing activity, then there was a class discussion, and finally a fill-in-a-chart activity.

These activities are analyzed by taking into account the guidelines for classwork assessment included in the checklist instrument.

### *Pre-classwork Guidelines*

**1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.** As stated previously, the students were not told about how the assessment was performed, nor the learning outcome they need to achieve. As it was explained before in Class # 1 from 9-1 A, students must be aware of how they will be assessed in each of the activities they will perform.

Additionally, they need to know that each task they perform has a purpose as MEP (2017) claims:

Task accomplishment by an individual involves the strategic activation of specific linguistic competencies (linguistic, pragmatic, and socio-linguistic) along with a range of sociocognitive competencies in order to carry out a set of purposeful actions in a particular domain (socio-interpersonal, sociotransactional, academic and professional) with a clearly defined goal and a specific outcome. (p. 41)

Therefore, here is when it becomes relevant that students are conscious of the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.

**2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.** The teacher guide (MEP, 2017) indicates a series of steps to implement a class activity based on the AOA and how it should be assessed. One of the steps is to make sure that all learners understand task instructions. In this class, the teacher mentioned what students had to do in order to complete the activity.

She also asked if there were any questions about it (see Figure 6). She did not, however, implement a strategy to know if students actually understood what they needed to do as stated in MEP (2017). Finally, she did not explain how they would be assessed.

**3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.** In this class, the teacher did not make sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student. MEP (2017) highlights the importance for students to understand this when affirming that “The enduring understanding is shared by the teacher at the beginning of each unit to connect students with the core ideas that have lasting value beyond the classroom (p. 42). Therefore, it is key to help students get involved with the main ideas of the classwork.

**4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings’ template).** In the document called “Orientaciones de mediación pedagógica para la educación combinada” MEP (2021) states that the PAB included in the tools box should be used by teachers when planning (p. 22). In this class, the theme studied was “Macro Cultures: Global Dimensions” which was part of the “Cultural Diversity and Connections” scenario (MEP, 2021). It is part of the PAB.

**5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher’s scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.** In this case, in the class students got immersed in the theme they were studying because, at the beginning of

the class, the teacher previously showed them some pictures about different cultures' traditions. MEP (2017) also determines that students need to share their opinions before starting the next activity because it “promotes the development of complex, challenging, creative and critical thinking skills, in order to face the multidimensional perspective of problems with the support of cooperative learning and pedagogical scaffolding” (p. 21). As explained before, this actually happens in Class # 2 from 9-1 A.

**6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.** In Class # 2 from 9-1 A, through pictures and class discussion, the students were given vocabulary that was key to developing the coming activities. MEP (2017) states that teachers should emphasize “useful words and phrases to learners’ attention” (p.44), which helps students have them in mind when performing the activities.

These six guides examined correspond to the pre-classwork guidelines included in the checklist. The following figure describes which of the guidelines were present in Class # 2 from 9-1 A and which ones were not.

**Figure 9**  
*Summary Table of the Pre-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.		X	
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X	
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and		X	

essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.			
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).	X		
5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.	X		
6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.	X		

*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

#### *During-classwork Guidelines*

**7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.** Class # 2 from 9-1 A did not include any performance-based activity. The students participated in a guessing activity and then in a class discussion about it. They also watched a video, did a fill-in-a chart activity and students shared their answers. Therefore, the activities did not constitute any performance-based task. Nevertheless, MEP (2017) mentions that learners are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real-life contexts meaningfully (p. 31).

**8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).** Assessment is based on what the social agent is able to do in real-life situations or scenarios and the process he/she requires to develop the competences (MEP, 2017, p. 40). In Class # 2 from 9-1 A, it was not performed. The activities were

assessed through class discussion and asking for volunteers; however, they were not performed as MEP recommends (based on real-life scenarios).

**9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening.** In Class # 2 from 9-1 A, no oral comprehension activity was performed in this class.

**10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.** As figure 6 shows there were no oral comprehension activities in this class; hence, this could not be established; thus, this could not be analyzed.

**11- In oral comprehension activities, the audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).** As stated previously, in this class there was no oral comprehension activity; therefore, this could not be determined.

**12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.** This is not applicable given the fact that in Class # 2 from 9-1 A, students participated in the class discussion, and for the fill-in-a-chart activity they shared their answers out loud but there was not an oral production activity.

**13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.** In this class, the teacher kept asking questions to students, which led to discussion and also clarified some queries when students had them. She also asked if there were any questions and encouraged participation. MEP (2017) emphasizes that teachers must check on the progress of learning situations or when carrying out a



learning task (p. 214). This could be seen through the class because the teacher encouraged students and made it clear that she was there to help them understand and finish the activities.

**14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.** MEP (2021) states that the GTA constitutes a source of evidence. It is an input to collect information about the level of achievement of the learning outcomes developed. It is key to analyze and make prompt decisions to provide support to each student. In this class, the students did not use the GTA (p.2). Since it can be used asynchronous, this instrument was not used for mediating the class or assessing classwork.

**15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities.** As it was pointed out previously given the fact that the self-study guide was not used in this class, this guideline could not be verified.

These nine guidelines correspond to the during-classwork set of guidelines contained in the checklist instrument. Figure 10 specifies if the guidelines were followed or not during the class # 2 from 9-1 A.

### Figure 10

*Summary Table of the During-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.		X	

8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).		X	
9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening.			X
10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.			X
11- In oral comprehension activities, audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).			X
12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.			X
13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X		
14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.		X	
15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities.			X

*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

#### *Post-classwork Guidelines*

**16- Before presenting, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension**

**activities.** As stated throughout this analysis there were no oral production nor oral comprehension activities. The activities performed were discrete-point tasks but not considered oral production or oral comprehension activities. Therefore, it could not be found. Unfortunately, the lack of oral production and oral comprehension affected the case study because those were the expected English areas to be assessed within the blended learning context.

**17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.**

In this class, the teacher provided feedback and assessed the fill-in-a chart activity. Through the guessing activity, she pointed out the important words that were required for the next activity. MEP (2017) mentions that students need to value feedback and error correction as a learning opportunity (p. 167) This is why it is emphasized along with the curriculum the constructive feedback.

**18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.** As stated before there were no oral comprehension and oral production activities; consequently, students did not assess their performances through any instrument.

**19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a performance scale to measure the outcome of students.** As stated before, there were no oral production activities in the class; hence, it cannot be said that the teacher used a

performance scale to measure the outcome of students.

**20- If a performance scale is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs.** In this class there were no oral production activities; thus, this cannot be determined.

The previous five guidelines correspond to the Post-classwork Guidelines incorporated in the checklist instrument. Figure 10 below summarizes which of the guidelines were compliant with class # 2 from 9-1 A and which ones were not.

**Figure 10**

*Summary Table of the Post-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.		X	
17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X		
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X	
19- For assessing oral production activities, the		X	

teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance.			
20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs.			X

*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

**Class #3 From 9-1 B.** Similar to classes #1 and #2, class #3 will be thoroughly analyzed in the following section using the MEP's guidelines for assessing classwork in the AOA blended learning context. As explained in the Theoretical Framework, these guidelines are divided into three groups: Pre-classwork guidelines, during-classwork guidelines, and post-classwork guidelines. Therefore, this analysis encompasses the three groups of guidelines herewith.

#### *Pre-classwork Guidelines*

**1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.** As it can be verified in the description of the events that took place in Class #3 from 9-1 B in the Results section, it was not observed that the teacher indicated to the students how they were going to be assessed. The lack of criteria based on which the performance of the classwork activities would be assessed is incompatible with the pedagogical implications contained in the English Curriculum (MEP, 2017) from which this guideline was compiled. That implication states, as explained in the Theoretical Framework of the research, that for assessing communicative competencies in the classroom, teachers

must “inform in advance and discuss with students the criteria that will be used to assess the task so they know what is expected and can assess their own performance as well” (MEP, 2017, p.58).

It was also not observed or heard in Class #3 that the teacher commented with the students the actional outcome that they were to achieve with the activity. This contradicts the theory of the AOA contained in the new English curriculum from MEP, as it says that when it comes to implementing the curriculum in any class activities, teachers should consider that their students “are social agents that use the target language to perform specific actions in real-life contexts meaningfully” (MEP, 2017, p.31).

**2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.** The teacher provided instructions to the student before the classwork activities. The teacher also made sure that the student understood these instructions before starting to work on the activities, which coincides with what the English curriculum states when it highlights that “in spoken interaction, students are expected (...) to check comprehension of tasks given by the teacher” (MEP, 2017, p.51). However, no indication as to how they would be assessed was provided, which goes against the pedagogical implication for teachers to assess communicative competencies that claims that the teacher must “select the indicators and performance levels (criteria) that will be used to assess the performance of the learner during the task” (MEP, 2017, p.58). This non-compliance with the guideline could be attributed to the fact that the activity was not a summative one, but the English

curriculum foundational theory claims that the four types of assessment (diagnostic, formative, implicit/spontaneous, and summative) “allow for the support of learners in the classroom and provide cumulative evidence for a final score” (MEP, 2017, p.58); hence, it is not only for the summative assessment that the teacher should use indicators or criteria to assess performance.

**3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities being assessed.** In the case of Class #3 from 9-1 B, the teacher did not perform this action because it did not apply. The teacher presented the theme in the first class, and the one observed was not the first one.

**4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).** Just like in the two previous classes that were observed, in Class #3 from 9-1 B, the theme studied belonged to the PABs, and it was “Macro Cultures: Global Dimensions” which was part of the “Cultural Diversity and Connections” scenario (MEP, 2021).

**5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher’s scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.** In the case of Class # 3 from 9-1 B the teacher made sure to model and scaffold from the beginning of the lesson. He constantly asked questions so that the student could monitor her own knowledge, and make a bridge between what she knew and what she was going to

learn. On the other hand, peer collaboration was not possible since the student was the only one to show it to the class. Also, individual practice was present during the class. In the mediation activities, teachers scaffold learning by moving learners throughout the following pedagogical steps: 1. pre-communicative language practices to focus on specific language features. 2. Communicative language practices to convey a meaningful message using newly acquired language skills. 3. Structured communication tasks, for using vocabulary and language structures within situations. 4. Action-oriented tasks for using spontaneous language and non-language skills and communication strategies within scenarios and domains to reach particular outcomes (MEP, 2017, p. 41)

**6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.** The teacher from Class #3 made sure that the only student who was present had at her disposal useful English phrases and idioms. The main activity of the class, as stated before, was a questionnaire about a Friends episode that the student watched in class. The episode held real conversations among the characters. Idioms, phrases, and slang were heard by the student. The teacher made emphasis on these phrases and these particular real-life scenarios. This coincides with the English curriculum as it says that in assessed activities, the teacher should “bring back useful words and phrases to learners’ attention, and provide additional pedagogical resources to the learners who need more assistance.” (MEP, 2017, p. 44).

The previous six guidelines analyzed correspond to the pre-classwork set of



guidelines contained in the checklist instrument to be evaluated in this research Results section. Figure 9 below summarizes which of the guidelines were followed in Class # 3 from 9-1 B and which ones were not.

### Figure 9

*Summary Table of the Pre-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.		X	
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.	X		
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.		X	
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).	X		
5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.	X		

6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.	X		
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*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument coined in appendix 4

### *During-classwork Guidelines*

**7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.** Contrary to the other two classes in which activities were performance-based, this one was a discrete point task. Such a task refers to “selected-response tasks to measure discrete units which encompass grammatical, semantic and pragmatic knowledge form, meaning and use” (MEP, 2017, p. 57). In this respect, it can be stated that the proposed activities for this day did not comply with what MEP states for performance-based activities. The questionnaire about the Friends episode had a component of oral comprehension as it was checked orally, and was a discrete-point task as it did not have a performance-based orientation.

**8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).** Based on guideline # 7 in which it is clear that the classwork activity was not performance-based it was also not an authentic task. As explained in the previous classes’ analysis, an action-oriented task is a purposeful act set in a context that learners could face in everyday life in a variety of situations (MEP, 2017, p. 210), and this was not the case in the classwork activity performed.

**9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening.**

Regarding this guideline, most of the MEP's guidelines were followed. First, the teacher started the class with the pre-listening activity. As stated before, this activity was a handout in which the student had to recognize vocabulary words that were going to be said during the oral comprehension activity. The listening for the first time complies with the sequence MEP requires. However, the pair/group feedback was not possible because this student was the only one in the class. Afterward, the student listened for the second time. Finally, for the post-listening activity, the student answered a quiz about the episode.

**10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.** In the case of class #3, as stated before, the oral comprehension activity was a Friends' episode that had a duration of approximately 22 minutes. In the words of MEP's English National Advisor "the range of duration of a sound file must be from thirty seconds to one minute (A. Ortega personal communication, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022). According to this, what the teacher mediated for this oral comprehension classwork activity may have numerous benefits; nonetheless, goes against MEP recommendations.

**11- In oral comprehension activities, the audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).** In the case of the student who attended Class # 1 from

9-1-B, her English level was within the band of B1.1 and B1.2 levels. The oral production aims of the B1 level require students to understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc., including short narratives. (Council for Cultural Co-operation, 2001, p. 66). With this being said, the research team concluded that the oral comprehension activity's level of difficulty aligned with the student's level, and even though the activity was not performance-based it was an effective activity since sitcoms "contain familiar topics which are presented with an understandable language that students can absorb, relate and reproduce in everyday situations" (Kilburn & Kilburn 2012, p. 29).

**12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.** In the third class observed, the teacher did not follow these steps since there was not an oral production activity.

**13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.** Per the new English curriculum, the "monitoring and assessment of the communicative competence is a key feature of the syllabus to provide evidence of language and non-language learning" (MEP, 2017, p.59). It was observed in this class that the teacher would constantly ask the student if she remembered the previous vocabulary they had studied before. Additionally, he encouraged her to speak in English, watch the Friends episode in English with English subtitles, and answer the comprehension questions correctly. When the teacher noticed that the student made a mistake, he replayed the specific part of the episode and made sure she corrected it

effectively.

**14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.** In the case of Class # 3 from 9-1 B, it was observed that neither the teacher nor the student had their GTA during the academic activities. In fact, in the words of the teacher, “I always assigned self-study guides weekly and they were done through Microsoft Forms. So, I can keep track of the performance of every student.” (A. Alvarado personal communication, October 26th, 2021). Although the GTA was used for the asynchronous classes, it was not present in the face-to-face class.

**15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities.** As explained in guideline # 14, since the self-study guide was not used during class, this guideline could not be evaluated.

The previous ninth guidelines analyzed corresponds to the during-classwork set of guidelines contained in the checklist instrument to be evaluated in this research Results section. Figure 10 below summarizes which of the guidelines were followed in Class # 3 from 9-1 B and which ones were not.

### **Figure 10**

*Summary Table of the During-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.		X	
8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).	X		
9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening.			X
10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.			X
11- In oral comprehension activities, audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).			X
12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.	X		
13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X		

14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.		X	
15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities.			X

*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

#### *Post-classwork Guidelines*

**16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.** Regarding this guideline, for class #3 the teacher did not prepare any oral production or spoken report activity. Therefore, the student did not rehearse any final presentation. According to the teacher, “I find that it is a lot more convenient to work on oral comprehension than oral production. When it comes to oral comprehension it is easier to be assessed or evaluated through our standard and regular exercises.” (A. Alvarado, personal communication, October 26th, 2021). With this said, the research team could interpret that oral production activities were not performed daily by the students from 9-B.

**17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners’ attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.**

During the observation of class #3, the research team noticed that the teacher did provide constant feedback to the student. The teacher also showed some pictures on the internet that represented the vocabulary being asked by the students, which does justice to the orientations for pedagogic mediation when it comes to ICTs as they claim that “if equipment and connectivity allow it at school, ICTs can be used to take advantage of the multiple didactic resources that MEP has made available such as radio, TV, social media, etc” (MEP, 2021, p.16).

**18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.** As explained in the previous analysis from Class #1 and #2 from 9-1 A, the teacher must provide a technically designed instrument for self-assessment. However, the teacher did not hand in any instrument to the student, and even if it had been given to the student, co-assessment would not have been performed since only one student was present in class.

**19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to measure the outcome of students.** This guideline could not be measured because there was not any oral production activity in Class #3 from 9-B.

**20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the**



**PABs.** Just like in the previous guideline, this one could not be measured because there was not any oral production activity in Class #3 from 9-B.

### Figure 10

*Summary Table of the Post-Classwork Guidelines Analyzed*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.		X	
17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X		
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X	
19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance.			X

20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs.			X
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*Note:* Excerpt of the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

The present analysis permitted to elaborate on the different guidelines for assessing action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the participant group. Throughout the analysis performed on these pages, the twenty guidelines for assessing classwork were discussed and supported by the theories from which they were derived, which were mostly the current English curriculum for 9th grade in bilingual experimental high schools, the pedagogic orientations to the teaching practice within the blended learning model, and the teacher guide to applying the AOA in class. The analysis encompassed the three classes observed from 9-1 (both subgroups A and B) as all of them included classwork activities that allowed the research students to examine each of them in light of the guidelines. While some activities were action-oriented and their analysis was more thorough, other activities such as the one documented in Class # 1 from 9-1 B could not be analyzed exhaustively as several guidelines simply did not apply to go over. As all guidelines were strategically categorized into pre-classwork, during-classwork, and post-classwork guidelines, this analysis attained the goal of reviewing the presence or absence of action-oriented classwork assessment traits that were essential to respond to this research question which reads “How is the assessment of action-oriented oral

comprehension and oral production classwork being performed in the Listening and Speaking class of the 9-1 group at LEBT in the current 2021 blended learning context?”

In the following pages, the third objective of the research is developed to finally determine, based on this previous analysis, if the classwork assessment in 9-1 is compliant with the guidelines provided by MEP, if it is partially compliant, or non-compliant.

**Results from Objective 3: Compliance of the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current 2021 blended learning context at LEBT with the MEP’s guidelines for classwork assessment.**

Based on the analysis of the application of the MEP guidelines for assessing action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork that was provided in the previous section, it was possible to accurately determine if the classwork assessment being carried out by the 9-1 teachers at LEBT is compliant with those guidelines, if it is just partially compliant, or if it is not compliant at all with them. In this section, the third objective of the research is developed to meet that purpose. Each class is addressed separately at first, and then, the three are analyzed together to issue the final claim as to how compliant or non-compliant the assessment process in the three of them is. This objective’s development is fueled by the insights of Alfredo Ortega, National English Advisor who contributed to this research project with explanations of how the teachers should put into practice the guidelines for classwork assessment and reasons why they may not be doing it in the blended learning model.

**Class # 1 From 9-1 A**

In this subsection, a summary table is presented depicting with which guidelines the classwork assessment in the Listening and Speaking class of 9-1 is fully compliant, with which ones it is partially compliant, and with which ones it is not compliant at all. Only the applicable guidelines are included in this summary as those that were marked as not applicable in the analysis cannot be taken into account in this determination of the level of compliance.

**Figure 11**

*Summary Table of the Compliance Level of the Classwork Assessment Performed in Class # 1 from 9-1 A*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
<b><i>Pre-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.	X		
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X	
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.			X
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).	X		
5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding	X		

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.			
6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.			X
<b><i>During-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.		X	
8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).			X
12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.	X		
13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X		
14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.			X
<b><i>Post-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.	X		

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X		
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X	
19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance.			X

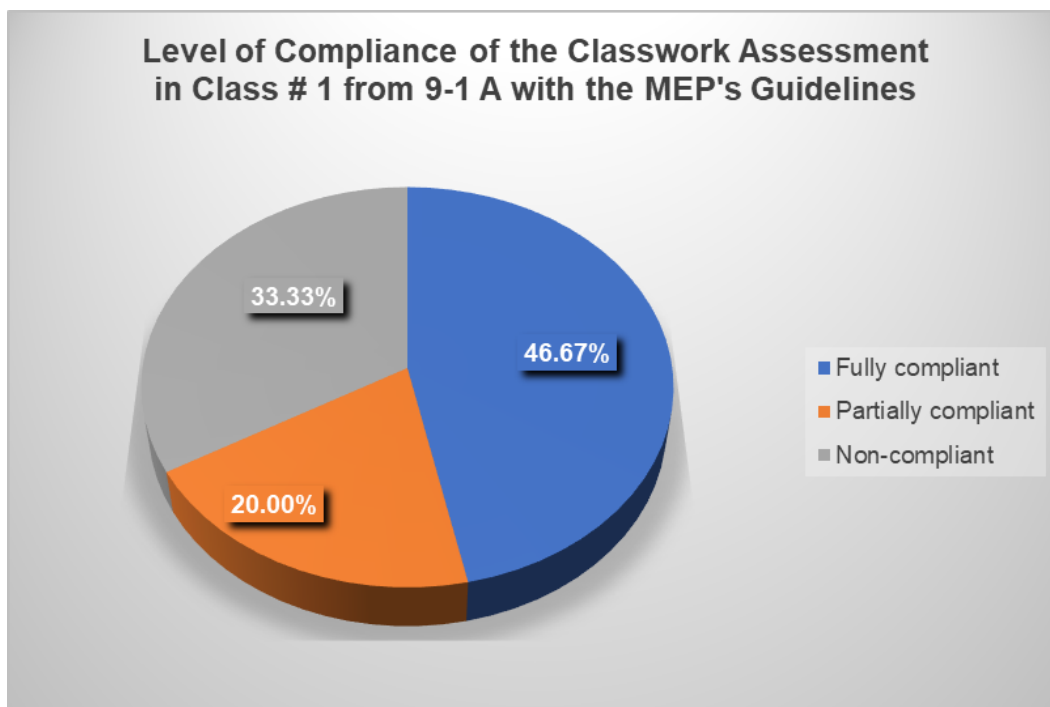
*Note:* Adapted from the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

In Figure 11, the classwork assessment applied in Class # 1 from 9-1 A is categorized into compliance levels using the MEP guidelines as the basis. As it can be observed, the classwork assessment is fully compliant with three out of the six pre-classwork guidelines, two out of the five during-classwork guidelines, and two out of the four post-classwork guidelines, which means that the percentage of full compliance is 46.67%. Moreover, there are some guidelines with which the classwork assessment performed in this class is partially compliant, just as marked in Figure 1 and explained in their analysis. In terms of numbers, it is one out of the six pre-classwork guidelines, one out of the five during-classwork, and two out of the four post-classwork guidelines. The

percentage of partial compliance is 20%. Finally, the classwork assessment in this class is not compliant with 5 guidelines, which represents a percentage of non-compliance of 33.33%. With these numbers, it can be stated that the oral production classwork assessed in this class is fully compliant with less than half of the guidelines provided by MEP and partially compliant with a fifth of them. For a better visualization of these results, Figure 12 shows the percentages of compliance of the classwork assessment with the guidelines:

**Figure 12**

*Level of Compliance with the MEP's Guidelines of the Classwork Assessment in Class # 1 from 9-1 A*



*Note:* Charted from the data displayed in Figure 11

**Class # 2 from 9-1 A**

For the class # 2 from 9-1 A, a summary table is presented depicting with which guidelines the classwork assessment in the Listening and Speaking is fully compliant, with which ones it is partially compliant, and with which ones it is not compliant at all. As well as the previous one, only the applicable guidelines are included in this summary as those that were marked as not applicable in the analysis cannot be taken into account in this determination of the level of compliance.

**Figure 13**

*Summary Table of the Compliance Level of the Classwork Assessment Performed in Class # 2 from 9-1 A*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant with</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
<b><i>Pre-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.			X
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X	
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.			X
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).	X		
5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to	X		



<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant with</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.			
6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.	X		
<b><i>During-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.			X
8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).			X
13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X		
14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.			X
<b><i>Post-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X		
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically			X

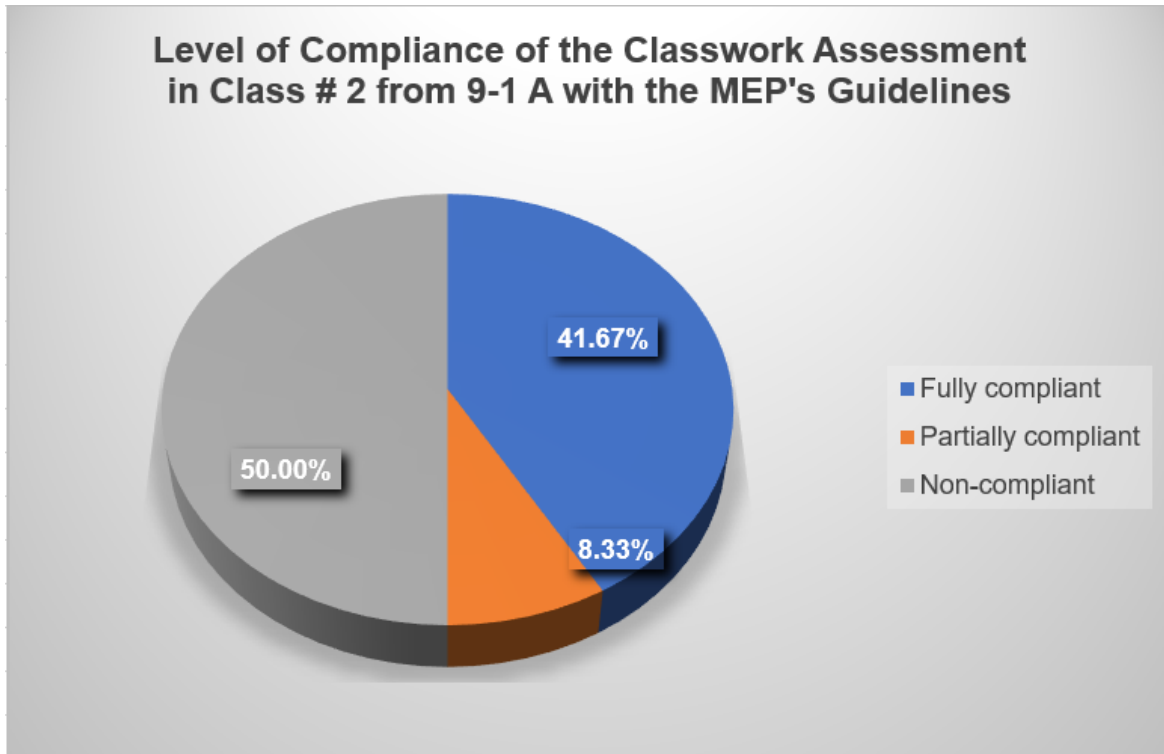
<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant with</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.			

*Note:* Adapted from the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

In Figure 13, the classwork assessment applied in Class # 1 from 9-1 A is categorized into compliance levels using the MEP guidelines as the basis. As it is shown in the figure, the classwork assessment is fully compliant with three out of the six pre-classwork guidelines, one out of the four during-classwork guidelines, and one out of the 2 post-classwork guidelines. This means that the percentage of full compliance is 41.67%. Additionally, there are some guidelines with which the classwork assessment performed in this class is partially compliant, just as marked in Figure 1 and explained in their analysis. In terms of numbers, it is one out of the six pre-classwork guidelines, one out of the four during-classwork, and one out of the four post-classwork guidelines. The percentage of partial compliance is 8.33%. Finally, the classwork assessment in this class is not compliant with 6 guidelines, which represents a percentage of non-compliance of 50%. With these numbers, it can be stated that the oral production classwork assessed in this class is fully compliant with less than half of the guidelines provided by MEP and partially compliant with eight of them. For a better visualization of these results, Figure 14 shows the percentages of compliance of the classwork assessment with the guidelines:

**Figure 14**

*Level of Compliance with the MEP's Guidelines of the Classwork Assessment in Class # 2 from 9-1 A*



*Note:* Charted from the data displayed in Figure 13

### **Class # 3 From 9-1 B**

In this subsection, similar to the previous classes' analysis, a summary table is presented depicting with which guidelines the classwork assessment in the Listening and Speaking class of 9-1 is fully compliant, with which ones it is partially compliant, and with which ones it is not compliant at all. Only the applicable guidelines are included in this summary as those that were marked as not applicable in the analysis cannot be taken into account in this determination of the level of compliance.

**Figure 15**

*Summary Table of the Compliance Level of the Classwork Assessment Performed in Class # 1 from 9-1 A*

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant with</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
<b><i>Pre-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.			X
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X	
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed.			X
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template).	X		
5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.	X		
6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.	X		
<b><i>During-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning.			X
8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic			X

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Fully compliant with</b>	<b>Partially compliant</b>	<b>Non-compliant</b>
(tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting).			
9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening.		X	
10- In oral comprehension activities, the audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2).	X		
11- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less.			X
12- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X		
13- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork.			X
<b><i>Post-classwork Guidelines</i></b>			
14- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X		

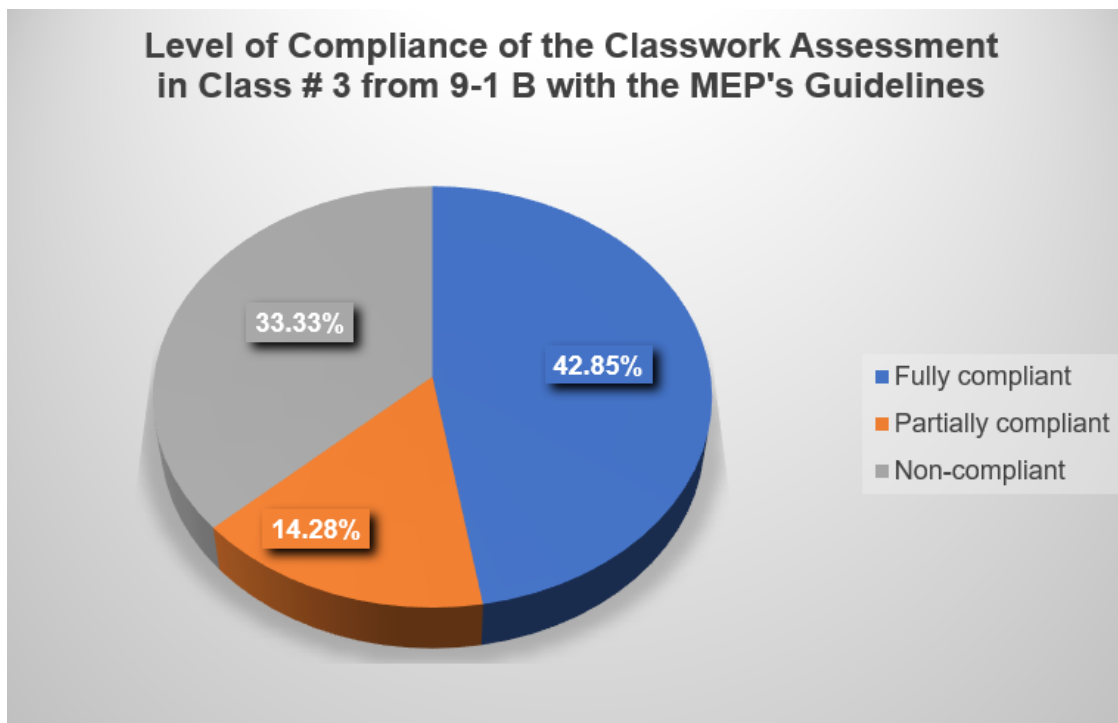
*Note:* Adapted from the checklist instrument provided in appendix 4

In Figure 15, the classwork assessment applied in Class # 3 from 9-1 B is categorized into compliance levels using the MEP guidelines as the basis. As it can be

shown, the classwork assessment is fully compliant with three out of the six pre-classwork guidelines, two out of the seven during-classwork guidelines, and one out of the one post-classwork guideline. This means that the percentage of full compliance is 42.85%. Moreover, there are some guidelines with which the classwork assessment performed in this class is partially compliant. In terms of numbers, it is one out of the six pre-classwork guidelines, one out of the seven during-classwork, and zero guidelines were partially compliant in the post-classwork. The percentage of partial compliance is 14.28%. Finally, the classwork assessment in this class is not compliant with 6 guidelines, which represents a percentage of non-compliance of 33.33%. With these numbers, it can be stated that the oral production classwork assessed in this class is fully compliant with less than half of the guidelines provided by MEP and partially compliant with a fifth of them. For a better visualization of these results, Figure 16 shows the percentages of compliance of the classwork assessment with the guidelines:

**Figure 16**

*Level of Compliance with the MEP's Guidelines of the Classwork Assessment in Class # 3 from 9-1 B*



*Note:* Charted from the data displayed in Figure 15

As can be disclosed from the numbers given above, the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in 9-1 is only partially compliant with the guidelines for its corresponding assessment. In order to understand possible reasons why this is so and provide some advice for the participant teachers to know how to comply with these guidelines, the research students conducted.

#### **Instrument # 4: Semi-structured Interview with MEP's National English Advisor Alfredo Ortega**

The following section condenses the inputs from Mr. Alfredo Ortega, National English Advisor, on the application of the MEP's guidelines to assess action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork. His answers served the purpose of understanding some of the causes for the classwork assessment at LEBT to be only partially compliant with the MEP's guidelines and providing recommendations for the teachers to improve this assessment. Just as in the case of the previous interviews with the participant teachers, the inputs from Mr. Ortega were grouped and categorized into some major aspects of interest for this research.

***Purpose of the Action-Oriented Classwork Assessment.*** According to Mr. Ortega, the assessment from the AOA perspective has to do with what the student can perform, which means it is performance-based. That is to say, all the assessment that is done in class, both in classwork and in summative assessments, must be assessment for learning in which students are asked to use the language to complete every-day tasks. On the same token, when asked what ways for assessing oral comprehension and oral production classwork MEP considered to be effective in AOA environments, he claimed that everything that is performance-based is considered compliant with what the AOA approach and the English curriculum foster, and it should be effected if it is conducted based on the guidelines.

***Possible Causes for the Non-compliance with the Classwork Assessment Guidelines.*** According to Mr. Ortega, many could be the reasons why a considerable



number of high schools may not be fully compliant with the guidelines for classwork assessment in the blended learning model. First, this was an unprecedented model for which nobody was really prepared, and it impacted all the populations that are part of the education system. (A. Ortega, personal communication, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022). This resulted in overwhelming situations as high schools tended to give different interpretations to the information and documentation provided by MEP, which was extensive and sometimes hard to digest given the stressful momentum that the country and the world were going through. Second, Mr. Ortega claims that another possible cause for the assessment not complying with the MEP guidelines is the lack of reading of official documentation from teachers, supervisors, and principals. He says that teachers had official documents that included recommendations on how to assess classwork since the very beginning of the blended learning model (A. Ortega, personal communication, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022). Mr. Ortega states that even though the MEP pieces of information, processes, orientations, and materials, in general, were made available for all teachers, advisors, coordinators, and principals, there were people who did not inform themselves about all this and who did not follow any of the orientations or help provided. In fact, the MEP supporting departments offered webinars and different training sessions to the teachers on how to face the new learning model. They even generated a thousand and two hundred GTAs in the toolbox (included on the MEP's website) which are available for all teachers. They were based on the new curriculum. (A. Ortega, personal communication, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022). Those GTAs not only included all the steps for students to follow to complete the activity, but also a section for self-assessment to facilitate the grading and autoperception processes of the

assessment. Finally, the third reason that Mr. Ortega considers to have played an important role in the non-compliance of the assessment with the MEP guidelines is the logistical difficulties that all schools had, including the LEBT, to put into practice the blended learning model itself. The fact that some students were taught remotely while others came from time to time to face-to-face classes as well as the fact that some students simply did not commit to their responsibilities made the assessment of classwork and the implementation of the blended learning painful processes (A. Ortega, personal communication, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022).

***Sources of Support for Teachers.*** In the words of Mr. Ortega, the MEP authorities supported and continue supporting the teachers on the implementation of the blended learning model and the mediation of their classes in general. They instructed and trained regional advisors with all the information and processes needed for teachers to be able to cope with the model and perform effective teaching (all this must have been cascaded to the teachers), they made available several technological resources from which the teachers could obtain teaching material, activities, and even GTAs that were ready to customize. Some of those resources were *Caja de Herramientas* (Toolbox), *Educativo*, and the MEP portal where all the orientations on how to assess, instructions to create GTAs, and official documentation could be found. In terms of the GTA creation and grading, which Mr. Ortega admits was troublesome for many teachers, MEP documented clear orientations on how to create them, and included the explanations of what was expected to happen in the four different pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and

construction. In spite of all this, Mr. Ortega recognizes that the supervision of the GTA creation, as well as the face-to-face and virtual classes, were very difficult due to the variety of scenarios with which the high schools had to deal with as well as the conditions of many teachers who had to face with many students' situations at the same time.

***Recommendations for Teachers to Assess Action-Oriented Classwork within the Blended Learning Model.*** During the interview with Mr. Ortega, he pointed out several recommendations for teachers at LEBT to assess action-oriented classwork by sticking to the guidelines for this purpose. First, he claims that in the blended learning model, teachers must promote the oral competence when students are in face-to-face classes; therefore, he recommends that the GTAs include spoken production and spoken interactions that can be worked in class taking advantage of the presence of the teacher and students with whom they can interact. For both oral comprehension and oral production activities, the teachers must take into account all the orientations for assessment that MEP has placed at their disposal. For example, the audio tracks played in class must not exceed 1.30 minutes in duration, and the teachers should favor the audio tracks where both men and women speak and interact. Second, everything that is assessed in class must be performance-based. The assessment must be authentic and must help enable the learners to perform daily-life activities using the language. It is vital to highlight that the teachers need to let the students know what they are going to be assessed upon in each classwork assessment. Actually, teachers count on official documents that include recommendations on how to assess classwork. In

addition, teachers should foster self-assessment / co-assessment in classwork activities, which Mr. Ortega considers is not happening right now as “teachers come with a previous mindset that prevents them from allowing the students to assess their own learning” (A. Ortega, personal communication, February 2nd, 2022). Third, Mr. Ortega recommends that teachers identify the tools that are available on the MEP’s platforms and websites as in some cases, they do not even know that they have these materials and that there are many materials created. In this regard, in the interview with the 9-1 A teacher, she claimed that it was challenging to find materials that were compliant with the AOA; however, Mr. Ortega claims that in the *Educatico* tool, teachers can find a variety of resources. Finally, Mr. Ortega highlighted the importance for teachers to follow the official documents and orientations where they have examples and guidelines on how to evaluate and mediate classwork in the blended learning model.

### **Overall Discussion and Contributions to the Foreign Language Instruction in Costa Rica**

Not only did this case study encompass an effort to evaluate the application of MEP’s guidelines for the assessment of classwork in group 9-1 at LEBT, but also embodied a completely unprecedented endeavor in the field of English teaching in public education in Costa Rica. This study stands as one of the very few research projects published in the country in the field of classwork assessment framed in the new English curriculum based on the Action-Oriented Approach. No other studies had been conveyed in the same particular field at the moment when this research was performed, which turns it into a pioneer study that can be taken as a referent for further research

efforts. In addition, given the conjunctural situation lived during the pandemic of COVID-19 that forced MEP's authorities to come up with a palliative plan to continue educating their students, this research can be considered a contributor to a better understanding of how teachers can assess action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in face-to-face classes of a blended learning model. That was achieved thanks to the compilation of the most important guidelines to be followed when assessing this type of work. Such compilation took as a basis the already existing guidelines for classwork assessment and powered it with the incorporation of very particular guidelines conceived in the blended learning model released as part of the *Estrategia Regresar*. Those guidelines are currently not compiled by MEP or by LEBT in a single instrument that can be used by the teachers in case the blended learning model is instaurated in the future. Here is where this research's takeaways can be taken as reliable inputs to compose that kind of instrument as all the guidelines were compiled from official documentation, pedagogic and assessment orientations, and the participation of a National English advisor.

The intention of this research was not to point out what flaws, discrepancies, or non-compliance with the MEP's current guidelines for classwork assessment the participant teachers had in their teaching practice. On the contrary, the study was always conceived as an evaluation of the status-quo of the process for assessing action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork with the purpose of knowing how compliant was their classwork assessment with those MEP's guidelines and how they could improve this process and overcome the challenges of assessing productive skills such as the oral production and receptive skills such as the oral

comprehension, which would automatically turn their assessment into more compliant of a practice. It can be stated, therefore, that the main contribution to LEBT is that now teachers know what they are doing well according to the MEP and what they need to take action on if they wish to stick to the guidelines ruling classwork assessment within such a complex panorama as it is the current blended learning model in which they need to continue using a curriculum that was born thinking it would be taught in face-to-face classes only.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Objective 1: To describe the assessment process of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT.**

Regarding the first specific objective about the description of how the action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork was being assessed in group 9-1 at LEBT, it can be concluded that:

1. There are some aspects related to classwork assessment that both 9-1 teachers share and some in which they differ. For instance, the teacher from 9-1 A stated feeling more comfortable with teaching oral comprehension and the teacher from 9-1 B openly preferred oral production in the blended learning model. However, they both agreed that assessing these two competencies within this new model was a difficult task. One of the reasons to state this was the fact that students could not work in groups because of the public health and social measures for COVID 19 that they needed to keep as a result of the pandemic. Additionally, not

all the students attended the face-to-face lessons because being there was not mandatory and the classwork component was not part of their grade. In conclusion, assessing either oral comprehension or oral production activities was a laborious duty within the 2021 blended learning context according to the teachers.

2. Both 9-1 English teachers agree on the GTA being an effective evaluation tool. In their words, the GTAs fostered self-assessment, simplified their job in some ways, and were feasible for teachers to track students' performance. Unfortunately, the GTAs in 9-1 were assigned to be done at home which in the words of the teacher from 9-1 B is a drawback because a lot of students tended to copy the answers to the exercises from their classmates.
3. Both 9-1 English teachers agree that AOA is an approach that encourages listening and speaking skills. Interestingly, they did not refer to these as oral comprehension and oral production competences, which is what they are called in the English curriculum. Whereas students were preparing and attending a job interview or learning idioms and being in touch with authentic English through a Friends episode, these two skills were enhanced. However, they coincide that the pandemic and the blended learning model had a direct impact on the classwork assessment process.
4. The research team concluded that the English teachers from 9-1 A and B did not provide students with co-assessment tools as encouraged by the English curriculum and MEP. Some of the reasons were that classes were unidirectional, and students had more interaction with the teachers than among them.

Additionally, self-assessment was considered “pointless” by one of the teachers since most of the students marked “yes” to all the evaluation checklist criteria provided to them as part of the GTAs.

**Recommendations:**

1. The research students recommend that the 9-1A teachers implement some of the AOA-aligned GTA's tasks provided by MEP as supporting material in their online toolbox, in their face-to-face classes. Alternatively, a recommendation for the teachers in case they do not find those sample GTAs useful is to come up with their own authentic interactions and open-ended real-life scenarios and incorporate them as part of the GTAs tasks, so that students can not only put into practice their oral comprehension as they are doing now but also their ability to produce orally.
2. The teachers should introduce their students to self-assessment and co-assessment tools and help them understand how they work. When students learn how to take advantage of these tools, they could potentially be able to self-managing their own learning. It is key for students to understand that what they are assessed upon is something that he will put into practice eventually, so the teachers must highlight the importance of the assessment for learning.
3. A recommendations for the LEBT's principal and academic coordinator is to bring to school some of the offered trainings on AOA and the new English curriculum from MEP, starting from the regional advisory office. This can help the teachers better understand the curriculum and plan activities that stick to the AOA, which



will allow them to plan GTS or face-to-face classes more compliant to the guidelines for classwork assessment as well.

**Objective 2: To analyze the application of the MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT.**

Regarding the second specific objective about the analysis of the application of the MEP's guidelines for the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in 9-1, it can be concluded that:

1. The oral comprehension activities were favored by teachers only as part of GTAs which were assigned for students to do at home and not in class. This means that the recommendation from MEP about favoring both oral comprehension and oral production in face-to-face classes is not followed per *Estrategia Regresar*.
2. The GTA was not used in any of the classes even though in the orientations for the pedagogic mediation in the blended learning model it is stated that the GTA is the sole instrument to mediate the classes and collect evidence of learning, which turns this one into one of the most critical non-compliance found in the study.

**Recommendations:**

1. Teachers should favor in their face-to-face classes the performance of oral

comprehension and oral production activities just as MEP highlights; they are crucial in the AOA and are part of the blended learning model and the *Estrategia Regresar*.

2. It is recommended for teachers to use the GTA to mediate the class even for oral activities. This was emphasized by the MEP's National English Advisor when he indicated that the GTA is key in the blended learning model. Also, the GTA is important for the development of the autonomous work that students are assigned (MEP, 2017).
3. The teachers should review the differences between the Task-Based Approach (TBA) and the Action-Oriented Approach (AOA), and make sure that the classwork activities proposed are action-oriented as both approaches tend to be mistaken in their scope. In case they need clarifications or more training from MEP, they should reach out to the local English advisor at the Turrialba's MEP headquarters. If no response from them is satisfactory, they should reach out to any of the National English advisors for help.

**Objective 3: To determine if the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 in the current blended learning context at LEBT is compliant with the MEP's guidelines for classwork assessment, as well as possible action items to improve the application of these guidelines.**

Regarding the third specific objective about the determination of whether the assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the

Listening and Speaking class of group 9-1 at LEBT is compliant with the MEP's guidelines for classwork assessment, as well as possible action items to improve the application of these guidelines, it can be concluded that:

1. The assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in 9-1 is not fully compliant with the guidelines provided by MEP for classwork assessment within the blended learning model. This conclusion was obtained thanks to the thorough analysis performed on the three classes observed. The classwork assessment performed in the first class had a percentage of full compliance with the MEP guidelines of 46.67 while the assessment performed in the second and third classes' classwork activities had 41.67% and 42.85% as percentages of full compliance. Therefore, the level of compliance in the action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork assessment can be categorized as partially compliant.
2. The research students with the cooperation of Mr. Alfredo Ortega, National English Advisor from MEP, concluded that this research results cannot be extrapolated to other high schools, not even to other LEBs, as there may have been certain variables that influenced the fact that the 9-1 group's classwork assessment be partially compliant with the guidelines provided by MEP for self-assessment of action-oriented oral comprehension and oral production classwork in the blended learning model. Those variables could be the level of English from students which allowed them to actively participate in oral production activities, the number of students attending face-to-face classes, etc.

Therefore, this case study's results are uniquely reliable to the classwork assessment of 9-1 at LEBT.

3. The research students concluded that there are some discrepancies between the MEP authorities and the teachers regarding the "assessment for learning" orientation that MEP promotes via the new English curriculum. While MEP recommends that teachers foster the need for their students to self-assess and co-assess their learning, teachers are not putting this into practice in the blended-learning model (and also not before this model became current, as disclosed in the interviews with the teachers). The reason why they are obviating to apply self-assessment and co-assessment strategies is the non-reliable results that could be obtained from students as in the GTAs they sometimes copy the answers from someone else or get a lot of help at home or from the internet.
4. There was a disconnection from most institutions with MEP and vice-versa that turned the application of the blended learning model into a difficult endeavor. Mr. Ortega helped the research students to understand that the reasons for this mismatch could have been many, but in particular, he attributed them to the overwhelming amount of information that was constantly provided to the teachers and institutions which was not always processed and understood equally by all the parties. In addition, the high number of scenarios that could be happening at school with the implementation of the model (i.e. some students attending both virtual and face-to-face classes, only virtual ones, only face-to-face ones, none of them) was the trigger for many misunderstandings and complications both at schools and at the students' homes.

**Recommendations:**

1. Although some of the classwork activities observed were already action-oriented, the research students recommend that the teachers orient all the classwork activities to a performance-based focus. This way, the students can experience assessment for learning that allows them to use language in real-life scenarios and complete authentic actions with it. To achieve this, the teachers need to let students know what they are going to be assessed on and what for.
2. Teachers should keep up to date with the documents and resources that MEP makes available to them as they contain key information on how to assess and mediate classwork, particularly from an actional standpoint. They also contain materials that can be used in class to ease the complexity of the blended learning model. *Educatico*, the MEP online toolbox, the pedagogic orientations, and the sample GTAs are some of those valuable resources that teachers can profit from.
3. Given the fact that everything that teachers assess on a summative test such as the instrument of summative evaluation being used in the blended learning model must have been assessed and mediated before in class, the research students, as well as Mr. Alfredo Orterga, recommend sticking to the current norms for summative assessment when proposing classwork activities. That is to say, teachers should assess classwork activities incorporating the norms of summative evaluation for the oral comprehension and oral production tests. For example, the audio tracks played in class must not exceed the 1.30 minutes

duration and the teachers should favor the audio tracks where both men and women speak and interact. All these norms are contained in the official documentation for oral comprehension and oral production summative assessment which was not changed in the blended learning model.

### **Limitations**

1. Given the fact that the AOA had been implemented for only five years in Costa Rica's public education at the moment of the development of this research, there were very limited studies available on the implementation of this approach to nourishing this research's theoretical framework. This lack of studies was even more evident when focusing on classwork assessment within a blended learning model, which was a conjunctural situation during the school year of 2021. This represented a constraint for the student researchers as they could not resort to thorough references in Costa Rica or the world on how to assess action-oriented classwork within a blended learning model.
2. Per this research's methods, the number of classes to be observed would be linked to how long it would take for the teachers to cover the theme being studied, which was 4 classes of two lessons each. However, due to the face-to-face attendance being optional for students and given the fact that the classes observed took place in October and November when the school year was almost coming to its end, no student from 9-2 B showed up to the fourth class that would be observed. Therefore, the study could take into consideration only three classes for a total of 6 lessons.

3. In contrast to Class # 1 and Class # 2 from 9-1 A where a considerable amount of students were present, only one student showed up to class # 3 from 9-1 B. This made it extremely difficult for the teacher to assess oral interaction between peers and to promote co-assessment, and at the same time prevented the student teachers to be able to observe an action-oriented set of activities being assessed as classwork. It would have been ideal if a similar amount of students had been present that day in class from 9-1 B.

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## Appendices

### **Appendix 1. Non-participant Observation to the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 at LEBT**

University of Costa Rica

Atlantic Branch-Paraiso Campus

Licenciatura in English Teaching

Researchers: Brenes Prendas Jocelyne, Monge Zelaya Paula, Sanabria Mora Esteban

**Project:** Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

### **Non-participant Observation to the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 at LEBT**

The purpose of this instrument is to compile the most relevant events that take place in the Listening and Speaking lessons observed by the researchers in Group 9-1 at LEBT, particularly from the perspective of oral comprehension and oral production classwork assessment. The investigators will observe half of the group each week since that is the dynamics of face-to-face lessons in the *Estrategia Regresar* context. The researchers will follow all the MEP protocols to observe the group. The information compiled will be analyzed with the sole purpose of serving as input for the project and will be strictly confidential.

### Lesson Observation

School:		Observers' names:	
Class:		Length of the lesson:	
Number of students:		Theme:	
Name of the teacher:		Date of Observation:	

**Y= Yes, N= No. ST= Sometimes. N/A= Not applicable**

Environment	Y	N	ST	N/A	Additional Comments
The number of students in class is manageable for the teacher.					

The allotted time for students to complete the task is enough.					
The teacher encourages active participation in class.					
<b>AOA Application</b>					
Classwork activities imply a task or action that students can perform.					
The action or task proposed relates to a real-life scenario in which students may perform it.					
The mediation activity lets students work according to the AOA's goal.					
The teacher uses supporting material to check the AOA sequence or guide himself/herself.					
<b>Instructions</b>					

The teacher gives instructions about the activity to be done in class.					
The students comprehend the instructions of the activity and/or ask for clarification.					
<b>Classwork Assessment</b>					
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.					
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.					
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.					
The students consciously assess their language performance with a					



given instrument.					
The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.					

**Observation forms filled out:**

**Lesson Observation**

School:	Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba	Observers' names:	Jocelyne Brenes
Class:	9-1	Length of the lesson:	12:30 – 1:40
Number of students:	10	Theme:	Culture and clothing
Name of the teacher:	Corina Diaz	Date of Observation:	Tuesday October 20th, 2021

**Y= Yes, N= No. ST= Sometimes. N/A= Not applicable**

Environment	Y	N	ST	N/A	Additional Comments
The number of students in class is manageable for the teacher.	X				

The allotted time for students to complete the task is enough.	X				Students finish the task in the allotted time
The teacher encourages active participation in class.	X				Yes, the teacher asks for volunteers and many students want to participate
<b>AOA Application</b>					
Classwork activities imply a task or action that students can perform.	X				Yes, students complete the tasks successfully and this is proven when sharing their answers because all of them correspond to what the teacher assigned
The action or task proposed relates to a real-life scenario in which students may perform it.	X				Yes, students were given a task about a job interview and they performed it successfully
The mediation activity lets students work according to the AOA's goal.	X				
The teacher uses supporting material to check the AOA sequence or guide himself/herself.	X				Yes, the material is key and she takes advantage of technological resources which help her go through the activities

<b>Instructions</b>					
The teacher gives instructions about the activity to be done in class.	X				
The students comprehend the instructions of the activity and/or ask for clarification.	X				Yes, they also recall what the teacher said to confirm they understood
<b>Classwork Assessment</b>					
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.	X				
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.	X				Yes, she assigned a person to lead an assessment activity
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.		X			

The students consciously assess their language performance with a given instrument.		X			Not as part of classwork activities but it is certainly performed as part of the GTA
The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.	X				

### Lesson Observation

School:	Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba	Observers' names:	Paula Monge Zelaya
Class:	9-1 B	Length of the lesson:	12:30 – 1:40
Number of students:	1	Theme:	
Name of the teacher:	Alberto Alvarado Vindas	Date of Observation:	Tuesday October 26th, 2021

**Y= Yes, N= No. ST= Sometimes. N/A= Not applicable**

Environment	Y	N	S T	N/ A	Additional Comments
The number of students in class is manageable for the teacher.	X				

The allotted time for students to complete the task is enough.	X				
The teacher encourages active participation in class.	X				
<b>AOA Application</b>					
Classwork activities imply a task or action that students can perform.	X				
The action or task proposed relates to a real-life scenario in which students may perform it.		X			The activity was appealing, but not action-oriented
The mediation activity lets students work according to the AOA's goal.	X				
The teacher uses supporting material to check the AOA sequence or guide himself/herself.		X			
<b>Instructions</b>					

The teacher gives instructions about the activity to be done in class.	X				
The students comprehend the instructions of the activity and/or ask for clarification.	X				The teacher is great at giving instructions.
<b>Classwork Assessment</b>					
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.	X				The teacher and the student discuss the answers to the quiz together. He asks the questions out loud, and the student answers. He asks additional questions and encourages her to answer.
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.				X	It does not apply because there is only one student.
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.		X			
The students consciously assess their language performance with a given instrument.		X			

The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.	X				
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### Lesson Observation

School:	Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba	Observers' names:	Jocelyne Brenes
Class:	9-	Length of the lesson:	12:30 – 1:40
Number of students:	10	Theme:	Culture and clothing
Name of the teacher:	Corina Diaz	Date of Observation:	11/02/2022

**Y= Yes, N= No. ST= Sometimes. N/A= Not applicable**

Environment	Y	N	ST	N/A	Additional Comments
The number of students in class is manageable for the teacher.	X				
The allotted time for students to complete the task is enough.	X				Yes, they finish the task on time

The teacher encourages active participation in class.	X				Yes, she asks for volunteers and many of them participate, even the ones that have audio issues because they participate in the Microsoft Teams chat
<b>AOA Application</b>					
Classwork activities imply a task or action that students can perform.	X				
The action or task proposed relates to a real-life scenario in which students may perform it.		X			
The mediation activity lets students work according to the AOA's goal.	X				
The teacher uses supporting material to check the AOA sequence or guide himself/herself.	X				Yes, she takes advantage of technological resources
<b>Instructions</b>					



The teacher gives instructions about the activity to be done in class.	X				
The students comprehend the instructions of the activity and/or ask for clarification.	X				Yes, they perform the activity as it was supposed to
<b>Classwork Assessment</b>					
The teacher encourages the students to self-assess their work.		X			
The teacher encourages the students to co-assess their work.	X				Yes, because they play a game and she asks the class what they think of the answer
The teacher uses an instrument to measure classwork completion.					
The students consciously assess their language performance with a		X			

given instrument.					
The class time is enough for assessing students' classwork.	X				

## **Appendix 2. Semi-structured Interview with the Listening And Speaking 9-1**

### **Group's Teachers**

University of Costa Rica

Atlantic Branch-Paraíso Campus

*Licenciatura* in English Teaching

Researchers: Brenes Prendas Jocelyne, Monge Zelaya Paula, Sanabria Mora Esteban

**Project:** Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

### **Semi-structured Interview with the Listening and Speaking 9-1 Group's Teachers**

The purpose of this instrument is to gather information from the teacher's experience working with the Action-Oriented Approach and especially assessing oral comprehension and oral production action-oriented classwork. The information compiled will be analyzed to serve as input for the project and will be strictly for this sole purpose.

1. Please refer to your experience assessing oral comprehension and oral production classwork with the Action-Oriented Approach.
2. Now that blended learning is being implemented, may you please describe how is oral comprehension/oral production classwork carried out?
3. Regarding oral production and oral comprehension, how is classwork being assessed?
4. How do you promote the development of skills when assessing classwork?
5. What tools or resources do you use to assess classwork?
6. In regards to self-assessment and co-assessment, what tools do you provide students with so that they assess their language performance? Please give an example
7. Please describe the application of the Self-Study Guide (GTA) and how it collects information from the students' performance
8. What do you think about the classwork assessment guidelines provided on the new English curriculum based on the AOA?
9. How are those guidelines applicable/not applicable in the current blended learning context in your class and group?

### **Appendix 3. Semi-structured Interview with MEP's the English National Advisor**

**Alfredo Ortega**

University of Costa Rica

Atlantic Branch-Paraiso Campus

*Licenciatura* in English Teaching

Researchers: Brenes Prendas Jocelyne, Monge Zelaya Paula, Sanabria Mora Esteban

**Project:** Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

**Semi-structured Interview with MEP's English National Advisor Alfredo Ortega**

This instrument intends to gather MEP inputs about the classwork assessment process carried out with the Action-Oriented Approach through the position of the National English Advisory Unit of MEP. The information compiled will be analyzed to serve as input for the project and will be strictly confidential.

1. What is the purpose of classwork assessment from the Action-Oriented Approach's perspective?
2. What ways of assessing oral comprehension and oral production classwork does MEP consider to be effective in AOA environments?
3. How are formative and summative assessments applied in the Action-Oriented Approach? Please explain in both scenarios: virtual and face to face.
4. How does MEP guide teachers in the process of assessing oral comprehension and oral production classwork through this new modality?
5. How has the pandemic lockdown modified the classwork's evaluation component in the Costa Rican public institutions?
6. How are the new instruments such as the Self-Study Guide and the summative assessment instruments going to modify the classwork assessment process?

7. What would you recommend for teachers assessing oral comprehension and production in class through the AOA within a blended learning environment?

**Appendix 4. Checklist to Analyze the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba**

University of Costa Rica

Atlantic Branch-Paraíso Campus

Licenciatura in English Teaching

Researchers: Brenes Prendas Jocelyne, Monge Zelaya Paula, Sanabria Mora Esteban

**Project:** Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

The purpose of this instrument is to gather and rank information from the current classwork assessment process taking place in the Listening and Speaking class of Group 9-1 at LEBT. The criteria in the chart correspond to the latest MEP's guidelines on how to assess classwork in the development of expected learnings and skills. As it states, these guidelines are necessary because they are going to allow the teacher to identify the students' progress based on their knowledge construction (MEP, 2020, p.4). Therefore, the information compiled will be analyzed to serve as input for the project

and will be strictly confidential.

**Y= Yes, N= No, NA = Not Applicable**

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve				
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.				
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed				
4- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting)				
5- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for				

assessing the classwork				
6- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template)				
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning				
8- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities				
9- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, through the teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.				
10- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.				
11- The teacher monitors the learners' performance				



and encourages them when necessary.				
12- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.				
13- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening				
14- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less				
15- In oral comprehension activities, the audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2)				
16- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning;				

Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.				
17- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.				
18- The learners consciously assess their oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.				
19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance				
20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the				

PABs				
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Class # 1 from 9-1 A:

**Y= Yes, N= No, NA: Not Applicable**

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N A</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve		X		
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X		
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed		X		
4- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings template)	X			

5- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.	X			Yes, there was peer collaboration but just in the co-assessment activity
6- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.		X		
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning	X			Yes, the first activity about "shopping clothes for a job interview" was performance-based; however, the rest of the activities were not
8- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting)	X			Yes, the first activity about "shopping clothes for a job interview" included real life scenarios; however, the rest of the activities were not
9- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening			X	No oral comprehension activity was performed in this class

10- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less			X	No oral comprehension activity was performed in this class
11- In oral comprehension activities, the audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2)			X	
12- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Inteacting.		X		
13- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X			
14- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork			X	Since the self-study guide was not used during class, this cannot be determined.
15- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities			X	Since the self-study guide was not used during class, this cannot be determined

16- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.		X		
17- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X			
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X		
19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance		X		
20- If a technically			X	

designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs				
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Class # 2 from 9-1 A:

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve		X		
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.	X			
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed	X			
4- The classwork		X		

assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting)				
5- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork		X		
6- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings' template)	X			
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning		X		
8- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities			X	Since the self-study guide was not used during the class, this cannot be determined.
9- The teacher ensures that learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or	X			



individual practice.				
10- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.	X			
11- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X			
12- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X			
13- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening	X			
14- In oral comprehension activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less			X	
15- In oral comprehension activities, audio track's level	X			

of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2)				
16- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.			X	
17- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.			X	
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X		
19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the		X		

students' performance				
20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs			X	

Class # 1 from 9-1 B:

<b>Guidelines to assess oral comprehension/oral production classwork for the new English Curriculum in the current Blended Learning model according to MEP</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1- Students are told what they are going to be assessed upon pointing out the actional outcome they are expected to achieve.		X		
2- The teacher makes sure that all learners understand task instructions and how they are going to be assessed.		X		
3- The teacher makes sure the enduring understanding and essential questions are		X		

understood by the student before performing the classwork activities and being assessed				
4- The classwork assessment performed is authentic (tasks that simulate real-life situations within the domains and scenarios beyond the classroom setting)		X		
5- The GTA is used as the main resource for mediating the class and, therefore, for assessing the classwork			X	Since the self-study guide was not used during class, this cannot be determined
6- The theme students are assessed on belongs to the PAB (basic learnings' template)	X			
7- The activities proposed as part of the classwork are performance-based whose intention is to foster the assessment for learning		X		
8- The pedagogic mediation moments of connection, collaboration, clarification, and construction based on which the GTA was designed are favored in classwork activities			X	Since the self-study guide was not used during class, this cannot be determined
9- The teacher ensures that		X		

learners know how to use strategies to achieve the goal of the classwork task proposed, by means of teacher's scaffolding and modeling, peer collaboration, and/or individual practice.				
10- The teacher makes sure that students have at their disposal useful words, phrases, and idioms that they need to perform the classwork task.		X		
11- The teacher monitors the learners' performance and encourages them when necessary.	X			
12- The teacher assesses performance, provides feedback in the form of assistance, brings back useful words and phrases to learners' attention, and provides additional pedagogical resources to students who need more practice.	X			Yes, the teacher provides feedback in terms of pronunciation
13- For oral comprehension activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Pre-listening; Listening for the first time; Pair/Group feedback; Listening for the second time; post-listening		X		No, the teacher plays the video only once
14- In oral comprehension		X		No, its duration is longer than

activities, audio tracks played have a duration of 1.30 min or less				1.30 min
15- In oral comprehension activities, audio track's level of difficulty is aligned with the CEFR band corresponding to ninth grade in Experimental Bilingual Schools (B1.2)	X			
16- For oral production activities, the sequence required in the ninth-grade English curriculum is followed: Planning; Organizing; Rehearsing; Delivering; Interacting.		X		
17- Before presenting the oral production, the teacher provides students with time for them to rehearse their presentation in the case of oral production activities, and for them to revise their written or spoken reports in the case of oral comprehension activities.		X		
18- The learners consciously assess their own oral comprehension and oral production performances using rubrics, checklists, and other technically designed instruments that are provided and explained to them in advance by the teacher.		X		

19- For assessing oral production activities, the teacher uses a technically designed instrument to collect evidence of the students' performance		X		
20- If a technically designed instrument is used to measure the outcome when assessing oral production activities, that scale contains can-do performance descriptors previously designed by the teacher or provided in the PABs		X		

## Appendix 5. Authorization Letter from LEBT's Principal to Perform the Study

Turrialba, Costa Rica. Viernes 9 de julio del 2021

Señores:

Comisión de Trabajos Finales de Graduación de Enseñanza del Inglés  
Sede del Atlántico  
Universidad de Costa Rica

Estimados señores:

Yo, Seidy Nájera Núñez, cédula 1-0877-0416, directora del Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba, doy fe de que los estudiantes:

B51232 Jocelyne Brenes Prendas  
B54555 Paula Monge Zelaya  
A85895 Esteban Sanabria Mora

cuentan con la aprobación respectiva para desarrollar su trabajo final de graduación para optar por el grado de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés. El título de su anteproyecto reza:

*"Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba"*

Los estudiantes previamente mencionados contarán con la cooperación de una persona docente del departamento de inglés y su grupo, así como con los permisos necesarios para ingresar al colegio y realizar trabajo de campo.

Sin más por el momento, se despide de ustedes con toda consideración,

SEIDY NAJERA  
NUÑEZ  
(FIRMA)

Firmado digitalmente  
por SEIDY NAJERA  
NUÑEZ (FIRMA)  
Fecha: 2021.07.13  
07:08:31 -06'00'

M.A.Ed Seidy Nájera Núñez  
Directora  
Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba



**Appendix 6. Informed Consents from the Participant Teachers and Information to Students' Parents**



**UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA**

**COMITÉ ÉTICO CIENTÍFICO**

Teléfono/Fax: (506) 2511-4201

**Carrera Lic. en Enseñanza del Inglés**

**Sede del Atlántico**

**Recinto de Paraíso**

**FORMULARIO PARA EL CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO BASADO EN LA LEY N° 9234 “LEY REGULADORA DE INVESTIGACIÓN BIOMÉDICA” y EL “REGLAMENTO ÉTICO CIENTÍFICO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA PARA LAS INVESTIGACIONES EN LAS QUE PARTICIPAN SERES HUMANOS”**

Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

**Nombre de los investigadores principales:** Brenes Prendas Jocelyne, Monge Zelaya Paula y Sanabria Mora Esteban

**Nombre del/la participante:** Corina Díaz Calvo / Cédula 3-0411-0154

**Medios para contactar a la/al participante: números de teléfono:** 8887-4457 y **correo electrónico:** corina.diaz.calvo@mep.go.cr

## A. INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL PROYECTO

La presente investigación forma parte del Trabajo Final de Graduación modalidad Seminario de la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés del Recinto de Paraíso, Sede del Atlántico de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Los estudiantes investigadores quienes realizan esta investigación para optar por el grado de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés son:

Jocelyne Brenes Prendas, carné universitario # B51232

Paula Monge Zelaya, carné universitario #B54555

Esteban Sanabria Mora, carné universitario # A85895

**Directora de este trabajo:** Lic. Jennifer Solano Mata, cédula 3-0427-0980

## B. PROPÓSITO DEL PROYECTO

El objetivo de la investigación es evaluar la aplicación de las pautas de valoración de trabajo en clase (*classwork assessment guidelines*) emitidas por el MEP y estipuladas en el actual currículum de inglés basado en el “*Action-Oriented Approach*” (AOA), en la materia de *Listening and Speaking* de la sección 9-1 del Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba (LEBT). La investigación tiene como propósito analizar la aplicación o no de estas guías por parte de los docentes participantes de la investigación, los cuales son los dos docentes a cargo de esta materia, al momento de realizar actividades en clase que involucren la producción oral y la comprensión oral.

### C. ¿QUÉ SE HARÁ?

Los estudiantes investigadores realizarán observaciones semiestructuradas de las lecciones presenciales de la materia *Listening and Speaking* de la sección 9-1 durante el desarrollo de al menos un tema (*theme*) del escenario que se esté trabajando en el segundo ciclo lectivo 2021. Esto servirá de insumo principal para el correspondiente análisis de la forma en que se miden estas actividades en clase y de si los docentes realizan esa medición a la luz de lo que dictan las directrices de medición de trabajo en clase previamente mencionadas. La duración del trabajo de campo se estima será de 1 a 2 meses o durante el tiempo que le tome a los docentes desarrollar al menos un *theme* del escenario que se esté trabajando. Los dos docentes a cargo de esta materia/sección son los sujetos de investigación principales y, por ende, contribuirán con el estudio a partir no sólo de la observación de sus clases, sino por medio de una entrevista estructurada que serán invitados a sostener con los estudiantes investigadores. Esta tiene como fin conocer sus percepciones de la medición de trabajo en clase en su grupo en el contexto del modelo de educación combinada que se está implementando durante 2021 en instituciones del MEP. El orden de la aplicación de dichos instrumentos consiste en primeramente observar las lecciones y posteriormente realizar la entrevista a los docentes.

### D. RIESGOS

Debido a la situación sanitaria actual, el principal riesgo de la investigación corresponde a la exposición al contagio del virus del COVID-19 de los docentes participantes, estudiantes investigadores, y estudiantes del LEBT de la sección 9-1. La literatura científica y los recientes informes corroboran la magnitud de la pandemia de COVID-19 e indican la necesidad de carácter especial y de esfuerzos coordinados para prevenir dicha enfermedad. Es por eso que los estudiantes investigadores se comprometen a respetar y seguir los protocolos dictados por el Ministerio de Salud de Costa Rica. Asimismo, los estudiantes investigadores aplicarán las medidas de higiene promulgadas por el Ministerio de Educación en la estrategia “Yo me cuido, yo te cuido y la comunidad se cuida” las cuales comprenden:

1. Utilizar siempre mascarilla dentro de las instalaciones.
2. Mantener siempre un distanciamiento físico de 1,8 metros entre personas.
3. Evitar tocarse los ojos, nariz, boca durante la aplicación de instrumentos.
4. Evitar saludar de beso y/o abrazo.
5. Aplicar siempre los pasos del protocolo al estornudar o toser.
6. Lavarse las manos con abundante agua y jabón al ingresar a la institución.
7. Desinfectar manos, pupitres y objetos que se utilicen.
8. No presentarse a la institución en caso de fiebre, tos, congestión nasal y/o presentar dificultad respiratoria.

Finalmente, es de suma importancia recalcar que los 3 estudiantes investigadores poseen las dos dosis de la vacuna para la protección del contagio de COVID-19.

## **E. BENEFICIOS**

Este estudio beneficiará a la población docente participante y al LEBT como tal, ya que se emitirán recomendaciones de cómo lidiar con las directrices de medición de trabajo en clase en la materia de *Listening & Speaking* del grupo 9-1 en el modelo educativo actual. Asimismo, la sociedad se verá enriquecida de un estudio como este ya que el currículo del programa de inglés del MEP sufrió cambios hace algunos pocos años. Debido a esto, existe poca información sobre cómo aplicar el AOA en actividades en clase y menos información aún sobre cómo medirlas efectivamente, sobre todo en el contexto de educación combinada. Los estudiantes investigadores se encargarán de devolver los resultados a la población participante a través de una actividad donde se informe y comparta acerca del producto final de la investigación.

## **F. VOLUNTARIEDAD**

Es fundamental aclarar que la participación en esta investigación es voluntaria y los sujetos de investigación pueden negarse a participar o retirarse en cualquier momento sin perder los beneficios a los cuales tienen derecho, ni ser castigados de ninguna forma por su retiro o falta de participación.

## **G. CONFIDENCIALIDAD**

Los estudiantes investigadores garantizan el estricto manejo confidencial de la información y recolección de datos durante la aplicación de los instrumentos y análisis de resultados. La información recolectada no será de dominio público y responderá solamente al propósito mismo de la investigación. La universidad autoriza que cualquier uso futuro de los resultados de la presente investigación será factible siempre y cuando se mantenga el anonimato de los participantes.

## **H. INFORMACIÓN**

Antes de dar su autorización los estudiantes investigadores y la directora del trabajo final de graduación, Lic. Jennifer Solano Mata (8864-1056) deben haber compartido con usted toda información pertinente respecto al estudio y respondido satisfactoriamente todas sus dudas acerca del mismo y de sus participaciones. Si requirieran más información, sírvanse contactar a la directora o a los investigadores: Jocelyne Brenes Prendas, Paula Monge Zelaya o Esteban Sanabria Mora a los teléfonos: 8466-7007, 7114-4544, 7204-7760 respectivamente en el horario de lunes a viernes de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m. Cualquier consulta adicional puede comunicarse con la Vicerrectoría de Investigación de la Universidad de Costa Rica a los teléfonos 2511-4201, 2511-1398, de lunes a viernes de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m.

### CONSENTIMIENTO

He leído o se me ha leído toda la información descrita en esta fórmula antes de firmarla. Se me ha brindado la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y estas han sido contestadas en forma adecuada. Por lo tanto, declaro que entiendo de qué trata el proyecto, las condiciones de mi participación y accedo a participar como sujeto de investigación en este estudio

**\*Este documento debe de ser autorizado en todas las hojas mediante la firma, o en su defecto con la huella digital, de la persona que será participante o de su representante legal.**

LEBT. 19-10-2021 12:30-2:00pm

Nombre, firma y cédula del sujeto participante

Corina Díaz Calvo Corina Díaz Calvo 3-411-154

Lugar, fecha y hora

Jocelyne Brenes Prendos, ced: 1-1681-0208 JH

Paula Monge Zelaya, ced. 3-0503-0451 Paula Monge Zelaya

Esteban Sanabria Mora, ced. 3-0448-0472

Nombre, firma y cédula del/la/los investigador/a/es que solicita/n el consentimiento

Paraíso, Cartago, 20-09-2021, 7am

Lugar, fecha y hora

Formulario aprobado en sesión ordinaria N° 216 del Comité Ético Científico, realizada el 02 de junio del 2021.

Firma de sujeto participante:

Corina Díaz Calvo

Comité Ético Científico - Universidad de Costa Rica - Número de sesión en que fue aprobado el proyecto: \_\_\_\_\_ Comité Ético Científico - Universidad de Costa Rica



UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA

COMITÉ ÉTICO CIENTÍFICO

Teléfono/Fax: (506) 2511-4201

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ÉTICO CIENTÍFICO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA PARA LAS  
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Evaluation of the Application of MEP’s Guidelines for the Assessment of  
Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening  
and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at  
Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

**Nombre de los investigadores principales:** Brenes Prendas Jocelyne, Monge Zelaya  
Paula y Sanabria Mora Esteban

**Nombre del/la participante:** Alberto Alvarado Vindas / Cédula 3-0374-0856

**Medios para contactar a la/al participante: número de teléfono:** 8818-3888 y  
**correo electrónico:** alberto.alvarado.vindas@mep.go.cr

**A. INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL PROYECTO**

La presente investigación forma parte del Trabajo Final de Graduación modalidad Seminario de la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés del Recinto de Paraíso,



Sede del Atlántico de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Los estudiantes investigadores quienes realizan esta investigación para optar por el grado de Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés son:

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## **C. ¿QUÉ SE HARÁ?**

Los estudiantes investigadores realizarán observaciones semiestructuradas de las lecciones presenciales de la materia *Listening and Speaking* de la sección 9-1 durante el desarrollo de al menos un tema (*theme*) del escenario que se esté trabajando en el segundo ciclo lectivo 2021. Esto servirá de insumo principal para el correspondiente análisis de la forma en que se miden estas actividades en clase y de si los docentes realizan esa medición a la luz de lo que dictan las directrices de medición de trabajo en clase previamente mencionadas. La duración del trabajo de campo se estima será de 1 a 2 meses o durante el tiempo que le tome a los docentes desarrollar al menos un *theme* del escenario que se esté trabajando. Los dos docentes a cargo de esta materia/sección son los sujetos de investigación principales y, por ende, contribuirán con el estudio a partir no sólo de la observación de sus clases, sino por medio de una entrevista estructurada que serán invitados a sostener con los estudiantes investigadores. Esta tiene como fin conocer sus percepciones de la medición de trabajo en clase en su grupo en el contexto del modelo de educación combinada que se está implementando durante 2021 en instituciones del MEP. El orden de la aplicación de dichos instrumentos consiste en primeramente observar las lecciones y posteriormente realizar la entrevista a los docentes.

#### **D. RIESGOS**

Debido a la situación sanitaria actual, el principal riesgo de la investigación corresponde a la exposición al contagio del virus del COVID-19 de los docentes participantes, estudiantes investigadores, y estudiantes del LEBT de la sección

9-1. La literatura científica y los recientes informes corroboran la magnitud de la pandemia de COVID-19 e indican la necesidad de carácter especial y de esfuerzos coordinados para prevenir dicha enfermedad. Es por eso que los estudiantes investigadores se comprometen a respetar y seguir los protocolos dictados por el Ministerio de Salud de Costa Rica. Asimismo, los estudiantes investigadores aplicarán las medidas de higiene promulgadas por el Ministerio de Educación en la estrategia “Yo me cuido, yo te cuido y la comunidad se cuida” las cuales comprenden:

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## **G. CONFIDENCIALIDAD**

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responderá solamente al propósito mismo de la investigación. La universidad autoriza que cualquier uso futuro de los resultados de la presente investigación será factible siempre y cuando se mantenga el anonimato de los participantes.

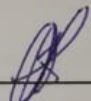
## **H. INFORMACIÓN**

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### CONSENTIMIENTO

He leído o se me ha leído toda la información descrita en esta fórmula antes de firmarla. Se me ha brindado la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y estas han sido contestadas en forma adecuada. Por lo tanto, declaro que entiendo de qué trata el proyecto, las condiciones de mi participación y accedo a participar como sujeto de investigación en este estudio


**\*Este documento debe de ser autorizado en todas las hojas mediante la firma, o en su defecto con la huella digital, de la persona que será participante o de su representante legal.**

Alberto Alvarado Vides  3-374-856


Nombre, firma y cédula del sujeto participante

Turrialba 29/09/21 10:11 am

Lugar, fecha y hora

Jocelyne Brenes Prendas, ced 1-1681-0308 

Paula Monge Zelaya, ced 3-0503-0451 Paula Monge Zelaya

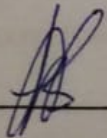
Esteban Sarabia Mora, ced 3-0448-0472 

Nombre, firma y cédula del/la/los investigador/a/es que solicita/n el consentimiento

Paraiso, Cartago, 20-09-2021, Fam

Lugar, fecha y hora

Formulario aprobado en sesión ordinaria N° 216 del Comité Ético Científico, realizada el 02 de junio del 2021.

Firma de sujeto participante: 

Comité Ético Científico - Universidad de Costa Rica - Número de sesión en que fue aprobado el proyecto: \_\_\_\_\_ Comité Ético Científico - Universidad de Costa Rica

**Communication to the Students' Parents**

Turrialba, 05 de Octubre del 2021

Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba

Departamento de Inglés

Estimados padres de familia:

Reciban un cordial saludo de nuestra parte. Sirva la presente para saludarles y a la vez informarles que, nosotros Jocelyne Brenes Prendas cédula de identidad 116810308, Esteban Sanabria Mora cédula de identidad 304480472 y Paula Monge Zelaya cédula de identidad 305030451 somos estudiantes de la Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Actualmente, nos encontramos realizando el Trabajo Final de Graduación al que titulamos: *Evaluación de la aplicación de las pautas del MEP en la valoración del trabajo en clase de comprensión y producción orales orientado a la acción en la clase Listening & Speaking del grupo 9-1 en el contexto del modelo combinado en 2021 en el Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba.*, el cual tiene como propósito evaluar cómo se está valorando el trabajo cotidiano dentro de la clase utilizando el método "AOA" decretado por el Ministerio de Educación Pública en 2019 para noveno año.

El pasado 28 de junio del 2021 obtuvimos la aprobación de la directora institucional M.A.Ed Seidy Nájera Núñez para realizar el trabajo de campo en las instalaciones del Liceo Experimental Bilingüe de Turrialba durante el segundo período del 2021. Para completar dicha tarea, contaremos con la cooperación de los docentes del departamento de inglés Corina Diaz Calvo y Alberto Alvarado Vindas y su grupo 9-1 durante las clases de *Listening and Speaking*. Debido a esto, muy respetuosamente, quisiéramos compartirles que estaremos observando la clase de sus hijos e hijas durante los meses de octubre y noviembre del presente año.

Es de suma relevancia aclarar que nosotros como investigadores tendremos un rol de observadores no participantes. Es decir, tendremos un rol pasivo durante el transcurso de la clase sin interrumpirla ni cambiar la dinámica de los docentes. Nos dedicaremos solamente a recopilar datos sin interferir en el comportamiento habitual de la docente o de los estudiantes. Además, toda la información recopilada será estrictamente confidencial y utilizada únicamente con fines académicos.

Es de nuestro agrado aclarar que uno de los objetivos de la investigación es brindar recomendaciones basadas en la teoría y en opiniones de los expertos en métodos educativos para que durante la clase de Listening and Speaking de sus hijos e hijas se sigan repitiendo los patrones positivos de medición formativa del trabajo cotidiano, además de que se incorporen actividades óptimas y recomendadas por el modelo educativo dado el caso que no se estén aplicando actualmente.

Finalmente, la información recolectada por los investigadores podrá ser solicitada por ustedes, tutores legales, de los estudiantes en cualquier momento. Asimismo, podrán solicitar el documento finalizado una vez publicado de la base de datos de la universidad.

En espera de su respuesta y deseándoles un bonito día, se despiden:

A85895 Esteban Sanabria Mora

B51232 Jocelyne Brenes Prendas

Estudiante UCR

Estudiante UCR

B54555 Paula Monge Zelaya

Estudiante UCR



## Appendix 7. Timetable of Activities

Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba

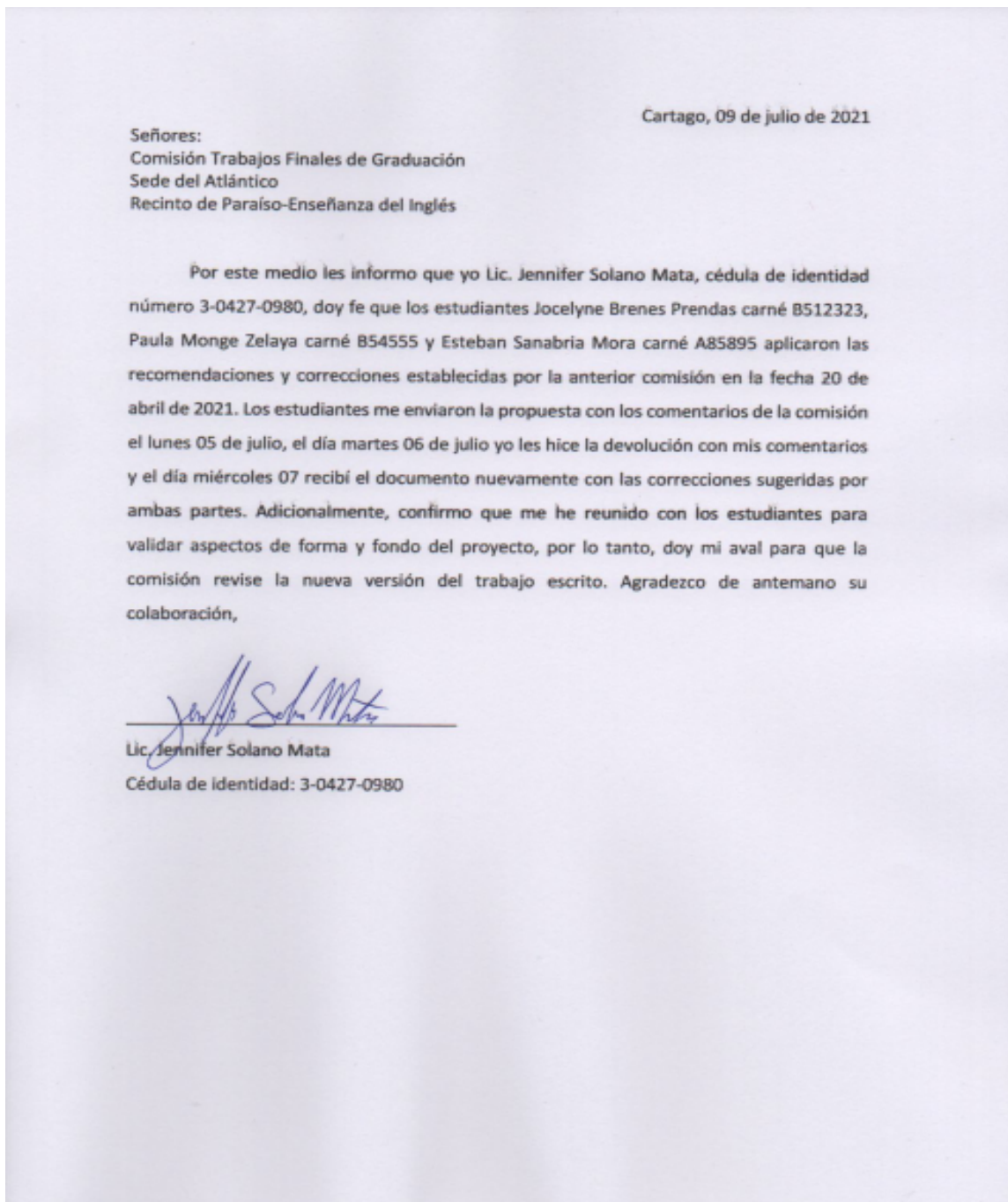
The following chart provides tentative information about the dates on which the investigators of the project were to perform the different activities. This cronogram is going to support the logistics in which the project will be developed and concluded.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Proposal's Resubmission to the Committee	July 3rd, 2021
2	Reopening of MEP's public institutions: Visit the Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba in order to obtain signatures from the subjects of study.	July 12th, 2021
3	Proposal's Return from the Committee	August 6th, 2021
4	Feedback revision	August 9th, 2021
6	Visit #1 Observation 1 at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba	October 12th, 2021
7	Visit #2 Observation 2 at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba	October 19th, 2021
	Interview to the 9-1 English teachers at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba	October 27th, 2021
8	Visit #3	October 27th, 2021

	Observation 3 at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba	
9	Data Analysis Analysis of the Teachers' Structured Interview using the map of activities and the argumentative paragraph.	November 1st - 7th, 2021
10	Visit #4 Observation 4 at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba	November 9th, 2021
11	Data Analysis Analysis of the observations using the map of activities and the argumentative paragraph.	November 15th - November 30th, 2021
13	Data Analysis Analysis of the checklist instrument through the table argumentative paragraph.	November 15th - November 30th, 2021
14	Interview with the English national advisor of MEP	December 1st, 2021
15	Data Analysis Analysis of the comments and recommendations of the expert through a summary.	December 1st - 9th, 2021
16	Draft #1  Recommendations and Conclusions	December - January 2022, 2021

## Appendix 8. Approval Letters from the Counseling Committee's Members and Subject-Matter Expert

### Research Tutor:



Cartago 22 de julio de 2021

Señores:

Comisión Trabajos Finales de Graduación

Sede del Atlántico

Recinto de Paraíso-Recinto de Paraíso

Por este medio les informo que yo Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga cédula de identidad número 3-0352-0447 doy fe que los estudiantes Jocelyne Brenes Prendas carné B51232, Paula Monge Zelaya carné B54555 y Esteban Sanabria Mora carné A85895 aplicaron las recomendaciones y correcciones emitidas por la Comisión de Trabajos Finales de Graduación el día 20 de abril del presente año para el trabajo final de graduación el que titularon *Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba*. Adicionalmente, confirmo que como lectora interna he leído el documento y he comentado aspectos de forma y fondo del proyecto, por lo tanto, doy mi aval para que la comisión revise la nueva versión del documento escrito. Agradezco de antemano su colaboración.



Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga

Cédula de identidad: 3-0352-0447

Cartago 23 de julio de 2021

Señores:

Comisión Trabajos Finales de Graduación

Sede del Atlántico

Recinto de Paraíso-Recinto de Paraíso

Por este medio les informo que yo Katherine Rojas Madriz cédula de identidad número 3-0442-0304 doy fe que los estudiantes Jocelyne Brenes Prendas carné B51232, Paula Monge Zelaya carné B54555 y Esteban Sanabria Mora carné A85895 aplicaron las recomendaciones y correcciones emitidas por la Comisión de Trabajos Finales de Graduación el día 20 de abril del presente año para el trabajo final de graduación el que titularon *Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba*. Adicionalmente, confirmo que como lectora externa he leído el documento y he comentado aspectos de forma y fondo del proyecto, por lo tanto, doy mi aval para que la comisión revise la nueva versión del documento escrito. Agradezco de antemano su colaboración.

Katherine Rojas M. 304420304

Katherine Rojas Madriz

Cédula de identidad: 3-0442-0304

**Subject-Matter Expert:**

San José, Costa Rica 03 de agosto del 2021

**Señores:**

**Comisión Trabajos Finales de Graduación de Enseñanza del Inglés**

**Universidad de Costa Rica**

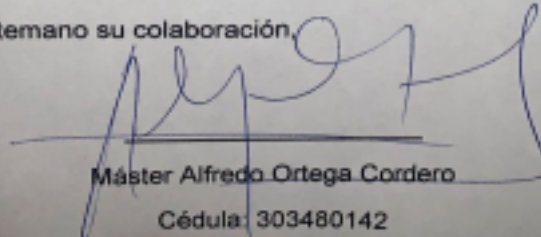
**Sede del Atlántico**

**Recinto de Paraíso**

Estimados señores,

Por este medio les informo que yo, profesor Máster Alfredo Ortega Cordero, cédula de identidad número 3-0348-0142, doy fe que los estudiantes Jocelyne Brenes Prendas con carné # B512323, Paula Monge Zelaya con carné # B54555 y Esteban Sanabria Mora con carné # A85895 aplicaron las recomendaciones y observaciones brindadas por mi persona como *Subject Matter Expert* junto con las de la Comisión de TFG brindadas el día 26 de enero del año 2021 durante la reunión de seguimiento y posteriormente el 16 de abril en el oficio CTFG – RPING – 05 -2021. Adicionalmente, confirmo que me he reunido con los estudiantes para validar aspectos de forma y fondo del proyecto al que titularon *"Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba."* Por lo tanto, doy mi aval para que la Comisión revise la nueva versión del trabajo escrito, ya que considero que la propuesta es atinente al contexto actual y es viable su implementación.

Agradezco de antemano su colaboración,



Máster Alfredo Ortega Cordero

Cédula: 303480142

Profesor Universidad de Costa Rica

## Appendix 9. Dismissal of Required Approval from The Ethics and Scientific Committee of the University of Costa Rica for Research



UNIVERSIDAD DE  
COSTA RICA

CEC Comité  
Ético Científico

4 de noviembre de 2021  
CEC-666-2021

Jocelyne Brenes Prendas  
Paula Monge Zelaya  
Esteban Sanabria Mora  
Estudiantes  
Sede del Atlántico

Estimados estudiantes:

El Comité Ético Científico (CEC) en su sesión **No.236** celebrada el **27 de octubre de 2021** sometió a consideración el trabajo final de graduación "Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba".

Después del análisis respectivo, los miembros del CEC-UCR acuerdan:

**Acuerdo N°06.** Declarar que el trabajo final de graduación "Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba" **no requiere aprobación por parte del CEC-UCR** ya que se encuentra enmarcado entre las categorías operativas 9.3 de los "Lineamientos del Comité Ético Científico de la Universidad de Costa Rica para investigación con seres humanos, biomédicas y no biomédicas".

Quedamos en la entera disposición de colaborar ante cualquier consulta.

UCR | Firmado  
digitalmente

Dra. Karol Ramírez Chan, DDS, MSc, PhD  
Presidenta Comité Ético Científico

KRC/svc  
C. Archivo



Año de las Universidades Públicas  
por la conectividad como  
derecho humano universal  
BICENTENARIO DE LA  
INDEPENDENCIA DE COSTA RICA



**Appendix 10. Approval Letters from the Counseling Committee's Members**

29 de Junio de 2022

Dra. Rosibel Orozco Vargas

Directora

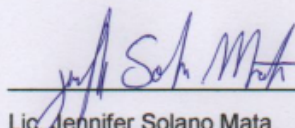
Sede del Atlántico

Estimada señora:

Yo Jennifer Solano Mata, directora del Trabajo Final de Graduación de los estudiantes Brenes Prendas Jocelyne carné B51232, Monge Zelaya Paula carné B54555 y Sanabria Mora Esteban carné A85895 de la carrera Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés y titulado *Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba*, hago constar que el TFG se encuentra en estado de finalizado, y por tanto puede ser defendido en el momento que sea considerado oportuno.

Además, se adjunta a este oficio otros dos que contienen el visto bueno de las dos lectoras que conformaron conmigo el Comité Asesor de este trabajo final de graduación.

Agradeciendo su atención, se despide



Lic. Jennifer Solano Mata

Directora del TFG



29 de Junio de 2022

Dra. Rosibel Orozco Vargas

Directora

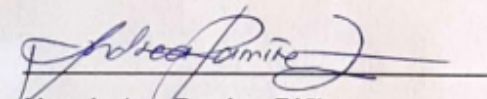
Sede del Atlántico

Estimada señora:

Yo, Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga, lectora del Trabajo Final de Graduación de los estudiantes Brenes Prendas Jocelyne carné B51232, Monge Zelaya Paula carné B54555 y Sanabria Mora Esteban carné A85895 de la carrera Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés y titulado *Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba*, hago constar que el TFG se encuentra en estado de finalizado, y por tanto puede ser defendido en el momento que sea considerado oportuno.

Además, he acordado con los estudiantes una posible fecha para asistir a su defensa oral.

Agradeciendo su atención, se despide



Mag. Andrea Ramírez Zúñiga

Lectora

29 de Junio de 2022

Dra. Rosibel Orozco Vargas

**Directora**

**Sede del Atlántico**

Estimada señora:

Yo, Katherine Rojas Madriz, lectora del Trabajo Final de Graduación de los estudiantes Brenes Prendas Jocelyne carné B51232, Monge Zelaya Paula carné B54555 y Sanabria Mora Esteban carné A85895 de la carrera Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés y titulado *Evaluation of the Application of MEP's Guidelines for the Assessment of Action-Oriented Oral Comprehension and Oral Production Classwork in the Listening and Speaking Class of Group 9-1 in the Current 2021 Blended Learning Context at Bilingual Experimental High School of Turrialba*, hago constar que el TFG se encuentra en estado de finalizado, y por tanto puede ser defendido en el momento que sea considerado oportuno.

Además, he acordado con los estudiantes una posible fecha para asistir a su defensa oral.

Agradeciendo su atención, se despide

Katherine Rojas M.

Lic. Katherine Rojas Madriz

Lectora