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"Approaches, methods and strategies to develop productive skills: An analysis of EFL Contexts"

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Resumen

La presente síntesis de investigación está enfocada a descubrir qué enfoque o método fue el más efectivo para enseñar habilidades productivas en inglés y cómo estos métodos contribuyen al desarrollo de dichas habilidades productivas. Se recopilaron quince estudios que utilizaron diferentes enfoques y métodos que se desarrollaron en diferentes entornos y niveles. Estos estudios fueron analizados, comparados y contrastados tomando en cuenta los diferentes enfoques y métodos usados en ellos. Con este análisis, hubo una idea más precisa sobre los resultados positivos de cada enfoque o método, y las razones por las cuales un determinado enfoque fue más efectivo que el otro. El criterio para seleccionar los estudios fue que debían ser empíricos, y además debían ser de reciente publicación. Después del análisis, se puede concluir en que es imposible determinar un método o enfoque que pudiera considerarse el más efectivo en cuanto a la enseñanza de habilidades productivas, por lo que la adaptación de estos enfoques y métodos de acuerdo con el contexto de los alumnos podría ser una posible solución. Se sugiere más investigación sobre las nuevas herramientas tecnológicas y cómo estas pueden mejorar estos métodos y enfoques para enseñar habilidades productivas.

Palabras clave: Enfoque metodológico. Métodos. Efectividad. Enseñanza de habilidades productivas.

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Abstract

The present research synthesis focuses on the discovery of the most effective method or approach to teach English productive skills and how these methods contribute to the development of these productive skills. Fifteen studies, using different approaches and methods and developed at different settings and levels of formal education, were gathered. These studies were analyzed, compared, and contrasted taking into consideration the different approaches and methods used in them. With this analysis, it was possible to find a more precise idea about the positive results of each approach or method, and the reasons why a certain approach was more effective than the other. The criteria to select the studies was that they had to be empirical, and also, they had to be recently published. After the analysis, it can be concluded that it is impossible to find an approach or method that could be considered the most effective regarding productive skills teaching, consequently, the adaptation of these approaches and methods according to learners' context could be a possible solution. Further research about the new technology tools and how these can enhance these methods and approaches to teach productive skills is suggested.

Keywords: Approach. Methods. Effectiveness. Teaching productive skills.

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Dedication

This project is dedicated to my parents, Luis and Blanca and my siblings Angel, Luis, Claus and Alex, who have supported me since I was a primary school student until the end of the university major. This research synthesis is also dedicated to my girlfriend Pamela, who shared with me the good and bad situations in my university life.

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Introduction

Learning English has become a globalized need due to its importance in people' personal life. For that reason, people need to learn not only how to make structures or learn vocabulary but also how to speak and be communicative competent. This is the reason why the approaches or methods used by educators affect directly in learners' effectiveness in English language. In the next section, there is an analysis of some studies that demonstrates the positive effects that some approaches and methods can have on the students' performance regarding English productive skills learning.

Nevertheless, only those studies that used approaches that could be applied in EFL contexts were considered because the purpose of the present synthesis is to analyze the most effective method or approach used in foreign contexts. For the purpose of this paper, only those studies that used a certain approach or method to teach English productive skills were considered.

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CHAPTER I

1. Description of the Research

1.1. Background

The British council defines productive skills as those skills that allow learners to produce language, i.e., speaking and writing, which are also known as active skills (British Council, 2018). This definition of productive skills leads us to an important reflection on how speaking and writing are activated in the EFL classroom and how they contribute to the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. Throughout the decades, several approaches, methods, and strategies to teach not only writing and speaking, but also other aspects of the English language have emerged. These approaches are the result of research studies and profound discussions in the educational field (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). These methods and approaches include the Direct Method, Inductive Approach, Deductive Approach, Communicative Language Teaching, Grammar Translation Method (GTM), among others (Halim, 2018).

Research foregrounds the relevance of productive skills in terms of the benefits they have on communication. Alvarado (2014), for instance, states that productive skills are significant because they allow learners to engage in communicative events such as oral presentations or written reports. However, developing productive skills is demanding and students may experience difficulties during the process. One of the reasons for this is that productive skills must be learned and used in contexts that serve communicative purposes (Golkova & Hubackova, 2014). This means that developing productive skills is a complex

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aspect of the EFL learning process, as teachers should be consciously aware that the process requires to enable students to be communicatively competent as they develop their speaking and writing skills. The English language is globalized which makes it an important language to be learned. Notwithstanding, the learning process may be hard for students in most of cases. This process must be student-centered and educators can take advantage of the great amount of information that is available about the different methods and approaches that can be used in classes.

For the present research synthesis, the following approaches, methods will be considered: a) Communicative Language Teaching, b) Problem Based Learning, c) Task Based Language Teaching, d) Technology-Based Approaches.

First, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) also known as Communicative Approach is one of the first approaches used to develop communicative competence. In this approach, the learning process is considered as a whole learning in which various contexts are used to make the students be able to communicate well (Sabrina, 2020). The principles of Communicative Language Teaching state that students use the language features for real communicative purposes, this means that CLT enhances the productive skills in learners, with this, the communicative competence is developed (Rambe, 2017). According to this author, Rambe (2017) the most used strategies inside the Communicative Language Teaching are: role play, information gap activities, interviews, and information transfer activities.

Second, Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centered method in which educators teach students to solve real-life problems by using their critical thinking (Kadhim, 2015). The main result that this methodology can generate is the greater preparation of

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students to seek academic, professional, and personal success. Because of the increase in critical thinking, students can enhance their productive skills through workgroups using the target language in EFL classrooms (Dastgeer & Afzal, 2015). According to Edith Cowan University, the most used strategies inside the Problem-Based Learning are: peer work, role play, questioning, and group discussion.

Next, Güvendir & Hardacre (2018) define Task-based language teaching (TBLT) as an approach to the second language (L2) teaching that aims to involve learners in communicative language use by having them complete tasks. TBLT correctly implemented in EFL classrooms enhances learners' efficiency and communicative competence, and with the development of communicative competence, productive skills are also improved (Kumari,2017). Some of the most used strategies inside the Task-based language teaching include: role play, information gap activities, interviews, and peer working (Guvendir &Hardacre, 2018)

Finally, in this educational context, curricula may include Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) tools creating Technology-Based Approaches to teach English due to the situation that Covid-19 created. Indeed, this Technology-Based Approach can enhance the quality of education in several ways: (a) increasing learner motivation and engagement; (b) facilitating the acquisition of basic skills; and (c) enhancing teacher training. ICTs are also transformational tools which, when used appropriately, can promote the shift to a learner-centered environment (Tinio, 2003). Some of the strategies used inside the Technology-based approach include: role play, the use of online forums, blogs, simulations, integrated learning systems and computer- based games (Koller, V., Harvey, S., & Magnotta, M, 2006).

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Due to the variety of approaches, methods, and strategies that educators can use to enhance the development of productive skills, it becomes essential to understand how these different methods and strategies can work combined with others, or with some adaptations to allow learners to develop their speaking and writing productive skills in EFL contexts.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The four skills which encompass the English language are divided into receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (writing and speaking). All these skills are important elements that should be developed by EFL or ESL students to become proficient users of the target language (Singh, 2011). It is important to recognize that these English skills are not an ignored part of the language therefore, EFL teachers need to teach these skills through the best method, approach, or strategy according to learners' needs. The assumption that one method, strategy or technique is more suitable than other has always been a controversial issue in EFL classrooms, especially when dealing with productive skills. Some research studies suggest one method over another according to the level of effectiveness in the classroom (Muijs & Reynolds, 2017). However, many of these methods are not working as they should, or the results are not as effective. This really depends on the educational context in which they are used or the way in which the educators used the different methods. Therefore, it is crucial to find the more used and documented methods and approaches to analyze which ones are the most effective in teaching productive skills, and how they can be used with some adaptations and modifications, or how they can be combined

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with other methods or approaches to effectively develop speaking and writing skills in EFL learners.

1.3. Rationale

English has historically been used as a tool for job opportunities, economic development and social functioning, and its use has undoubtedly gained popularity worldwide (Pandey, 2014). English plays a far greater role in the world that it is inevitable for people to ignore it. Learning the English language gives people the opportunity to be connected with a globalized world and helps them in their personal and professional lives (Nishanthi, 2018). However, learning a language involves not only mastering on grammar but on each of the four skills reading, writing, listening, and speaking, placing special emphasis on writing and speaking, as they reflect learners' linguistic production in the target language and communicative competence (Akay & Tomaran, 2015).

Plenty of research on how different methods, strategies and techniques are used to develop productive skills has been conducted. For instance, Barrot (2014) found that students who received Formed Focused Instruction (FFI) have significantly improved their productive skills. Likewise, Zuhriyah (2017) suggests that students benefit from a problem-based learning approach not only in speaking and writing, but also in all aspects of the English language. Putri, Artini & Nitiasih, (2017) also state that Project Based Learning (PBL) helps learners to improve productive skills, as PBL enhances students' learning quality in terms of enthusiasm, confidence, creativity and collaborative learning. Also, Khatib and Dehghankar (2018) foreground that the use of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) improves learners'

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proficiency in productive skills because TBLT can create interactive classrooms with students who have different English proficiency levels.

In addition, technology can play an important role in today's educational approaches. In fact, Ahmadi (2018) found that when technology is used appropriately, it can bring a lot of advantages to teachers and learners to develop receptive and productive English skills. Based on what has been presented in this section, analyzing the different approaches that have been used to teach productive skills becomes essential in order to find possible solutions to the lack of developing productive skills that we as teachers may or may not experience in the EFL classroom. Therefore, this research synthesis aims to analyze the most used and documented in research papers approaches, methods, and strategies to enhance EFL students' development of productive skills as well as to understand how these approaches have contributed to such development.

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1.4. Research Questions

Two main questions will be addressed in this research synthesis:

1. Which are the most effective and useful teaching approaches, methods and their strategies to enhance EFL students' development of productive skills?

2. How do these methods, approaches and their strategies contribute to the development of productive skills?

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1.5. Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

To analyze how different approaches, methods and their strategies contribute to the development of productive skills in EFL learners.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

1. To determine the most used and documented in research papers, approaches methods, and their strategies to develop EFL learners' productive skills.

2. To understand how different methods and their strategies contribute to the development of the writing skill in EFL students.

3. To understand how different methods and their strategies contribute to the development of the speaking skill in EFL students.

CHAPTER II

2. Theoretical Framework

Introduction

It is necessary to establish a background about the different ways in which productive skills have been taught through the time. A lot of approaches, methods and strategies have been developed in order to teach not only English productive skills, but also other aspects of the language. Presently, it is important to clarify the definitions of the mentioned terms.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), an approach can be defined as the level at which hypotheses and beliefs associated with language and language learning are specified. However, a method is "the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, the content to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 15). In the other hand, a teaching strategy is a generalized plan for a lesson which includes structure, instructional objectives and an outline of planned tactics (Issac, 2010).

For the present research synthesis, the following approaches, methods will be considered: a) Communicative Language Teaching, b) Problem Based Learning, c) Task Based Language Teaching, d) Technology-Based Approaches.

Before defining the mentioned methods and approaches, it is important to clarify the English skills that are necessary to use the language correctly.

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2.1 English skills definition

Language learning includes four important skills which are Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (Al-Jawi, 2010), and they are grouped into two categories, speaking and writing are called productive skills or (active skills) because while using these skills a learner is not only active but also produces sounds in speaking and symbols in writing. On the other hand, listening and reading are named receptive skills because in this case, a learner is generally passive and receives information either through listening or reading (Husain, 2015). Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are also categorized as "macro skills" because these can be divided into a variety of "micro-skills" at the moment of acquiring the language (Barrot, 2016)

2.1.1 Productive Skills

Speaking is the means through which learners can communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, facts, and points of view. It is a complex process that involves the simultaneous concentration of content, vocabulary, discourse, information structuring, morphosyntax, sound system, prosody, pragmatics, and linguistics features (Hinkel, 2006). Speaking instruction is important because it helps students acquire English as foreign language speaking skills thus converse spontaneously and naturally with native speakers (Torky, 2006)

Writing is also considered a productive skill. It is the system of written symbols, representing the sounds, syllables, or words of the language, with different mechanisms - capitalization, spelling and punctuation, word form, and function. Writing skills are very important because communication is transmitted more through writing than any other type of

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media. Therefore, EFL students need effective writing skills to meet their academic needs and work or personal requirements. (Durga & Rao, 2018)

2.1.2 Receptive Skills

Usually listening is related to speaking. Listening is the ability to hear in a mental channel by which people understand the words and relate to the world surrounding them. Listeners must internalize and interpret information according to the sociocultural contexts and the different elements of the English language; thus, they need to differentiate and identify sounds, vocabulary, grammatical structures, stress, and intention (Hinkel, 2011).

Traditionally, it is imagined that reading is a simple process that is linear and passive. However, more recent views have established that it is a complex cognitive process of decoding written symbols. It is a "linguistic, socio-cultural, physical and cognitive activity" that involves getting meaning from and putting meaning to the printed text. Reading requires simultaneous application of skills and subprocesses, such as identifying the author's mood and purpose, identifying main ideas, context, and relating such meanings to the readers' already existing knowledge (Barry & Lazarte, 1998).

Al-Jawi (2010) mentioned that "the main reason for isolating these skills and discussing them separately is to highlight their importance and to impress upon the teachers to place emphasis on their teaching and deal with them in a balanced way" (p.2).

2.2 Communicative Language Teaching

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), also known as Communicative Approach, was developed in Britain and United States (English speaking countries). The

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Communicative Language Teaching must be used to develop students' communicative competence, not only grammar rules as Grammar Translation Method propose. This method requires a change in teaching from the presentation of grammatical rules of a language towards performing different activities in the classroom related to the communicative competences. These competences are: linguistic, sociocultural, actional, strategic and discourse competence (Rambe, 2017).

Some of the features of CLT include an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language, the introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation, and the provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process itself (Sreehari, 2012). According to the mentioned author, the CLT is concentrated on getting learners to do things with language, to express concepts, and to carry out communicative acts of various kinds. It tries to build a course not in terms of forms, words and sentence patterns, but in terms of concepts, or notions, which such forms are used to express, and the communicative functions which they are used to perform.

The biggest problem of the CLT is that was created in English speaking countries, and it works perfectly in these situations. But, its application in countries where English is taught as a foreign language will not be an easy task. Teachers and learners should be flexible enough to follow the practices implicit in CLT.

2.3 Problem Based Learning

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a constructivist educational approach in which teachers act as cognitive coaches, and it has been recognized as an efficient teaching-learning method (Dastgeer & Afzal, 2015). This method is a student-centered one, and it involves students in

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effective learning by means of discussing and finding ways to solve actual problems among themselves using their critical thinking.

PBL enhances the problem-solving skills of the students as opposed to providing only theoretical knowledge, and it allow students to use prior knowledge to solve a new problem. PBL ensures deeper understanding. Problem Based Learning also include more motivation and excitement in English students to learn presenting real-life situations (Kadhim, 2015).

Aryanti & Artini (2017), stated that the significant impacts given by Problem-Based Learning instruction indicate that this approach can be taken into consideration by the teacher as an approach to be implemented in the classroom in general, as well as in EFL classes in particular.

Some of the difficulties of PBL include that it is a new experience for the teacher as well as learners and they may require some support or training, the idea of making workgroups in the class does not work because of non-participation or personality clashes, and strategies have to be put in place to deal with groups that do not work. Finally, one of the biggest problems that educators face is that learners use the first language instead of the target language.

2.4 Task Based Language Teaching

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT), which is regarded as one of the three most significant methodologies extracted from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and as a logical development of CLT has been the focus of a number of studies. A task refers to any

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communicative activity, within which there is a specific part of the language that is learned as well (Khatib and Dehghankar, 2018).

The main characteristics of Task Based Language Teaching consist on the opportunity for 'natural' learning within the classroom context, it stresses meaning over form, it also offers learners a fertile input of target language. The TBLT It is consistent with a learner-focused educational philosophy but also gives permission for teacher input and guidance, it contributes to the improvement of communicative fluency while not disregarding accuracy, and it can be deployed together with a more traditional approach (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011).

Kumari (2017) in her study suggested that if TBLT executed properly and on a broader manner in the curriculum, enhances learners' efficiency and communicative competence.

Regarding the negative points, Task-based learning involves a high level of creativity and dynamism on the part of the teacher. If the teachers are restricted to more traditional roles or do not possess time and resources to provide task-based teaching; this type of teaching may be impracticable, and also task-based learning necessitates resources beyond the textbooks and related materials which are generally not available in foreign language classrooms (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011).

2.5 Technology-Based Approaches and Methods

ICTs or "Information and Communication Technology" consist of technological devices that teachers can use during their classes. These can be internet-enabled, wireless networks as well as old technologies (Pratt, 2019). ICT can have a positive effect on EFL students since it reduces the level of anxiety because it makes the communication process live and efficient

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(Shahbaz, Khan, Khan, & Mustafa, 2016). Multimedia resources such as animated videos, slideshows, podcasts, etc., can fall into this category as well. For instance, teaching English through the use of movies or sitcoms can have several positive effects on students. First, these resources grab students' attention, and also it shows authentic language that will help students to get an idea of what they may encounter in a real-life situation (Ishihara & Chi, 2004).

Zahra, W., Inderawati, R., & Petrus, I. (2019) stated in their study that the implementation of ICT used on the authentic assessment of the productive skills can help students in order to acquire all the English skills specially the productive ones.

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CHAPTER III

3. Literature Review

In the following section, we can find a review of the existing literature that will be useful in the present research synthesis. Fifteen studies were chosen, and these have been classified according to the approaches or methods used in them. The classification is detailed as follows:

3.1 The use of Communicative Language Teaching

The use of Communicative Language Teaching can have positive effects in the development of productive skills in EFL learners. Toro et al. (2018), in their study about the use of communicative language teaching to improve students' oral skill, found that CLT used with strategies such as role-play or group work help learners to improve their speaking skill, and also it allowed learners to be aware of their mistakes while receiving input from the teacher through oral interaction. The authors used a mixed-method design in which the data was collected through a questionnaire given to the English teachers, and class observations were carried out. The participants were 6 English teachers and 105 students enrolled in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades at a public elementary school in the city of Loja, Ecuador.

In a different context, Noori (2018), in their study about the implementation of Communicative Language in English as a foreign language context in Afghanistan, found that CLT found that Afghan EFL lecturers in this study had positive effects using CLT in their classes. They indicated that their students improved their communicative competence while using this method. The author also suggested also revealed that educators face certain challenges that prevented them from implementing CLT effectively. The challenges observed

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in classes were the lack of administrative support, students' low proficiency in the English language, and lack of motivation of students to involve in communicative competence. This study used a quantitative research approach in which a survey questionnaire was given to 32 EFL lecturers teaching in a public university.

Furthermore, Hattani (2018), in their study about Communicative Language Teaching in the Moroccan EFL Classroom, found that CLT approach helped to enhance oral competency and also language proficiency among EFL students. The author also mentioned that CLT contributes to create an atmosphere where students are actively participating and using the target language, and it also encouraged cooperative language learning. The data was gathered using a semi-structured interview with 16 EFL secondary level teachers.

3.2 The use of Problem Based Learning (PBL)

Research shows that the use of Problem Based Learning (PBL) can have positive effects on EFL learners' productive skills. Ansarian et al (2016), in their study about The Impact of Problem Based Learning on Iranian EFL learners' speaking proficiency, found that the use of Problem Based Learning had a significant positive effect on speaking proficiency of intermediate Iranian EFL learners. The authors of the study suggested that PBL needs to be taken into account by educational scholars, those in charge of the syllabus, material producers, language teachers, and language learners. The researcher used an experimental design in order to collect the information. The participants for the study were 75 intermediate Iranian EFL learners who were studying in Esfahan.

In addition, Aryanti & Artini (2017), in their study about The Impact of Problem Based Learning on Productive Skills and Attitude towards English Language Learning, found

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that there were significant impacts of PBL on students' productive skills and attitude towards English Language Learning. This study also concluded that PBL had positive influence on teaching and learning process. The authors used an embedded mixed-method design which involved the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The data collection involved the use of pre-test, post-test, closed-ended questionnaire, open-ended questionnaire, observation checklist, and interview guide.

Furthermore, Khotimah (2014), in his study about The Use of Problem Based Learning to improve Students' Speaking ability, found that there were significant improvements in students' speaking ability after being taught by problem-based learning. The study also showed that the activities used in class such as discussions, sharing ideas, and cooperation with their friends were effective. The research was conducted in three cycles as an effort to improve the students' speaking skills. The three cycles were called cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3. The population of the study was 32 students of tenth grade.

Othman & Shah (2013), in their study about Problem Based Learning in English classrooms found that, specifically in writing, students in the PBL group were also able to present their arguments in a critical manner and provided sufficient supporting material to illustrate their arguments. The study was conducted on 128 students of Malaysia university, grouped into the experimental and control groups, and employed an experimental research design.

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3.3 The use of Task-based Language Teaching

The Task-based language Teaching is known as one of the three most significant approaches extracted from Communicative Language Teaching (Brown, 2007). In this case, Khatib and Dehghankar (2018), in their study about The Impact of Task-based Language Learning Teaching on EFL learners' productive skills, presented their results of the data analysis in which they indicated that the TBLT group displayed a significant difference in terms of improvement in acquiring productive skills. The research took place in a public university in Iran and it had 60 participants who were divided into two groups of 30 students each. The researchers administered a pre-test to each group, afterwards, one group was taught via Task-based Language Teaching meanwhile, the other group was taught via the content of the textbook (traditional method) during one semester.

At the end of the semester, these groups were tested through a TOEFL test, which was solved through written and spoken answers.

In addition, Córdoba (2016), in his study about Implementing Task-Based Language Teaching to Integrate Language Skills in an EFL Program in Colombia, found that facilitated the integration of not only the productive skills, but also the receptive skills in English as a foreign language context. The research took place in a public university in the south part of Colombia and the population of the study were 10 full-time teachers, and 21 part-time teachers. The author in this study suggested that English teachers need to bear in mind that the use of this methodology is meaningful because it promotes language learning naturally and this motivates learners to be involved in the class activities.

Other authors, which are, Ahmed & Bidin (2016) conducted a study about The Effect of Task Based Language Teaching on Writing Skills of EFL Learners in Malaysian

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universities. In this research synthesis, the participants were divided into an experimental and a control group in which the authors found that there is an effectiveness of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in promoting writing skills of EFL learners enrolled in undergraduate programs at public sector in Malaysia.

Kumari & Sunalini (2017) in their study about the use of Task-Based Language Teaching to develop English Language Teaching in India, found that TBLT activities help the teacher in assessing the students continuously and also facilitate language skills learning through interesting tasks which keep them engaged. The research took place in a university located in Hyderabad. The authors used a design in which the data was collected through demonstrative classes of two groups of 30 students each. The duration of each lab session was 100 minutes.

3.4 The Use of Technology-Based Approaches.

Muhamad & Abdullah (2015), in their study about the utilization and integration of ICT tools in promoting English language Teaching and Learning, found that English lessons that incorporate multimedia applications can exert powerful motivation and provide bored students with exciting new ways to learn. The utilization and integration of ICT tools can indeed assist students in acquiring English Language productive skills as well as enhance the quality of their learning experience. The author also mentioned that there is a lack of use the ICT tools in English classes.

In addition, Solano et al. (2017), in their study about the use of Educational Technology in EFL teaching in the south part of Ecuador, found that technology help to develop students' performance of both receptive and productive language skills. The authors

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of the study also mentioned that it is necessary to integrate technology tools combined with appropriate teaching strategies in EFL classrooms. The authors suggested that institutions should include technological tools in the curriculum in order to get the expected academic results, with this implementation students and teachers are engaged to participate more actively in the teaching-learning process. The total number of participants was 150 students and 15 teachers; all Spanish native speakers from 10 state schools.

Furthermore, Alhujaylan (2019, in his study about the Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in Saudi Arabia, found that students' writing skills can be improved through CALL, their writing power can improve significantly compared to when they are taught using traditional textbook methods. The sample was sixty female students of a Saudi University divided equally into control and experimental groups.

Singh & Sharma (2017), in their study about the effectiveness of web-based learning technology in the development of English skills, found that that this multimedia approach was effective in the development of English productive skills, and the students showed a positive attitude towards this multimedia approach.

The investigators selected four schools from which 64 students were selected (16 from each school). The authors used a self-constructed achievement test and attitude scale to see the effect of web-based learning technology. The authors of the study suggested that all schools and teachers should use multimedia tools to make the teaching-learning process effective.

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CHAPTER IV

4. Methodology

In order to obtain reliable information, an exploratory bibliographical research synthesis will be done. This type of research is defined as "the systematic secondary review of accumulated primary research studies" (Norris & Ortega 2006, p. 4). The criteria to select the articles for analysis will be as follows: 1) All the studies have to be empirical, which means that these studies have to be based on observation and experience as well as on theoretical analysis; 2) The articles must be published studies in order to obtain relevant and reliable information; 3) The articles must be recently published to guarantee that the information is still relevant 4) The participants in these studies must be learning English as a foreign language; and 5) The participants' age can vary from study to study because that is not a determiner.

The exclusion criteria used to search for studies were the year of publication (studies older than 10 years of publication will not be considered), studies which do not have a delimited number of participants, and studies which do not have specified the place where they took place.

The information will be searched in online databases such as Google Scholar, Academia.edu, Research Gate, and the library of the University of Cuenca. The terms that will be used to look for information will be the following: (a) method, (b) approaches, (c) English teaching, (d) skills, (e) advantages and disadvantages, (f) articles, (g) effectiveness, (h) productive, (i) results, (j) EFL. There will not be any restriction related to the design of

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the studies; qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods will be considered as relevant and

reliable.

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CHAPTER V

5. **Data Analysis**

For the present synthesis, 15 studies were obtained from different sources, and these studies were classified according to the approach, the level, the productive skill focus in the study, and the effectiveness of the methods and approaches used in this research. Also, the year of publication was considered in order to show that these studies were published since 2010 until today.

5.1 Year of Publication of the Studies

Table 1

Year of Publication of the Studies

Years	Authors	Number of Studies	Percentage
2010 – 2015	Khotimah (2014); Muhamad & Abdullah (2015); Othman & Shah (2013)	3	20%
2016 - 2021	Ahmed & Bidin (2016); Alhujaylan (2019); Ansarian et al (2016); Aryanti & Artini (2017); Córdova (2016); Hattani (2018); Khatib & Dehghankar (2018); Kumari & Sunalini (2017); Noori (2018);	12	80%

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Singh & Sharma (2017); Solano et al.

(2017); Toro et al. (2018);

Table 1 displays the number of studies according to their year of publication. They were divided into two periods of time to demonstrate that 12 (80%) of them were published from 2016 until nowadays; while the rest of them 2 (20%) were published from 2010 until 2015 so they are suitable for the present synthesis. This fact is an important point because, although teaching productive skills has been an important topic in the area of EFL, researchers are still investigating different methods and approaches to teach this particular part of the language.

5.2 Approaches used in Studies

Table 2

Approaches/Methods used in Studies

Approaches / Methods	Authors	Number of Studies	Percentage
The use of Communicative Language Teaching	Hattani (2018); Noori (2018); Toro et al. (2018);	3	20%
The use of Problem Based Learning	Ansarian et al (2016); Aryanti & Artini (2017);	4	26,67%

	Khotimah (2014); Othman & Shah (2013)		
The use of Task-Based Language Teaching	Ahmed & Bidin (2016); Córdova (2016); Khatib & Dehghankar (2018); Kumari & Sunalini (2017)	4	26,67%
The use of Technology Based Approaches	Alhujaylan (2019); Muhamad & Abdullah (2015); Singh & Sharma (2017); Solano et al. (2017)	4	26,67%

Table 2 shows the number of studies chosen according to the method or approach they belong to. All of these studies accomplished the inclusion criteria stated in the methodology section previously mentioned. First, they were all empirical studies which means that these studies were based on observation and experience. Second, all of them were published studies, so they are reliable because they were researched in online databases. Finally, the studies were published since 2010 until nowadays. This last criterion is crucial because the purpose of the synthesis was to find the different methods and approaches that have been used to teach English productive skills during the last years in EFL context. The total number of studies was 15, three belong to the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), four belong to the use of Problem Based Learning (PBL), four belong to the use of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and four to the use of Technology-based approaches.

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One can infer from these available articles that even though there are still studies related to the use of traditional methodologies, the necessity to find other methods and approaches to teach English productive skills has been important during the last years.

5.3 Productive Skill Focus

Table 3

Productive Skill Focus

Skill Focused	Author	Number of Studies	Percentage
Writing	Ahmed & Bidin (2016); Alhujaylan (2019); Othman & Shah (2013)	3	20%
Speaking	Ansarian et al (2016); Hattani (2018); Khotimah (2014); Toro et al. (2018);	4	26,67%
Writing and speaking	Aryanti & Artini (2017); Córdova (2016); Khatib & Dehghankar (2018); Kumari & Sunalini (2017); Muhamad & Abdullah (2015); Noori (2018); Singh &	8	53,33%

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Sharma (2017); Solano et al. (2017),	

Table 3 shows a classification according to the English productive skill focus studied. For this classification, all fifteen studies were considered. As it is shown, the majority of them 8 (53,33%) focused on both productive skills (speaking and writing), 4 studies (26,67%) focused just on speaking skill while the rest 3 (20%) focused on writing skill. The information displayed in the previous table is directly related to the objectives of this research synthesis; it helps to understand how different methods and approaches contribute to the development of writing and speaking EFL learners' skills. Notwithstanding, after categorizing these studies into English productive skills, one can infer that most of the methods and approaches mentioned in this research paper are not only focused on one productive skill or another, it means that these methods tried to improve both productive skills involving also the other skills of the English language.

5.4 The level

Table 4

The level

Level	Authors	Number of Studies	Percentage

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School & High School	Ansarian et al (2016); Aryanti & Artini (2017); Khotimah (2014); Singh & Sharma (2017); Solano et al. (2017); Toro et al. (2018);	6	40%
University	Ahmed & Bidin (2016); Alhujaylan (2019); Córdova (2016); Hattani (2018); Khatib & Dehghankar (2018); Kumari & Sunalini (2017) Muhamad & Abdullah (2015); Noori (2018); Othman & Shah (2013);	9	60%

Table 4 presents a classification according to the levels of formal education of students as well as the percentage that they represent for the total number of studies. As it is displayed, the majority of them 9 (60%) were performed in a university level while the rest 6 (40%) took place in schools and high schools. One can associate the information displayed in the previous table with one of the specific objectives of this research synthesis; the most used and documented approaches and methods to develop EFL learners' productive skills were applied most commonly in a university context. These nine studies that were developed at the

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university can be compared among them in order to find out how effective is a particular

method or approach.

5.5 Analyzing the effectiveness of Methods

Table 5

Analyzing the effectiveness of Methods

Approaches / Methods	Authors	Number of Studies	Percentage
The use of Communicative Language Teaching	Hattani (2018); Noori (2018); Toro et al. (2018);	3	20%
The use of Problem Based Learning	Ansarian et al (2016); Khotimah (2014); Othman & Shah (2013)	3	20%
The use of Task-Based Language Teaching	Ahmed & Bidin (2016); Córdova (2016); Kumari & Sunalini (2017)	3	20%

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The use of Technology Based Approaches	Alhujaylan (2019); Muhamad & Abdullah (2015); Singh & Sharma (2017); Solano et al. (2017)	4	26,67%

N= 13

As it was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, 15 studies were considered as the total, but for the present table which intends to respond the main research question, 'Which are the most effective and useful teaching approaches, methods and strategies to enhance EFL students' development of productive skills?', only thirteen studies were considered. There was one reason to exclude the remaining two studies. These studies were focused on the students' and teachers' perceptions towards the approach or method and the challenges that the method faced, and not on how effective the method could be to improve or enhance the English productive skills. These methods are as follows: The Use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), The Use of Problem Based Learning (PBL), The use of Task-Based Language Teaching, and The Use of Technology-Based Approaches.

After analyzing the studies, there was not a specific method or approach that was considered the most effective among the others, for this reason, the answer to the question related to which is the most effective and useful teaching method or approach was not possible to answer because according to the findings they all are effective where they were applied. Consequently, it is advisable to analyze the situations, characteristics, and problems that make an approach or a method effective and useful. Now, there is an analysis of the methods and approaches described before.

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First, based on the three analyzed articles (Hattani (2018), Noori (2018), Toro et al. (2018)), there are certain aspects in which the Communicative Language (CLT) was effective. Toro et al. (2018) stated in their article that this approach can help learners to enhance their productive skills when teachers use modeling, repetition, and pair and group work, also metalinguistic and elicitation feedback allow EFL learners to be aware of their mistakes while receiving input from the teacher. Hattani (2018) found that CLT is not suitable for classes with more than 40 learners. This approach is always convenient for small groups in order to allow learners to interact and enhance not only their productive skills but also the other aspects of the English language. Noori (2018) mentioned in his study that educators that used CLT in classes had positive effects in their students' performance, but there were some challenges in the implementation of this approach; the lack of administrative support, the lack of the use of the English language in EFL context, and the number of students per class can directly affect the effectiveness of the approach.

Second, Ansarian et al. (2016), Khotimah (2014), and Othman & Shah (2013) conducted studies about the Problem Based Learning (PBL) in EFL context. Ansarian et al. (2016) stated that with the use of PBL in language classes in such settings, students can take control of the teaching-learning process, and the role of the teacher is only as a source for debriefing already learned information, but one aspect that can affect the implementation of PBL in classes is the lack of materials which do not use not only memorization, but also thinking and analyzing activities. Khotimah (2014) found that Problem Based Learning method in teaching English as a foreign language could increase students' motivation and interest in learning English especially speaking skill, also this method demands cooperative working and critical thinking skill. On the other hand, Othman & Shah (2013) conducted a

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study to analyze the effectiveness of PBL in writing skill, the author stated that this method combine con internet materials and good strategies of the educators can have positive effects, but the lack of the use of the target language can affect directly to its effectiveness.

Third, Ahmed & Bidin (2016), Córdova (2016), and Kumari & Sunalini (2017) conducted studies about the use of Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in EFL context. In this case, Ahmed & Bidin (2016) stated that students who received feedback during the implementation of TBLT in classes had a good improvement on writing skill, and also students felt motivated. Córdova (2016) found that TBLT facilitates teachers to keep a balance in the four skills (productive and receptive skills), and it creates a diverse and inclusive exposure in the target language. The use of contextualized activities is an important point inside TBLT because it gives real situations to the students and facilitates the learning process. In the other hand, Kumari & Sunalini (2017) said that in order to enhance the communicative competence in EFL learners, the TBLT should be executed properly and in a broader manner in the curriculum in order to be effective.

Finally, Alhujaylan (2019), Muhamad & Abdullah (2015), Singh & Sharma (2017), and Solano et al. (2017) conducted studies about the use of Technology Based Approaches in EFL context. Alhujylan (2019) in his study about the implementation of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) found that there is a good improvement in learners' writing skill, but the biggest problem of this method is that some educational institution does not have the infrastructure necessary to implement this method, and also teachers are not trained to use technological devices in classes. Muhamad & Abdullah (2015) found that the use of some ICT tools such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Cloud, Dropbox, Webinar, and Google Form can be implemented in order to enhance the English productive skills, but the problem is the lack of

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use of these tools in classes, and all these aspects of ICT are not included in the curriculum in EFL contexts. Singh & Sharma (2017) suggested in their study that teachers should implement technology tools instead of traditional methods of teaching in order to make the learning process effective. Solano et al. (2017) stated that learners felt motivated and interested in using the technological tools in classrooms, but the author also mentioned that educators show poor knowledge of the technological tools, and there is a lack of implementation of these tools in the educational curriculum.

As a result, the answer to the research question: Which are the most effective and useful teaching approaches, methods and strategies to enhance EFL students' development of productive skills, it cannot be affirmed that one approach is more effective than others due to the fact that there are several studies that support the methods and approaches categorized in this research. There are no concrete studies that establish which approach is the most effective among others, for that reason, it is not possible to determine whether one approach is better than the other.

Given these facts, with good judgment, one can say that from the previously mentioned approaches and methods, there is not an ideal one that stands out from the others. As a result, the most suitable solution could be to take advantage of the characteristics of each method and approach and combine them in order to adapt to a certain context. This adaptation will depend on several factors such as the possibilities of the use of technology, the level and the age of the students, the cultural aspect, among others.

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CHAPTER VI

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6. 1 Conclusions

English productive skills teaching has been an important topic in EFL education for a long period of time. Due to the fact that English has been used for job opportunities and personal growth, it is necessary to establish an approach or method that satisfies the learners' needs, in this case, productive skills. As it could be seen, all the approaches reviewed in this research have positive findings and benefits in the context where they were applied.

Therefore, regarding the research question about which approach or method is the most effective, it was not possible to determine only one approach or method because all of those analyzed had positive aspects and good impacts in EFL contexts.

Consequently, it was made visible that educators have to take advantage of the most important characteristics of each method and approach in order to adapt to a certain context depending on learners' level, age, the cultural aspect, among others. Additionally, it was found that most learners showed good results when ICT tools were included in one method or approach. The use of technological tools instead of using traditional methods can enhance the learning process of English productive skills.

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6. 2 Recommendations

Further research on the use of innovative approaches and methods to teach English productive skills should be conducted so that educators can benefit from them. Also, it is important to investigate about the technology tools used nowadays to enhance the improvement of English skills through the implementation of different methods and approaches, not only to teach productive skills, but also other important aspects of this language.

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