



UNIVERSIDAD HISPANOAMERICANA

Faculty of Education

Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Licentiate Degree in English Teaching

ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF ROLE-PLAY STRATEGIES AND THE 'I SEE, I THINK, I WONDER' THINKING ROUTINE ON SPEAKING FLUENCY THROUGH THE USE OF PLAY BASED AND PROJECT BASED APPROACHES IN SIXTH-GRADE EFL STUDENTS AT AMADITA PRIMARY SCHOOL, CORONADO, COSTA RICA, DURING THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 2025

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January 2025

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San José, 03-10-2025

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Estimado señor(a)

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He revisado y he hecho las observaciones relativas al contenido analizado, particularmente lo relativo a la coherencia entre el marco teórico y análisis de datos, la consistencia de los datos recopilados y la coherencia entre éstos y las conclusiones; asimismo, la aplicabilidad y originalidad de las recomendaciones, en términos de aporte de la investigación. He verificado que se han hecho las modificaciones correspondientes a las observaciones indicadas.

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## **Dedicatory**

First of all, I dedicate this thesis to God, for being my constant guide and strength through this journey. In the hardest moments, His presence gave me the courage to keep going and the peace to trust the process.

I also dedicate this work with all my love to my family. Thank you for always being there with unconditional love, encouragement, and patience. Every word of support, every hug, and every reminder to believe in myself made this possible.

And most of all, I dedicate this thesis to my sixth-grade students. You were the heart and inspiration of this project and the reason behind every effort. Their motivation, creativity, and willingness to grow gave true meaning to this project. Thank you for encouraging me and motivating all the way. This work is for you and because of you. I carry you in my heart always.

## **Acknowledgment Letter**

I want to express my sincere thanks to my tutor, Lic. Jeffrey Montero Núñez, for all his patience, guidance, and support during this process. His advice and dedication were key to making this project possible, and I truly appreciate the time he invested in helping me grow.

I am also very grateful to Amadita Primary School, for opening its doors and allowing me to carry out this research. Over time, this place became my second home and a space where I grew not only as a professional but also as a person. To the teachers and staff who gave me their support, thank you for trusting in this project and for encouraging me along the way.

Finally, thank you to all the people who, in one way or another, gave me encouragement, ideas, or even just kind words during this time. Every bit of support meant so much and helped me finish this stage with hope and motivation.

Marisol Acosta Lachner

## **Abstract**

The pandemic left a mark in global education systems that made the world change from face-to-face classes to virtual learning in the blink of an eye. This disrupted the foundational academic development in young learners. In Costa Rica, the pandemic left an impact specially in elementary schools. Students are still trying to catch up on very basic and essential communication skills. At Amadita Primary School in Coronado, the sixth-grade students are facing different challenges with their fluency and speaking skills. This emphasizes the need for more meaningful and engaging experiences that students can relate with in a real-world context.

This research thesis originates from the urgent need to change the traditional teacher centered methods into something more innovative. Old approaches have always been focused on grammar, translation, memorizing, etc. and leaving aside communication. This has made students feel insecure or lose motivation when learning another language and perform poorly in front of other people. This study proposes the integration between active methodologies like role-play and the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine with play based and project-based learning.

Role play creates a fun, engaging classroom environment where students can practice through real life scenarios proposed by the teacher. It allows for an improvisation space, production, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. By combining role play with the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine, students can expand their language while developing critical thinking skills and improving their oral expression. These practices help to create an environment in which students are faced with a more authentic speaking practice.

This research paper will be conducted during the first semester of 2025 with a sixth-grade class at Amadita Primary School in Coronado, Costa Rica. It will include observation, student reflections, teacher notes, etc. The main idea is to have a creative environment where students are responding to academic and emotional challenges post pandemic. This research wants to create recommendations for teachers, schools, etc. who are looking for different ways to make classes more meaningful in English teaching or primary education. The discoveries can also help other educators trying to switch up their classes to a more dynamic and meaningful environment for students to grow.

**Keywords:** Speaking fluency-Role play-Active methodologies- Project-based learning- Primary education- technology in education

## Resumen

La pandemia dejó una huella en los sistemas educativos a nivel mundial, haciendo que el mundo pasara de las clases presenciales al aprendizaje virtual en un abrir y cerrar de ojos. Esto interrumpió el desarrollo académico fundamental en los estudiantes más jóvenes. En Costa Rica, la pandemia dejó un impacto especialmente en las escuelas primarias. Los estudiantes aún están tratando de ponerse al día con habilidades comunicativas muy básicas y esenciales. En la Escuela Primaria Amadita en Coronado, los estudiantes de sexto grado enfrentan diferentes desafíos con su fluidez y habilidades orales. Esto resalta la necesidad de experiencias más significativas y atractivas con las que los estudiantes puedan relacionarse en un contexto del mundo real.

Esta tesis de investigación surge de la necesidad urgente de cambiar los métodos tradicionales centrados en el docente por algo más innovador. Los enfoques antiguos siempre se han centrado en la gramática, la traducción, la memorización, etc., dejando de lado la comunicación. Esto ha hecho que los estudiantes se sientan inseguros o pierdan la motivación al aprender otro idioma y tengan un bajo desempeño frente a otras personas. Este estudio propone la integración de metodologías activas como el juego de roles y la rutina de pensamiento “Veo, pienso, me pregunto” junto con el aprendizaje basado en el juego y el aprendizaje basado en proyectos.

El juego de roles crea un ambiente de aula divertido y atractivo donde los estudiantes pueden practicar a través de escenarios de la vida real propuestos por el docente. Permite un espacio de improvisación, producción, vocabulario, pronunciación y fluidez. Al combinar el juego de roles con la rutina de pensamiento “Veo, pienso, me pregunto”, los estudiantes pueden expandir su lenguaje mientras desarrollan habilidades de pensamiento crítico y mejoran su

expresión oral. Estas prácticas ayudan a crear un entorno en el que los estudiantes se enfrentan a una práctica oral más auténtica.

Este trabajo de investigación se llevará a cabo durante el primer semestre del 2025 con una clase de sexto grado en la Escuela Primaria Amadita en Coronado, Costa Rica. Incluirá observación, reflexiones estudiantiles, notas del docente, etc. La idea principal es tener un entorno creativo donde los estudiantes respondan a los desafíos académicos y emocionales del período postpandemia. Esta investigación busca generar recomendaciones para docentes, escuelas, etc., que estén buscando formas diferentes de hacer que las clases sean más significativas en la enseñanza del inglés o en la educación primaria. Los hallazgos también pueden ayudar a otros educadores que deseen transformar sus clases en un entorno más dinámico y significativo para el crecimiento de los estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** fluidez oral – juego de roles – metodologías activas – aprendizaje basado en proyectos – educación primaria – tecnología en la educación

## **CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH PROBLEM**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Acquiring a second language has become an essential part of education worldwide. Learning English opens possibilities for personal, professional, academic, and cultural opportunities. However, many primary students face the challenge of developing oral communication skills. Ordinary and traditional teacher-centered methods which focus on memorization often lack opportunities for students to practice English in more authentic environments. Because of this, many students can struggle to express themselves fluently and can affect their academic performance and their motivation to continue learning the language.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students who were forced to virtual learning in their early years face struggles in communication. These students were isolated, and their exposure to speak in English was also reduced. This gave students limited opportunities to apply whatever they were learning during class. The effect of this disruption is seen in the sixth graders who are working to fill in the gaps in their English fluency.

Recognizing the challenges shows the importance of using innovative and active methodologies which can lead to meaningful learning and communication. Using role play and thinking routines creates spaces where students can participate actively. Using role play and the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine can impact positively fluency in sixth graders at Amadita Primary School, Coronado, Costa Rica.

## **1.2 Formulation of the problem**

### **1.2.1 Research Question**

What is the impact of using role-play and the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” thinking routine in fostering English Learning as a foreign language and speaking fluency in sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School, Coronado, Costa Rica, during the first trimester of 2025?

### **1.2.2 Research Problem**

#### **1.2.2.1 Background of the problem**

Learning a second language has become an important skill to have in today’s society. Learning another language, such as English, can open many opportunities in a personal or educational environment and professional opportunities. It is a crucial factor when applying for a new job, or to open intercultural relationships. Because of this, many schools like to include learning English as a priority in their curriculums.

However, traditional methods like repetition, memorization, and repetition exercises are often not very effective, and don’t translate into real life communication skills. These methods can make students feel bored, disengaged and lack motivation to learn. Because of this, educators are trying to find new ways to engage students and create meaningful and long-lasting learning.

The COVID-19 pandemic had great impact on foundational learning. Younger students have been affected because of the transition to online classes. Active methodologies help children apply their critical thinking skills as well. Since this generation of learners was deeply impacted by the pandemic, they are lacking basic critical thinking skills, studying techniques, and independence.

These factors also influence the fact that there is a gap between pre-pandemic kids and post pandemic ones; especially with this generation who spent prep and first grade virtually. Years that, according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), kindergarten is a crucial stage where kids develop basic skills like social, emotional, language skills, and literacy competencies. (NAEYC, date not specified) Also, according to Mader, 2021, in the first years of elementary, children learn other basic and socio-emotional skills. Disturbing these years can impact a child's upbringing. Mader mentions that disturbing first grade can make kids fall behind in literacy skills.

Another predetermining factor is that schools were forced to close during the pandemic which changed children's routines and led to this change into virtual learning. Research also shows that the kids whose learning was disturbed during COVID-19 have presented lower or worse cognition skills than those pre-pandemic students and specially in kids from a lower economic background who didn't have access to internet or electronic devices. (Dore et al.,2024)

Now, the combination of the traditional and well-known methods, with virtual learning had a great impact in developing critical thinking skills and language skills. The pandemic affected children's ability to communicate, to make new and meaningful relationships, and also affected language and speech (Ofsted, 2024)

For many years, teachers have used the same methods for teaching English learners. Students are used to working with reading comprehension exercises, memorization, a more teacher centered approach to the classes, etc. No one is saying that they are not effective or important, they just turn the classes into a more passive style of learning. When students feel disengaged or unmotivated to learn they will lack a deeper understanding of what their teacher is

currently teaching. Educators of EFL should consider that when teaching languages, interaction and practical application are key.

Because of all this, teachers around the world are exploring the use of learning methodologies as an alternative to traditional methods. A crucial part of active learning is involving kids in their own learning processes. This can be done with the use of activities of different types like problem solving, role-play, debates, etc. These different activities will reduce stress and anxiety, will motivate students of all ages to participate, and involve students in their own learning. Ghonosooly mentions that using activities like active methodologies created a more positive environment in the classroom, reduced student anxiety and involved English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in their learning.

This generation is used to guided work in class, which affects their speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills. They are used to copying from the board into their notebooks or simply answer at the same time with the teacher, completing their workbooks. Implementing active methodologies or strategies inside the classroom is important to try to eliminate this learning gaps or to level kids back to pre-covid student levels.

Understanding that the challenge currently faced come from many of COVID-19 pandemic issues is key in order to work towards the leveling of pre/post pandemic learners. The use of critical thinking and ensuring classroom engagement will not only create a supportive class environment, but will create more meaningful learning in students.

### **1.2.2.2 Problematization**

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in primary education is one of the goals all teachers try to achieve with their students in order to develop essential communication skills. Despite

trying to improve current methodologies, sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School exhibit several challenges in developing effective speaking skills in English. This issue can be caused by the use of traditional and teacher-centered classes with repetition. These methods can be perceived as boring to students and fail in motivating and engaging students inside the classroom or meet their specific learning needs.

The approach involving memorization and repetitive exercises, where teaching methods are primarily teacher centered- fail turn students into passive recipients of their own learning. According to Exeed College, 2024, these approaches can interfere with critical thinking skills or cause a set back on their problem-solving skills. Also, these methods are not necessarily “friendly” with all learning styles. According to Billabong High International School, 2024, these styles lack personalization.

Another issue with these methods is that since children work so much in grammar drills, practices, written exercises, etc. they lack speaking practice which is key to learn a second language. These methods are necessary to understand how English works, but they don’t get to apply their knowledge and then struggle with basic communication skills. Another determining factor is the lack of exposure or lack of interaction with environments in which they are forced to speak. According to Edukate Punggol, 2023, this lack of exposure, the fear of making mistakes when speaking, and most importantly, the limited opportunities they have to practice their English, contribute to develop poor speaking skills.

According to Billabong High International when children are not exposed to practical application of their learning, they are not able to see the relevance of the subject, lose interest and learning is not meaningful. To create meaningful learning, educators should change their focus from teacher-centered to teacher-centered approach. According to university of San Diego,

2020, an approach like this one provides space for deeper understanding, more critical thinking learning opportunities, and gives students the opportunity to communicate, practice, and receive feedback.

The challenges that these students at Amadita Primary School face are a result of these problematics. Changing the educators view on how to achieve meaningful learning will help students thrive with their English skills. Reevaluating the traditional methods, incorporating active methodologies such as role play, making sure educators are covering every learning style possible to create meaningful learning in sixth grade students.

### **1.2.3 Justification of the problem**

Active methods, like role play, make students interested and involved in learning. These ways of teaching help students get more motivated, think better, feel good about themselves, and get along with others (Frontiers Research Topic, 2024). These methods change the focus from the teacher to the students, making students take an active role in their own learning.

Now a days, children are lacking different skills needed to learn in a more effective way to create meaningful learning. Some of these kids have been affected by spending crucial development stages in virtual classrooms due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By spending these years apart from their friends, teachers, and a general education environment, they are behind on the whole learning process.

Confinement made children lose important moments where they would have been able to apply what they were learning in a real-world environment. If they were learning certain speaking skills in their virtual classroom, they had no opportunity to practice it with their peers, to receive feedback from a teacher, and to try to apply every new concept.

Now, more than ever, it is crucial for teachers to find a way to make learning attractive and motivate their kids. It is crucial to use new methodologies to enhance the already existing skills and foster second language acquisition.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Investigation**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

- To determine the impact of using role-play and “I see, I think, I wonder” as a thinking routine in fostering English Learning as a foreign language and speaking fluency in sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School, Coronado, Costa Rica, during the first semester of 2025.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- To describe the impact of role-play activities on the development of speaking skills in fourth-grade students at Amadita Primary School during the first semester of 2025.
- To identify the benefits of implementing thinking routines in fostering English as a foreign language learning among sixth-grade students at Amadita Primary School.
- To determine the combined effectiveness of role-play and thinking routines in promoting active participation and confidence in speaking English as a foreign language.

## **1.4 Scope and Limitations**

### **1.4.1 Scope**

The primary subjects for this investigation are forty-eight sixth-grade students, around the age of 12, at Amadita Primary School during the first semester of 2025 in San Isidro, Coronado, Costa Rica.

### **1.4.2 Limitations**

The primary limitations presented during this investigation include the lack of information on the internet about the effectiveness of active methodologies and thinking routines. Also, changing the older teacher's perspective on the methodologies that they use might present a limitation when obtaining reliable information on site.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## **2.1 Historical Context**

### **2.1.1 Background of the Institution**

Amadita Primary School was established in 1986 by a woman named Amadita Rojas de Malavassi in San Isidro Coronado. This is a very rural area where the school, the cemetery, supermarket, church, park, etc. are all nearby and holds a community that is founded on old school values. Amadita Rojas, who was also known as Tita Amadita by many, was a teacher, and with the help of her family she started with the preschool in San Isidro, Coronado. At first, she was a teacher at the Jose Ana Marín Public School in Coronado and then worked as the principal there for 38 years. Many of the students who attended that institution were of very poor families and with the help of the community, Amadita Rojas helped those students complete their education in search of a better future. The school was also facing structural damage and lack of qualified professionals. With help of the government, they built a new building for the school and helped the teachers become qualified professionals to take on the school.

When Amadita Rojas decided to start her own institution, the original name of the preschool was El Angelito Travieso. Seeing the towns need for a bilingual institution, Amadita and her husband Enrique Malavassi got bought a lot where they built a preschool, primary, gym, soccer field, etc. which allowed for more students to enroll and the school to grow changing its name in honor of their founder Amadita Rojas to Amadita Primary School in 1986. This became the first private institution in Coronado. As the necessity grew and children grew older, the school opened a high school nearby called EMVA (Colegio Enrique Malavassi Vargas) in 1994. Amadita Rojas received the honor of being declared “Hija Predilecta del Cantón de Coronado” in 2016 for all her efforts to improve education quality in Coronado. She had to take a step back

from education when she turned 89 but was always committed to helping children in any way she could until the day she passed.

The school has a unique methodology in which they do not provide homework for the students and focus on using Play Based Learning in their curriculums. Teachers are encouraged to include as much play in their classes as possible to ensure students active participation and involvement in their learning process. They also focus on using lots of projects which allow students to apply their knowledge in activities such as plays, building models, etc.

The school takes pride on its sport offers as well. They encourage students to learn discipline by providing different after school clubs like cheerleading, soccer, basketball, gymnastics, track and field, traditional dances, and others. The school believes that they can create leaders of the future by having student-athletes perform in different sporting events while they learn responsibility, hard work, teamwork, and many other important values.

At the moment, this school has around 420 students enrolled in primary holding generations of around 50 children per grade. These children are divided into two classrooms to ensure educational quality. The school counts with a curricular accommodations department called learning center. They help teachers with creating individualized plans and accommodations for children who have different conditions or are part of the gifted student programs. The school's mission is to provide bilingual quality education compromised with spiritual and moral values, as well as offering the opportunity to grow in artistic and sporting areas for a true integral formation. Their vision is to be the leading institution in integral formation for children and teens offering personalized education.

## **2.2 English teaching in Costa Rica**

According to Harvard, one of the big challenges faced by Costa Rica when it comes to teaching English is that there are still many “single teacher classrooms” in rural areas where one teacher is in charge of teaching every student in every level from 1<sup>st</sup> to sixth simultaneously. According to Tellier, the teacher workforce in this country is selected by a merit-based competition where temporary positions are given to teachers to avoid politicization and unfair appointments of teachers in the public service. He criticizes that this competition doesn't evaluate teaching competencies, and it's based on educational degrees. Although all teachers are required to complete their university level degrees, they do not guarantee knowledge or actual skills in the classroom. Tellier proceeds to mention that many of the courses provided in the country for Education are “low-quality private providers” in which the university can decide all of the requirements, standards, and curriculum. Just 19 out of 259 initial teacher education programs hold quality accreditation (MEP, 2016).

Teachers in Costa Rica receive little to no professional development in the public sector. There are training courses and workshops provided outside of school which are determined by government policies although teachers have asked for these trainings to be better connected with their realistic needs. This shows the little to no support teachers receive in this area. Tellier estimates there's one advisor for each 800 teachers and there's no real support inside the classroom (MEP, 2016).

### **2.2.1 History of English teaching in Costa Rica**

According to Harvard, English teaching in Costa Rica became a priority during the late 1980's. This because it made Costa Rica an appealing place for investors since there was also a

focus on technology during the same time combined with an already good educational system. During this decade, it was a priority for Costa Rica to attract foreign-direct investment. Companies such as Intel, Amazon, Boston Scientific, HP, and others were attracted by the quality workers provided by the country, clean/affordable energy sources, and strategic location. By focusing on English, it was easy for the country to attract foreign-direct investment and placed Costa Rica among the leaders of the region. Over the years, Costa Rica has been recognized for its great educational system and high enrollment rate in primary school. During the last decade, especially after covid, this number has declined.

Artavia et. al. 2024 explain how the country has started a shift in its curriculum and its now transforming it into a more skill-centered model coming since 2009. They mention how this has become a challenge since it has involved lots of teacher training but at the same time, teacher resistance to change. They also mention how in 2020 with the pandemic, the Ministry of Education implemented the SABER platform which allowed them to trace children from more vulnerable areas to ensure they could also get education. This platform would allow the Ministry to identify those students who were falling behind since it provided real-time info about their characteristics and also about their conditions such as internet access. During the pandemic, it was because of this SABER platform that the government could ensure these children internet connections of tablets for their studies.

### **2.2.2 Costa Rica Educational System: Main characteristics**

In Costa Rica, education is in charge of the Costa Rican Ministry of Public Education (MEP). It is a government entity that is responsible for developing the educational system in the country and ensuring quality education for all children. It is organized in different vice ministries. The Academic Vice Ministry manages matters related to quality, student participation, guidance, and

evaluations. The Vice Ministry of Institutional Planning and Regional Coordination is in charge of the regional education directors and coordinates planning within institutions. Finally, the Administrative Vice Ministry is in charge of finance, infrastructure, human resources, student transportation, and handles everything administrative (MEP, 2016).

In Costa Rica the school year goes from February November or until the beginning of December. According to Internations, the country's school system is considered the best in Latin America. The school system is divided into three levels: preschool, primary school, and secondary school. Preschool and primary school are mandatory. Students must enroll in preschool by age four. The Costa Rican curriculum emphasizes the importance of holistic development, promoting critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. It also integrates values education, fostering respect, tolerance, and social responsibility among students. The overall goal of the education system in Costa Rica is to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for personal and professional success. The education system in Costa Rica is free and mandatory for all citizens and usually students attend primary schools that are close to home and travel further away to enroll in secondary schools (OECD,2017) .

In this country, curriculum is divided in preschool, primary (which consists of I and II Cycles), and secondary (III cycle), and Diversified Education. Preschool includes children from birth up to 6 years old. They are also divided into maternal or infant cycle that holds kids from 4 to 5 years old. Then, they have the Transition cycle with kids aged 5 to 6; and finally, a Heterogeneous group ages 4 to 6.

First cycle includes grades 1, 2, and 3. They teach an integral education with classes such as English, Spanish, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, Math, Science, and many others to create whole rounded students. Second cycle includes grades 4, 5, and 6. They also

receive the same classes with a higher level of difficulty. III Cycle covers grades 7, 8, and 9; and diversified education include 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade (also 12<sup>th</sup> in some schools).

### **2.3 Teaching of English in I and II cycle in Costa Rica**

MEP explains how the priority in the country during first cycle is on oral comprehension while exposing the learnings to production and print. Reading and writing are skills that appear later in the process. MEP lessons focus on phonemics, vocabulary, oral and written comprehension, etc. with a mini project at the end of the unit.

During second cycle, children are faced with more elaborate tasks that include longer forms of reading, writing, and speaking. They start using the complete writing process with revising, editing, etc. and work on up to four goals per week. As well as with first cycle, children will eventually work on a mini project at the end of the unit. In second cycle, the teacher shares more about the learning process with the students. The teacher would generally start the class with a warm-up activity and pre-teaching introductory activity. Children are then exposed to the sociocultural aspect of the lesson, the learning goals and an essential question to be answered. “The enduring understanding and essential question are central to articulate the three learnings: learn to know, learn to do and learn to be and live in community.” (MEP, 2016) and linguistic skills in a single task.

The English curriculum in Costa Rica is designed to develop language competences in students from babies until high school. It follows an approach that aligns with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). For preschool, the idea is to have an immersive model where kids are exposed in a more natural way to English throughout their school day. In primary, kids are introduced to basic vocabulary, they learn simple grammatical structures, and have fun activities that encourage students to express

themselves orally and test comprehension. Finally in secondary children learn more advanced vocabulary and grammatical structures aiming to obtain a B1 level by the end of their education.

According to MEP (2021), some of the key features for the English Curriculum include the use of the communicative approach which focuses on creating effective communication in real-life contexts. It also focuses on developing skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Another key feature is the use of technology which incorporates digital tools to help exchange language learning in students. Finally, the last feature mentioned is the integration of competences such as critical thinking, collaboration, and problem solving.

## **2.4 Approaches in the process of learning English as a foreign language**

There are different approaches teachers use when teaching English as a foreign language. The one used by the teacher will be defined by the teacher's style and preference, and by the profile of the student group for the year. Another defining factor for the teaching style can be the institution and its specific methodologies. This thesis will be discussing the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT), Task-Based Language Teaching approach (TBLT), Content and Language Integrated Learning approach (CLIL), the Direct Method (DM), Project Based Learning, and Play Based learning approaches.

### **2.4.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

In the communicative language teaching approach, the objective is to develop complete competence in the language of for learners to develop the necessary competences for real life situations (Brandl 2008). The teacher not only focuses on the structure of the language but on the performance of it. Manghubang 2016 mentions that the knowledge of a speaker can be affected by various factors such as distractions, hesitation, memory limitations, etc. This is why the

author promotes this approach with a focus on developing the necessary competences to make meaningful communication. The author also mentions that the structure of the language will occur at a deeper level.

#### **2.4.2 Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)**

The task-based approach aims to use real life scenarios and tasks to promote authentic language use. The idea is to avoid general grammatical instructions by engaging students in activities in which they need to speak or use the language to achieve the expected goals. With task-based learning, children are invited to interact in real ways that can be used outside of the learning environment (Mudinillah, et al. 2019).

This approach uses engaging and relevant tasks to solve problems, to collaborate with their peers, and to express themselves without language use being the main focus. The authors mention how the TBLT approach is now aligned with the ideas of new methodologies since they try to focus on real world adaptability and also on learner centered environments in more dynamic classrooms.

#### **2.4.3 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)**

Darn explains Content and Language Integrated Learning as an approach in which language is integrated into a broad curriculum and used in context. When learners show interest in a topic, they are more motivated to acquire further vocabulary and language to communicate and continue learning. This approach focuses more on fluency than on the accuracy of the language since errors are part of the process. Darn also mentions that this approach helps to prepare learners for globalization, to develop more interests, to teach children about other

cultural contexts, and since it motivates students with the broad curriculum, it is a way to have more diversified classes instead of using traditional methods.

#### **2.4.4 Direct Method (DM)**

The Direct Method immerses students into communication rather than teaching by subjects and levels. It is also known as the Natural Method since it intends to mirror the environment in which babies learn their first language (Sanako, 2023). According to Sanako, this approach was developed in the 1890's as a response to the Grammar translation Method because it had many rules; the Direct method wants to replicate real life language use without the pressure with a focus on speaking and listening skills.

In the Direct Method, the teacher provides tasks to help students find their own grammar rules and their vocabulary is obtained through practice. The teacher can also include miming, acting, charades, pictures, realia, etc. to introduce new vocabulary, but the aim of the method is to have a more student-centered learning where students are responsible for their own learning. Teachers also encourage students to minimize the use of the students' native tongue so they can develop the ability to think directly in the target language without translating.

#### **2.5 Introduction to play based and project based**

The Department of Education at Queensland describe play based learning as an approach that provides learners opportunities to imagine, play, engage with people and objects, construct, pretend, etc. with the world around them. It is a way to integrate both the cognitive and creative areas of a child while developing physical, emotional, and social skills. In this approach the teacher's role is to make connections between play and the curriculum, to model, support and

initiate play, engage students in the process, and create the opportunities for students to connect play to real life scenarios.

In Project Based learning, students focus on working on a large project for an extended period of time. This project is derived from a question or a real-world problem. Children create a presentation to demonstrate what they have learned and how they solved the question or problematic. According to the Buck Institute for Education, when students work with the Project Based Approach, they develop critical thinking skills, learn to collaborate, increase their creativity and get to practice their communication skills. Using PBLs makes kids think about what they are doing and why, instead of just memorizing information for a test.

## **2.6 Play based and project-based approaches in the process of learning English as a foreign language**

### **2.6.1 Features**

Krajcik, J. S., & Shin, N. (2014). Mention that PBL's are more effective when they rely on the following four ideas. They propose that children construct their own learning actively, collaboratively, they should have authentic learning environments while they are starting to learn something new and construct the bases of their learning and implement the use of cognitive tools in their learning. These key features help improve the student's critical thinking abilities and develop their inter/intra personal relationships.

Mao & Handfort, 2022 explain that play based learning emphasizes the use of games, dramatization, and creating imaginative scenarios to help language development. This approach focuses on the fact that young learners acquire language in a better way when they are emotionally engaged and participate actively in their learning process. Through the use of role

play, students simulate real-world scenarios and real-world conversations which helps them put words in context and also expand their vocabulary. It is a way to help students reduce their anxiety of exposure and make them more willing to take these risks which is important for them to acquire the language (Song et al., 2023)

When referring to project-based learning, Beckett & Slater, 2020, propose that it involves students in extended tasks that will integrate them learning English with abilities such as critical thinking and problem-solving. The authors mention that these projects usually culminate with a presentation that reflects student understanding and application of the language. The fact that project-based learning promotes collaboration, helps foster communication within peers having them apply English for the purpose intended.

These strategies help highlight the importance of interaction, context, and learner engagement in the process of acquiring a second language. Incorporating play-based and project-based learning into English learning will not only support the development of said language but also enhance motivation and meaningful learning incorporating 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

### **2.6.2 Role of the teacher**

In play-based learning, the role of the teacher is to provide support to the students. This can be in the form of organizing the materials needed, to explain prompts verbally, to model the activity, etc. According to the department of education in Victoria, Australia, the teacher becomes a co-constructor of knowledge. The educator is supposed to engage students into learning independently and provide the necessary confidence in them to do so.

When working with a project-based approach, Ban, Q (2023) explains that the teacher becomes a guide in the process. This means that instead of teaching a class, he or she will discuss with the students every aspect of the project to guide them correctly towards the answer

while students acquire knowledge. To ensure student success, the teacher has to consider the PBL question design. An appropriate question, case, problem, etc. should be selected and engage in a class discussion to ensure that children are understanding the necessary concepts. The author also mentions that the teachers should strive to create a good learning atmosphere in the class, allow for mistakes, guide, etc.

### **2.6.3 Role of the students**

In play-based learning, the Department of Education in Victoria, Australia, highlight that the model is student centered. Children's natural motivation to play and discover will guide them towards learning. When children play, they use their imagination, they explore, experiment work as a team, etc. which are crucial skills for creating citizens of the future. "Years Learning and Development Framework (DET, 2018) highlights that the cognitive processes used by students in play, stimulate and integrate a wide range of intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative capabilities to foster high-level learning." (Victoria State Government, 2023) In Project Based learning students are also active participants in their learning process. Students collaborate with peers, they are in charge of their own research, analysis, application of knowledge, and eventually, of communicating their ideas to their peers and teachers.

## **2.7 Inclusion of role-play strategies in the process of learning English as a Second Language**

Ishak & Abdul (2022) comment that involving role-play strategies in the process of learning a second language benefits the students because it is a great opportunity to get students talking during activities in the class. These authors mention that during role play, students can play different scenarios that are so close to real life, that must be played with the

appropriate language and accuracy. It allows students to use their creativity to invent dialogues, to come up with scenarios, to act out parts in which they need to improvise while using the target language. In their systematic review, these authors come up with a definition for role play that accurately explains the focus needed in the classroom. They define it as a “comprehensive set of communication techniques that improves language fluency and encourages student participation in the classroom, while also raising students' motivation and encouraging them to study while also sharing duties between instructor and students” Ishak, S. A., & Abdul Aziz, A. (2022). Role play can be adapted to be used with various levels of students. Role play can vary in complexity, time, level, goal, difficulty, etc. these factors would be determined by the teacher based on the group taught. The authors also mention that using role play to introduce new vocabulary, grammar, etc. in class, allows students to strengthen their previous knowledge, work on the new topics, and engage students in new experiences.

### **2.7.1 Definition of role-play strategies**

The Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning define role playing as exercises given to students that have them assume the role of a person or act out a given situation. They suggest real-life scenarios that require students to examine their personal feelings and prior knowledge on the subject. It is mentioned that these exercises are usually short and spontaneous, but can also be prearranged research assignments.

It can be used to learn real world skills such as negotiation, debate, teamwork, persuasion, etc. provides students with the opportunity to be critical thinkers of new environments, and enhances current teaching techniques, motivates and engages students (Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, 2012).

## **2.7.2 Activities that include role-play strategies**

By using role play strategies inside the classroom, the teacher provides students with different contexts that are not specific to the books and curriculums provided. Northern Illinois University Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (2012), mentions the use of an interview practice. In this practice students can be the interviewer/interviewee for different contexts such as career interviews, history backgrounds, book analysis, etc. Another role play strategy proposed is to use role play for debates. The teacher would have the class prepare arguments against and in favor of different topics and have students defend their points of view. Role play can also be used when preparing students for guest speakers. They can role play the questions they are going to ask the speaker when the time comes. It can also help to prepare students for class presentations, job fairs, etc.

## **2.8 Thinking routines as part of the role-play strategies in the play based and project-based approaches**

### **2.8.1 Definition of thinking routines**

Harvard's Project Zero define thinking routines as short sets of questions or steps that support and make learners' individual and collective thinking visible. They are designed to foster students' content knowledge and thinking skills and dispositions across subjects. (Harvard, 2021) Thinking routines can be used continuously to help the students build on top of previous knowledge as they learn new topics and experience new challenges.

## 2.8.2 Features of thinking routines

Thinking routines are structured strategies that support and guide students' thinking in meaningful ways. They can be used at different points in the learning process, depending on the type of routine and the goals of the lesson (Project Zero, n.d.).

According to Thinking Pathways (n.d.), the use of thinking routines usually works through three stages. In the first stage, routines are introduced in a very clear and intentional way. Students are just getting to know them, so their answers are expected to be short and focused as they get used to how the routine works.

In the second stage, students start feeling more comfortable using the routines since they already had a first experience. They begin to see them as tools that help them understand ideas and explore different or new content. Even though the routines are still used in a visible and structured way, students start applying them more naturally and even across different subjects (Thinking Pathways, n.d.).

The third stage is when thinking routines become fully integrated into normal classroom life. Students use them on their own, without needing reminders from the teacher. At this point, the routines have become part of how they think and how they learn, and students shift towards more independent and reflective thinking (Thinking Pathways, n.d.).

What makes thinking routines especially effective is that each one is designed to encourage a specific kind of thinking, like observing carefully, analyzing, or reflecting. At the same time, they're flexible and can be used with all kinds of students, subjects, and age groups. They help students go deeper in their thinking by encouraging them to consider different perspectives, make connections, and engage more critically with what they're learning (Project

Zero, n.d.). Because they're interactive and student-centered, they also tend to increase student engagement and class participation.

In English language classes, thinking routines are a great way to support and motivate language development. They give students structured opportunities to use English in meaningful and authentic ways, helping them express ideas, build vocabulary, and improve both their speaking and writing skills. In this way, thinking routines help students grow not only as thinkers but also as confident English users (Project Zero, n.d.).

## **2.9 I see, I think, I wonder thinking routine**

### **2.9.1 Main characteristics**

The I see, I think, I wonder thinking routine, developed by Harvard's Project Zero, possesses several key characteristics that make it a valuable tool in the classroom:

- **Purpose-driven:** It encourages students to observe attentively and interpret thoughtfully while fostering a sense of inquiry (Harvard Graduate School of Education, n.d.).
- **Applicable to real-world contexts:** This routine can be used when students need to consider why something appears the way it does or why it is relevant. Harvard recommends using meaningful objects or topics to encourage transfer of knowledge and maintain student engagement.
- **Structured through guided questioning:** Once the teacher introduces the image or object, they guide students through reflective questions such as “What makes you think that?” or “What else is going on in there?” to deepen understanding (Harvard Graduate School of Education, n.d.).

- **Flexible in format:** The routine can be implemented individually, in pairs, or as a whole class. Ideas can be recorded in notebooks or worksheets for individual use, or on anchor charts or the board during group discussions.

These characteristics support student engagement and foster the development of both critical thinking and metacognitive skills. The structured yet adaptable nature of the routine allows learners to gradually move from simple observations to deeper analysis. Moreover, the act of documenting ideas promotes reflection and helps students become more aware of their learning process. For these reasons, this thinking routine is not only useful for introducing new topics but also for cultivating meaningful, inquiry-based discussions in the classroom (Project Zero, n.d.).

### **2.9.2 Advantages of the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine**

There are plenty of advantages to incorporating the I see, I think, I wonder thinking routine into your classroom. When introducing new topics, visible thinking is a way to get the conversation going for the teacher and the students. It is a way to let everyone know what to expect. Bown (2020) describes the three questions of this routine to expand the focus of each one. She mentions that the first part, “I see,” focuses on giving students the chance to describe everything they see—to explain the picture or object in their own words without the pressure of critical thinking. She then explains the “I think” part: this is done after the object has been described, and students are asked to describe what they think is happening. Students then proceed to answer this in the given space. Finally, Bown describes the last part of the thinking routine, “I Wonder.” For this final part, students write down any extra questions they have about the object or image. She mentions that this part can help the teacher guide the class toward any new inquiries students might have.

This thinking routine allows for a very complete class discussion after completing the thinking routine. Before moving on to explaining the topic, the teacher can allow students to express their thoughts and inquiries. It allows students to use their critical thinking skills based on the evidence provided. Bown (2020) mentions that this thinking routine is applicable with all different ages and groups. It is very versatile since it can be used with a picture, object, document, book cover, etc. It can be adapted to work individually, in groups, or as a class. It is easy to implement since it requires little to no preparation. Another benefit is that it allows students to start distinguishing between their opinions or interpretations and their observations. This allows students to use the correct discussion points when engaging in debates or in class.

### **2.9.3 Disadvantages of implementing “I see, I think, I wonder” Thinking Routine**

The "I See, I Think, I Wonder" routine is very useful in helping students think more deeply, but it also has some disadvantages. For example, Papalazarou (2015) mentions that some students might feel overwhelmed or stressed out when they have to answer the three questions (I see, I think, I wonder) at the same time. In the beginning, it can be hard for students to know what to write or say, and they may need time to get used to the routine. Also, some students may think there are “correct” answers they need to give or answers their teacher is expecting, instead of using the routine to write and think personally without any judgement. Ritchhart (2015) says that when students try to answer quickly just to get it done, they don’t really go deep in their thinking, which is the main goal of the routine.

Another thing to consider is the type of material teachers use with the routine. If the topic is too simple or not very interesting, the routine doesn’t work well. According to Ritchhart (2015), it’s important to use the routine with rich and meaningful content so students can really explore ideas. Find a topic that students find interesting, something they can relate to and enjoy

visually. Finally, the “wonder” part of the routine can sometimes be frustrating for students. Lowe (2013) found that some students liked asking questions, but they felt frustrated when they couldn’t find instant answers to their questions, especially when they were just starting to use the routine. That’s why teachers need to give support and guide students, so they don’t lose their motivation during the routine.

## **2.10 Skills in the process of learning English as a foreign language**

### **2.10.1 Reading Skill**

Simon & Simon (n.d) mention that reading is one of the key skills when learning English. It facilitates the comprehension of different texts which will enable kids the opportunity to improve their critical thinking, analysis, communication, etc. This is an important skill to have for the future since it can help people avoid misunderstandings with emails, letters, etc. It helps students to see language used in a different way than spoken and to see grammar being applied. According to Nation & Yamamoto (2020) reading helps kids develop their fluency and support other skills like writing and speaking. They have seen different ways in which the vocabulary they have learned is used and how to share their ideas with it in English.

According to Klimova 2014, teachers use stories, articles, etc to have kids see vocabulary used in context. When children read they increase their speed, their understanding and they learn how to understand a new word’s meaning from context (Klimova, 2014).

### **2.10.2 Writing Skill**

Writing is another key skill in the English language. Simon & Simon (n.d) explain that writing is key in order for people to express and organize their thoughts correctly. Students need to learn this skill from a very young age to communicate competently. It is

important to choose the appropriate vocabulary to ensure that writing is engaging, expresses the main intention of the message and that it is interesting.

Writing gives students more time to think about what and how they want to express themselves. It also gives them time to plan their thoughts, to review their writing and to improve their language when they make corrections. It is also a very visual way for teachers to see how their students are learning and improving. (Manaj, 2015). Depending on the age and level of the students, children can start out by writing short sentences, paragraphs until they develop the ability to write full stories or essays. Also, writing teaches children that there is different types of written expression such as opinion writing, creative writing, etc. (Klimova,2014).

### **2.10.3 Listening Skill**

Listening is another crucial skill of the English language. Simon & Simon (n.d) explain that there is a huge difference between hearing and listening; in order to listen correctly, the person should be immersed in the action. Listening is an essential component of the communication process to remain invested and comprehend what is happening.

Incorporating listening activities in the classroom is important because children can actually hear how real English is used in real conversations. It helps them understand pronunciation, the use of specific vocabulary, and to improve their comprehension. It is also a way in which students can start adapting their ears to different accents and speeds. It is different to listen to British people having a conversation than Americans. (Manaj,2015). Listening is also important because it provides kids with a sense of how emotions and intonations are expressed in the language. (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).

## **2.10.4 Speaking Skill**

### **2.10.4.1 Features of the speaking skill**

Speaking is the ability to express opinions or thoughts verbally. It is necessary to allow the students the maximum opportunity to speak when possible. It's a key part in the learning process (Patanjali Mishra, 2017). Activities like storytelling, dialogues, conversations, role plays, simulations, games, etc. make the student more active in the learning process. A professor for the University of Uttarakhand, Patanjali Mishra, mentions that in various countries, the effectiveness of a teacher's lesson plan is judged by the ratio of the teacher speaking time vs. the pupil speaking time. The greater the pupil speaking time is, the more effective the lesson is likely to be.

### **2.10.4.2 Importance of the speaking skill in the process of learning English as a second language**

It is important to consider the importance of the speaking skill. Now a days, there is a lot of different ways to get in contact with people all around the world. The growth of a globalized world has made it possible for people to work and talk to other individuals throughout the globe. "Effective communication skills are essential for achieving success in both commercial and personal endeavors." (Nguyen, et al.,2024)

### **2.10.4.3 Fluency as a part of speaking skill**

Fluency is also key when speaking a second language. Jones (2020) explains that there are two different rates in which fluency is measured. The first one is the rate of speech which consists of how many syllables are produced in a given time, the other is how many words you can produce on a row without pausing or hesitating. It is also important to include the speed

at which someone speaks to ensure that is clear enough for everyone. Fluency is a key factor in the English language. It allows children to grow up and express themselves correctly in several different contexts. Jones remarks that it should be one of the key priorities for teachers to ensure competent and successful students.

#### **2.10.4.4 Important elements to consider as part of the speaking skill**

There are different elements to consider when including speaking into a classroom that traditional classes might often fail to include. Rolf Donald from British council includes some elements that might make the implementation easier. The first one is to encourage students to include their native language into the conversation to make the transition simpler. Then, he proposes to teach the students to identify the difference between formal and informal English based on the context. Another proposal is to expose children to different conversational patterns.

Also, it is important to equip children with the necessary abilities to express themselves both in formal and informal contexts. This means the correct use of grammar and the necessary vocabulary they might encounter in these dialogues. While doing this, he also recommends correcting student pronunciation and fluency. Finally, give students time to practice promoting their confidence. ~

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Research Type**

This thesis was written as an applied study to evaluate two different strategies which are thinking routines and role play to improve students' oral expression and vocabulary in English. The study takes focus on sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School in 2025.

### **3.2 Applied Purpose**

This research has an applied purpose since it seeks to solve a practical problem. In this case, the problem is improving speaking fluency in sixth grade EFL students using role play and thinking routines.

#### **3.2.1 Transversal Temporal Dimension**

The research has a transversal, cross sectional, temporal dimension because it collects data during a specific period of time: first semester of 2025. "These are transversal studies where data are collected from the study population at a single point in time. Exposure and outcome are determined simultaneously" (Ranganathan et al., 2019, p. 91). The data collected for this investigation is only from the first semester of the 2025 school year.

#### **3.2.2 Micro framework of the research**

This research can be categorized within a micro framework since it focuses on a specific institution (Amadita Primary School), a defined group of students (sixth graders), and a short time frame. "At the micro level, sociologists examine the smallest levels of interaction; even in some cases, just "the self" alone." (Neuman, 2011, para. 1)

### **3.2.2.1 What is a micro space?**

A micro space is a small, scaled context or specific setting where the research takes place. In this case, it is the sixth grade EFL classroom at Amadita Primary School in Coronado, Costa Rica. “Differentiated or individualized teaching hardly takes place... which seems to create the need of a ‘micro-space’ of support... a space within a greater, differently structured space” (Buchner, 2023, p. 45) This is why for this investigation the English class at Amadita primary school becomes the reduces space used for the investigation.

### **3.2.3 Nature of the research**

The research follows a mixed approach, combining qualitative (interviews, observations) and quantitative (surveys, checklists) methods to gather and analyze data. “Research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of a qualitative and quantitative approach to research (use of qualitative and quantitative perspectives, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) to understand and support research.” (Mixed methodology of scientific research in healthcare,” n.d.) This approach is ideal for understanding the impact of role play and thinking routines on sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School.

#### **3.2.3.1 Mixed approach**

“Mixed methods research is an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks.” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 5). This approach integrates both qualitative data (like surveys, observation checklists) and qualitative data (like interviews) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the strategies on speaking fluency.

### **3.2.4 Type: Exploratory, Descriptive**

“Exploratory research is conducted to explore a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies to refer to or rely upon to predict an outcome. Descriptive research aims to describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied.” (Babbie, 2020, p. 90)

This research is exploratory because it investigates relatively under researched strategies in this context, and descriptive because it aims to describe how these strategies affect student’s speaking fluency.

### **3.3 Participants**

The participants in this study are sixth grade EFL students at Amadita Primary School, as well as their English teacher(s).

### **3.4 Sources of Information**

Primary sources: Student surveys, student interviews, observation checklists, and teacher interviews.

Secondary sources: Academic articles, books, and previous research related to role-play, thinking routines, speaking fluency, and educational approaches.

### **3.5 Sample Selection**

The selected sample for this investigation is all sixth grade EFL students at Amadita Primary School during the first semester of 2025. It was chosen because it is the population who spent prep and first grade online due to the pandemic.

Sample: All sixth-grade students as well as the institution’s English Teachers. This population has an important gap in their English fluency as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 3.6 Variables Chart

- General objective: To determine the impact of using role-play and “I see, I think, I wonder” as a thinking routine in fostering English Learning as a foreign language and speaking fluency in sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School, Coronado, Costa Rica, during the first semester of 2025.

<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Conceptual Definition</b>	<b>Instrumental Definition</b>	<b>Operational Definition</b>
To describe the impact of role-play activities on the development of speaking skills in sixth-grade students at Amadita Primary School during the first semester of 2025.	To establish the impact of role-play in speaking fluency in sixth grade students.	To understand through instruments the reality of speaking skills in this population.	Observati on checklists, student surveys, pre/post speaking tests.	Valid if $\geq 65\%$ of students show improvement in fluency (longer sentences, fewer pauses) and $\geq 70\%$ report positive perceptions in surveys.
To identify the benefits of implementing	To establish the impact of	To understand through	Observati on checklists, student surveys,	Valid if $\geq 70\%$ of students agree

thinking routines in fostering English as a foreign language learning among sixth-grade students at Amadita Primary School.	thinking routines in fostering English as a foreign language	instruments the benefits of these activities in English.	student interviews.	routines helped organize ideas and express themselves, and interviews confirm at least two benefits (more participation, better vocabulary, etc.).
To determine the combined effectiveness of role-play and thinking routines in promoting active participation and confidence in speaking English as a foreign language.	To establish the combined effectiveness of these activities in participation and confidence in	To understand through instruments the effectiveness of these activities in promoting English participation and confidence in	Teacher interviews, student surveys, pre/post comparison of speaking fluency.	Valid if $\geq 70\%$ of students report greater confidence and participation, and post-test results show $\geq 15\%$ improvement

	speaking English.	English speaking.		compared to pre-test.
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**3.6.1 Probabilistic or non-probabilistic sample**

The sample is non-probabilistic, most likely intentional or convenience sampling as participants are selected based on accessibility and relevance to the research.

Type of Source	Description	Use in Study
Primary Source	Data collected directly from the participants.	- student and teacher surveys, interviews and observation
Secondary Source	Theoretical and academic work	- Studies, research, publications

## **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

## **4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

### **4.1.1 Student surveys**

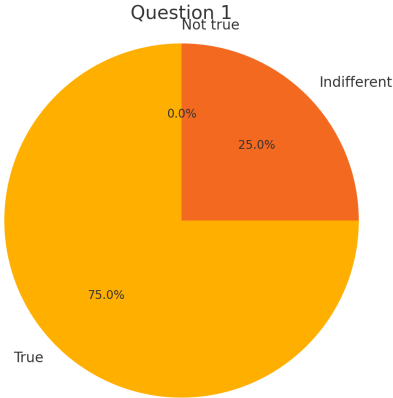
The student surveys consisted of thirteen different statements that were designed to understand student perspective on the activities we did in our classroom. Most of the students agreed with most of the items, especially those about learning new vocabulary and about feeling more confidence when speaking. They also agreed that thinking routines and role play were enjoyable activities. It was interesting to see that students agreed that strategies like these could be fun but also help them learn more English, use it properly, and feel safer when expressing themselves through oral English. Some students did answer a few statements indifferently, but these statements were about feeling nervous before performing the activities or about the instructions of the thinking routines. In conclusion, the survey can show that students agree that it was helpful in their learning process and an enjoyable way to acquire new language.

### **4.1.2 Student Surveys**

The purpose of the survey administered to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in Amadita Primary School was to obtain insight on what the children felt during the process of using active methodologies, like role-play, and thinking routines like the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine to improve their speaking skills. The survey was conducted to a group of 47 students.

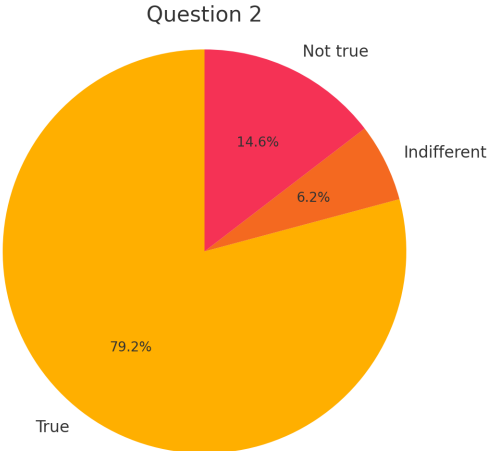
The survey intends to give light on what the children felt before, during, and after the activities and see if it helped them speak more confidently in English or incorporate new ones. The result of the surveys is presented below.

**Student Survey Graph 1: I enjoyed doing role-play activities in class**



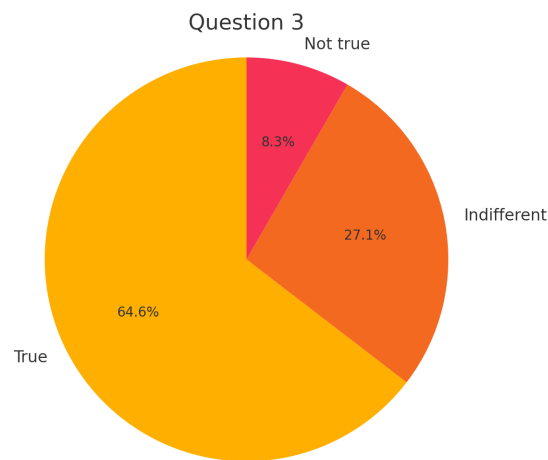
As seen in the graphic above, 75% of the students agreed that doing role play activities in class is fun while 25% felt indifferent about them. It is important to mention that none of the students surveyed felt like they didn't enjoy the activities in which they participated. This shows that role play proves to be a good tool to introduce in teacher plans.

**Student Survey Graph 2: I felt more confident speaking English during role-play.**



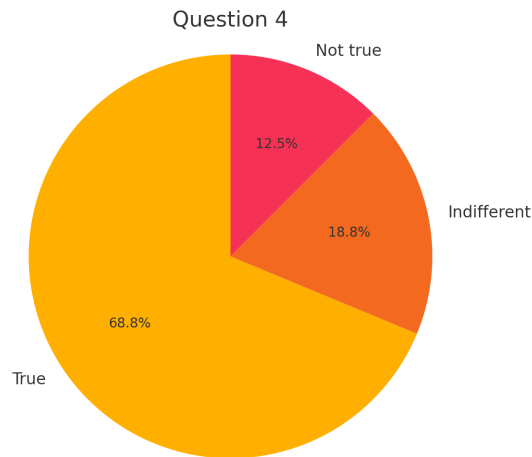
As seen in the graph above, most of the students felt more confident when speaking in English during the role play activities. 17.2% of them agreed with the statement while a small percentage 14.6% did not agree and felt the statement not to be true. Also, 6.2% of students felt indifference when relating to their confidence during role play activities. Having such a big percentage of students feeling more confident supports the idea of using role play to promote speaking.

**Student Survey Graph 3: Role-play helped me practice speaking in real-life situations.**



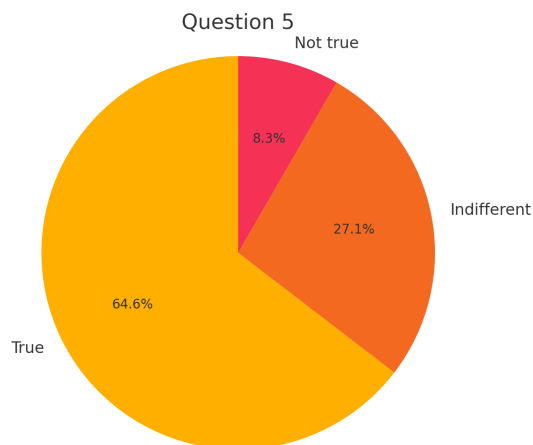
This question intended for students to answer if role play helped them use real life situations they can actually be faced to, to express themselves using English. 64.6 of the students agreed that it is a useful strategy to achieve that goal. 27.1% of the answers showed that students felt indifferent about it while 8.3% find it not to be true.

#### Student Survey Graph 4: I learned new English words while doing role-play



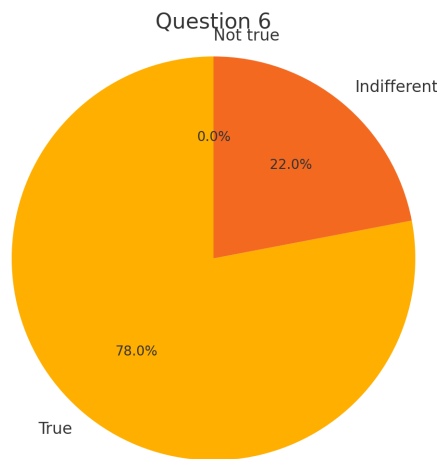
As shown in the graph above, more than half of the students averaging 68%, feel like they learned new English words when doing role play activities. 18.8% feel different about learning new words during this situation. 12.5% of students answered that they did not learn any new words during the process.

#### Student Survey Graph 5: I was able to use English words I learned in the role-play activities.



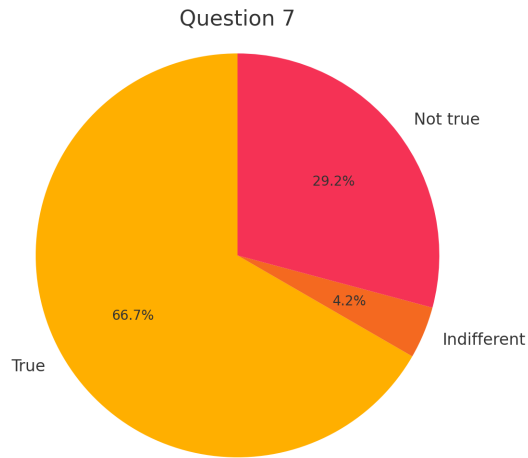
As seen in the graph above, students agreed that they were able to use English words during role play activities with a 64.6% of students. 27.1% of them felt that it was indifferent and 8.3% voted that it was not true. Still, the majority of subjects feel that they learned to use the words during the activities.

**Student Survey Graph 6: The “I See, I Think, I Wonder” routine helped me organize my ideas to speak more in English.**



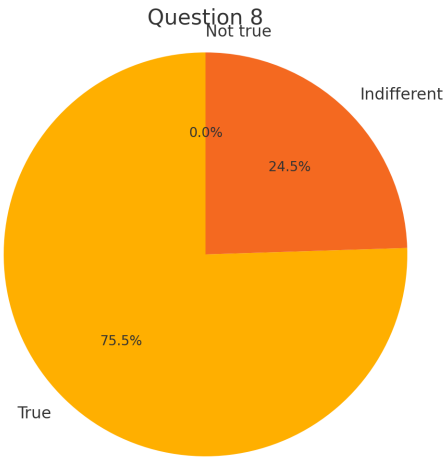
The graph above shows how children felt that the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine helped them organize their ideas to speak more English during class activities. None of the students felt it was not true which shows the effectiveness of the thinking routine. Only 22% of students voted that they felt indifferent.

**Student Survey Graph 7: I understood how to use the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” routine.**



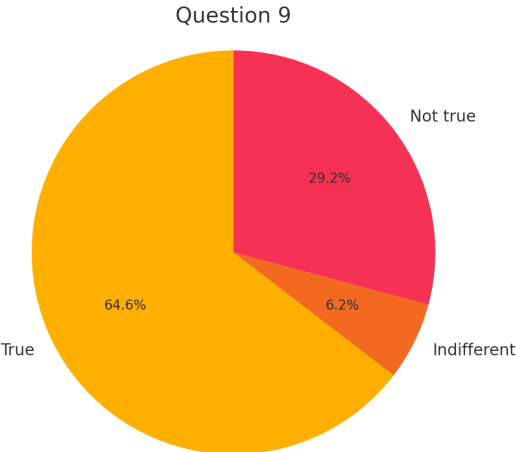
In this question, students were asked if they understood how to use the thinking routine provided. The graph shows that 29.2% of them did not understand how to use the thinking routine correctly which might have affected the results. Still, only 4.2 felt indifferent to the explanation while 66.7% of them understood how to use it correctly proving that it is simple to understand the thinking routine.

**Student Survey Graph 8: The thinking routine helped me think more about what to say in English.**



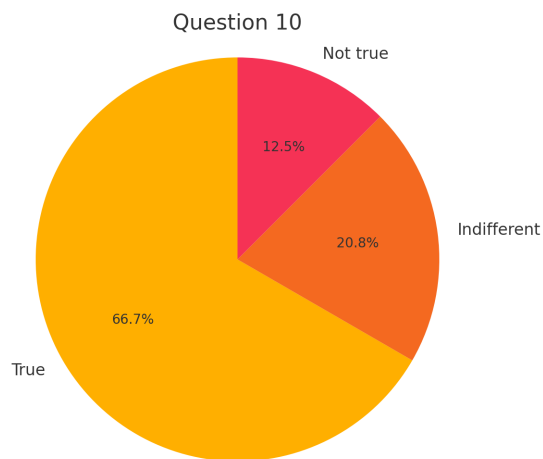
It was interesting to see how most of the students, with a 75.5% agree that the thinking routine helped them think about what to say by organizing their ideas. On the other hand, 24.5% felt indifferent about it, and none of the students felt it was not true. This proves the effectiveness of the thinking routine.

**Student Survey Graph 9: I liked doing the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” activity.**



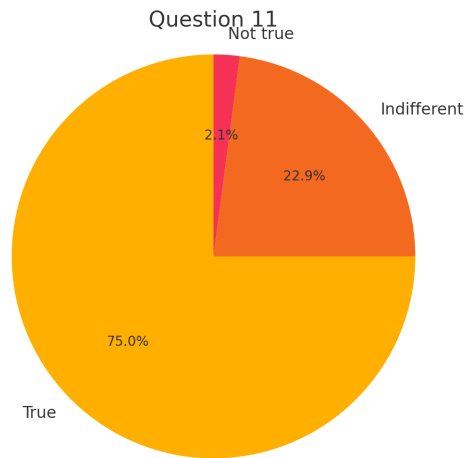
This question asked students how they felt about doing the thinking routine, if they liked it, disliked it or felt indifferent about it. The graph shows that 64.6% of the students liked doing the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine. 29.9% of the subjects disliked the thinking routine and 6.2% of them felt indifferent.

**Student Survey Graph 10: I spoke more English in class thanks to the activities we did.**



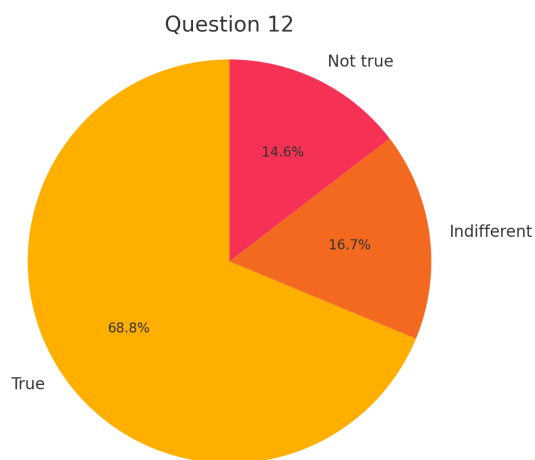
The graph above shows how students responded to the statement about speaking more English in class thanks to the activities we did. 66.7% of students felt that the activities helped them express themselves more using English. 20.8% felt indifferent about the statement, but 12.5% feel that they didn’t speak any more English because of the activities. It is important to also consider the different placements for students according to their English level.

**Student Survey Graph 11: I felt less nervous about speaking English after doing these activities.**



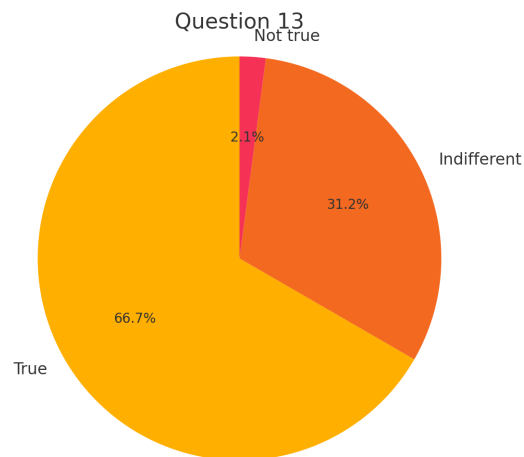
The graph above shows how students felt considerably less nervous about speaking in English after doing the activities. 75% of them agreed that they helped them express new terms with confidence. 22.9% felt indifferent about it while 2.1 disagreed.

**Student Survey Graph 12: I would like to continue doing role-play and thinking routines in English class.**



This question focused on asking the students if they would like to continue doing role play activities and thinking routines in class. Most of the students, with a 68.8% of the surveys agreed that they would like to continue using those tools. 16.7% felt indifferent about them and 14.6% wouldn't like to continue doing them.

**Student Survey Graph 13: I would recommend this to other students.**



The last question in the student survey asked them if they would recommend these strategies to other students. Only 2.1% answered that they would not recommend them to others, and 31.2 of them felt indifferent about it. Most of the surveyed students, with a 66.7% did feel like they would recommend these strategies to other students to speak more English.

### **4.1.3 Student Interviews**

The interviews give more detail and content about students' actual thoughts about the activities. Most students mentioned that the thinking routines were a good way to help them organize their thoughts before engaging in a discussion or speaking about the new topics. They

mention that it is a way to guide their thinking before participating. Many students enjoyed the “I see” part of the routine since they mentioned it is the easiest part to complete, others mentioned that they liked the “I wonder” part more because they can ask questions and clear their doubts.

Students mention that role play is a fun way to learn since it lets them include their own creative side to the class, they also mentioned that activities like these keep them more engaged than sitting on their desks working; they like moving around and it helps them stay on task. They say that the scenarios provided by the teacher were fun and made them include the topics in class they were learning. Within the suggestions students made, they included the use of costumes or turning the role play into a competition to make them more fun and engaging. This shows that kids do enjoy the activity and have the motivation to find ways to make it better.

The results of the interviews are presented below.

**Table 1. Results of Student interviews.**

Question	Positive	Percentage	Neutral	Percentage	Negative	Percentage
Liked 'I See, I Think, I Wonder' activity	38	79.2	7	14.6	3	6.2
Favorite part: I See	18	37.5	20	41.7	10	20.8
Favorite part: I Think	12	25.0	22	45.8	14	29.2
Favorite part: I Wonder	18	37.5	19	39.6	11	22.9

Routine helped speak more English	40	83.3	5	10.4	3	6.2
Role-play is fun and engaging	42	87.5	4	8.3	2	4.2
Role-play helped learn new words	36	75.0	7	14.6	5	10.4
Felt more confident after activities	39	81.2	6	12.5	3	6.2
Want more activities like these	41	85.4	4	8.3	3	6.2

The table presented above shows a summary of the answers of the 48 sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School. Most of the students expressed positive views about the thinking routine and role play activities. They highlight how these activities helped them practice real-world communication, to learn new words, and gain more confidence to speak in English.

**4.1.4 Observation Checklists**

Two observation checklists were applied to the students. One when they used the thinking routine and the other while doing the role play. They measured the goals in “achieved”, “sometimes”, and “not achieved”. When analyzing the thinking routine checklists, most students ranked the achieved box in categories like understands the routine, expresses thoughts appropriately, and shares ideas with the class. These results show that students understood the task and the structure of what they were asked to do and performed the task correctly. Other

categories that were ranked as achieved were showing confidence speaking English and uses relevant vocabulary which also match what students mention in their interviews and surveys.

When analyzing the role play checklist, it also reflected a strong performance of the students. Most students were marked in achieved when using appropriate vocabulary and interacting naturally with others. Also, the categories “enjoys activity” and “improves fluency and vocabulary” were marked as achieved in most students which shows that these strategies helped improve students overall use of English. There was also a smaller number of students that were marked with sometimes or not achieved in areas like improvisation or clear pronunciation. These cases were consistent with the overall performance and proficiency levels of the students. The results of the observations are presented below.

**Table 2. Results of “I See, I Think, I Wonder” Thinking Routine Observation Checklist**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Not Achieved</b>
Understands routine	36	9	3
Completes 'I See' section	38	7	3
Expresses 'I Think' ideas	37	8	3
Asks 'I Wonder' questions	35	9	4
Uses full sentences	34	10	4
Shares ideas in class	33	11	4
Shows confidence	32	12	4
Uses relevant vocabulary	34	10	4

Active in group work	35	9	4
Improvement over time	30	14	4

As presented on Table 1, most of the students reached the “achieved” category when implementing the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” thinking routine. As seen above, students reached this category especially in areas related to vocabulary, expression, and understanding. Few students remained in the not achieved category which can be related to their learning skills levels.

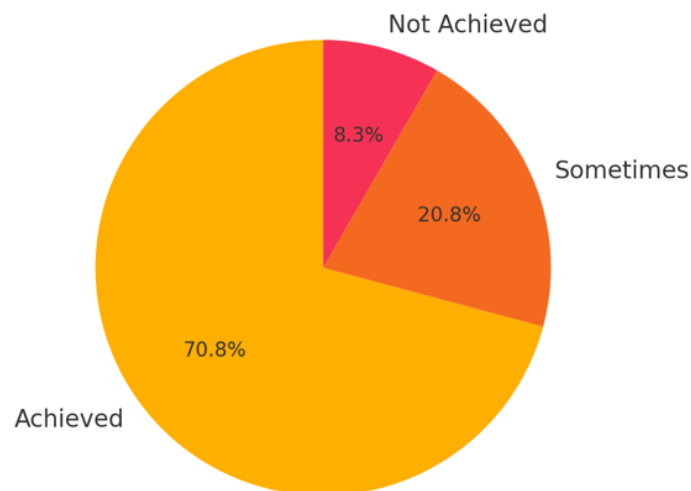
**Table 3. Results from the Role Play Observation Checklist**

Criteria	Achieved	Sometimes	Not Achieved
Understands scenario	34	10	4
Speaks in full sentences	35	9	4
Uses appropriate vocabulary	36	8	4
Improvise when needed	32	10	6
Interacts naturally	34	9	5
Shows confidence	33	10	5
Clear pronunciation	31	12	5
Maintains role	35	9	4
Enjoys activity	37	8	3
Improvement over time	32	11	5

As seen on Table 2, when students performed the role play activities most of the students reached the “achieved” category. They showed great results in areas like using appropriate vocabulary, enjoying the activity, and speaking in full sentences. Very few students remained in the “not achieved” category. This can be associated with their different skill levels.

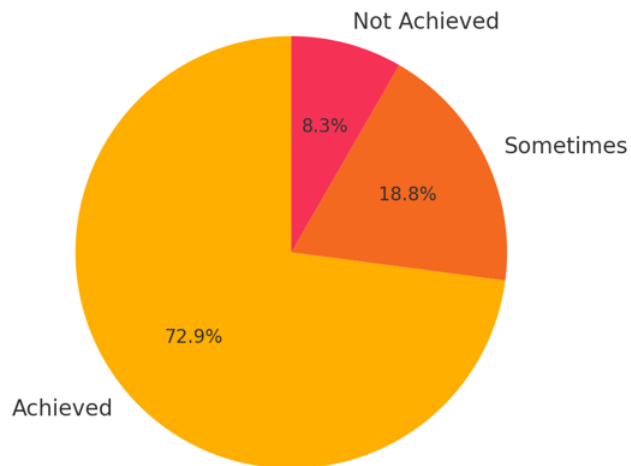
#### 4.1.5 Role- Play Observation Results

**Role Play Observation Graph 1. Student understands the role-play scenario or prompt**



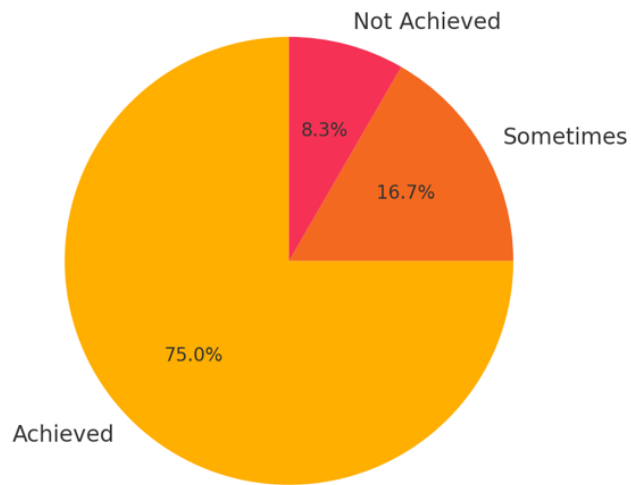
As seen on the graph above, most students achieved understanding of the role play scenario or prompt with a high percentage of 70.8% of the students. 20.8% of them were categorized as “sometimes” while only an 8.3% of them were ranked as “not achieved.” This graph shows that although most of the students showed understanding there’s still room for improvement in this area.

**Role Play Observation Graph 2. Student speaks in complete English sentences during role-play**



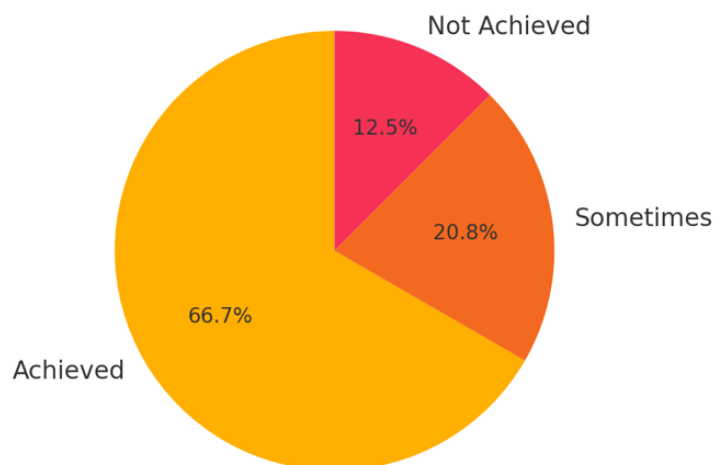
The graph above shows how 72.9% of the students reached the “achieved” category while only an 8.3% of them ranked the “not achieved” category, leaving 18.8% of the students in the “sometimes” category. This graph shows how many of them performed the task successfully while another percentage had certain difficulties either with speaking only in English during the activity or coming up with the appropriate vocabulary to use.

**Role Play Observation Graph 3. Student uses vocabulary appropriate to the situation.**



As seen on the graph above, 75% of the students managed to use vocabulary appropriate to the situations provided. 16.7% were ranked as “sometimes” since they struggled to find the correct words and only an 8.3% of the students did not achieve the task since they found the words in Spanish.

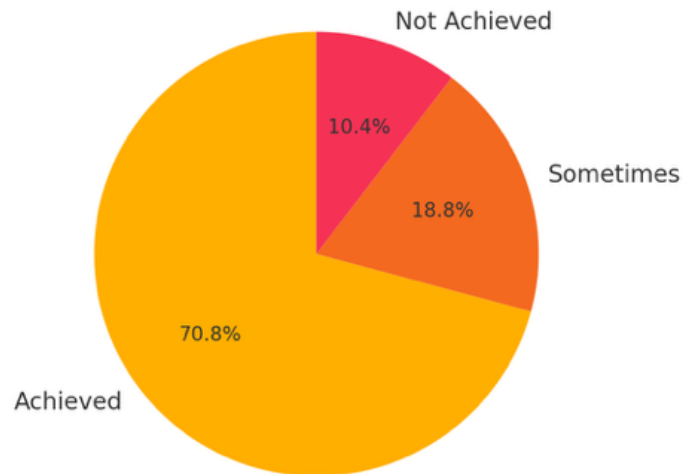
**4. Student improvises when needed during the role-play**



The graph above shows that 66.7% of the students managed to improvise when needed during the activities. 20.8% of them were categorized as “sometimes” during the role

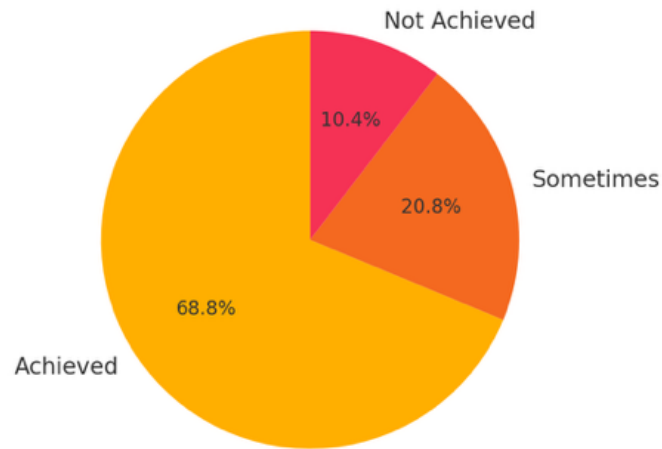
play and 12.5% of the students did not achieve improvisation correctly or effectively during this time.

**Role Play Observation Graph 5. Student interacts naturally with peers in the role-play setting**



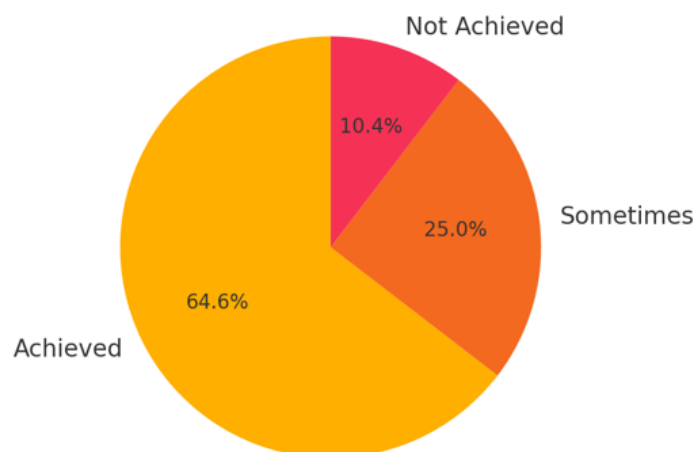
The graph above shows how 70.8% of the students were ranked as “achieved” when interacting naturally with peers during the role-play activities. 18.8% of them were ranked under “sometimes” since they seemed insecure or overthinking during the activity, and 10.4% were ranked under “not achieved” since they did not show any naturality during the activity.

**Role Play Observation Graph 6. Student shows confidence while speaking**



As seen on the graph above, most of the students showed palpable confidence while speaking during the activity with a 68.8% of the students ranking under the “achieved” category. In this case, 10.4% of the students did not achieve the expected goal and 20.8% were ranked under “sometimes”.

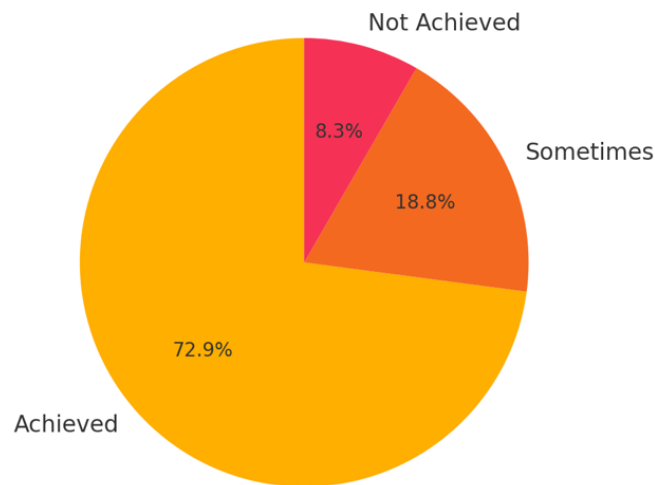
**Role Play Observation Graph 7. Student pronounces words clearly and is understandable**



As seen on the graph above, most of the students pronounced words clearly and were understandable with 64.6% of the students being categorized under the “achieved”

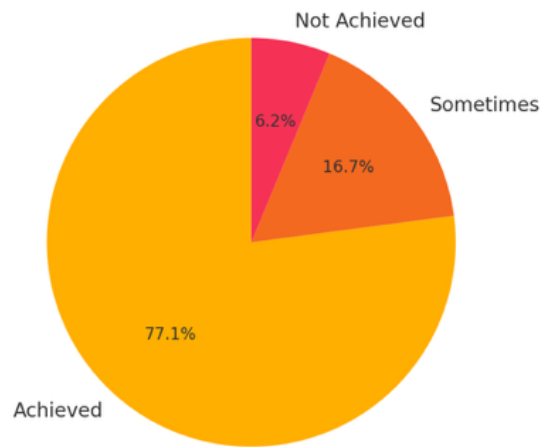
category. In this case, 25% of students had certain trouble with pronunciation of key words and were ranked as “sometimes”. Finally, 10.4% of students were ranked under the category of “not achieved” since they tried to use the words in context and were both mispronounced and not used correctly.

**Role Play Observation Graph 8. Student maintains the role assigned throughout the activity**



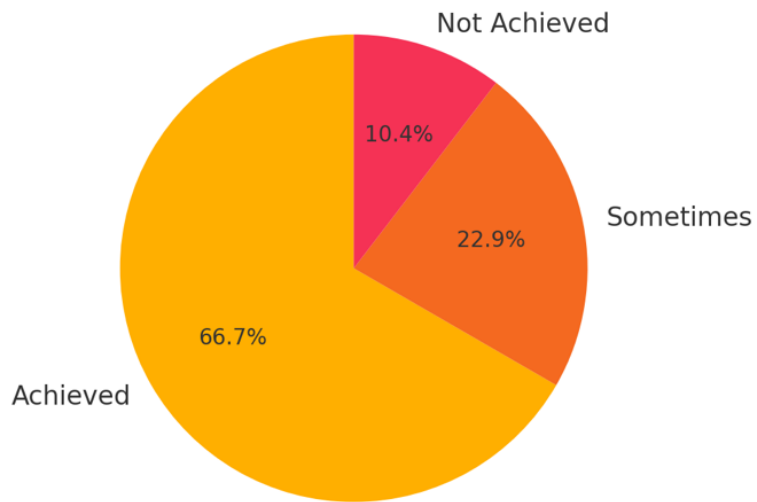
The graph above shows how most of the students managed to maintain their assigned role during the activity with a 72.9% of students being categorized under the “achieved” category. 8.3% of them were ranked under not achieved since they had to be reminded constantly to remain on task and on character and did not engage in the role play activity appropriately. 18.8% of students were ranked under the “sometimes” category since they seemed somewhat ashamed of acting out certain characters of situations but still managed to do it without breaking character often.

**Role Play Observation Graph 9. Student enjoys and actively participates in the activity**



As seen on the graph above, most of the students in this investigation enjoyed the role play activities having 77.1% of the students under the “achieved” category. Only 6.2% of students were marked under not achieved since they did not really engage in the activity and verbally mentioned they did not like it. 16.7% of the students were ranked under the “sometimes” category.

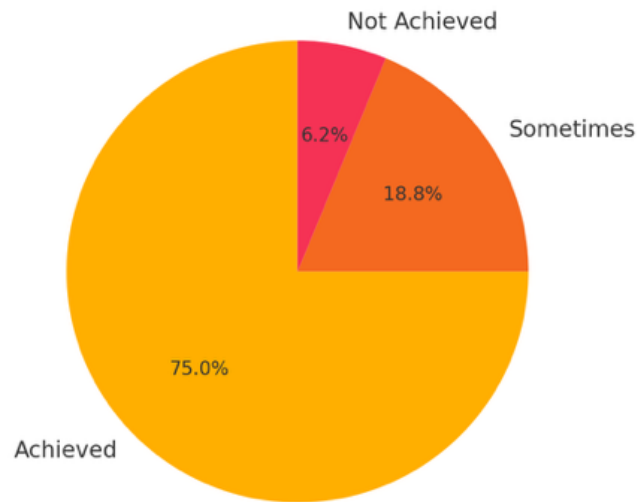
**Role Play Observation Graph 10. Student shows improvement in fluency and vocabulary use over time**



The graph above shows the improvement in fluency and vocabulary over time in students. 66.7% of them were ranked under the “achieved” category since they introduced new vocabulary and experiences over time during the activities. 22.9% of students were ranked under the “sometimes” category leaving a small percentage of 10.4% not achieving any improvement during this time.

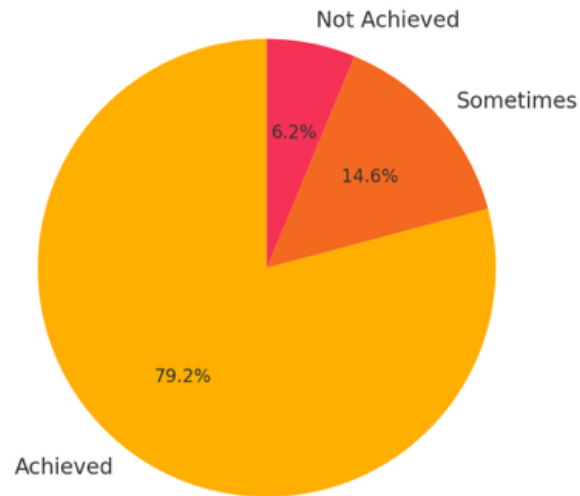
#### 4.1.6 Thinking Routine Results

**Thinking Routine Graph 1. Student understands how to complete each part of the thinking routine**



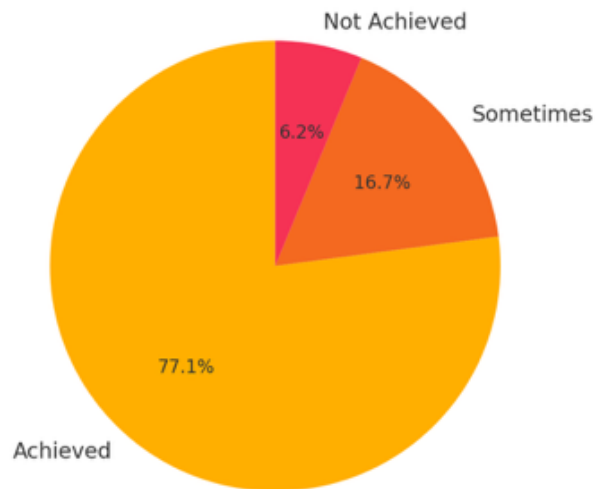
As seen on the graph above, 75% of students were ranked under “achieved” since they performed the whole thinking routine part by part correctly. 18.8% of students were ranked under “sometimes” since they had to ask multiple times what each part meant and what they were supposed to do. 6.2% of students were marked as not achieved since they did not apply the thinking routine correctly.

**Thinking Routine Graph 2. Student completes the "I See" section with relevant visual observations**



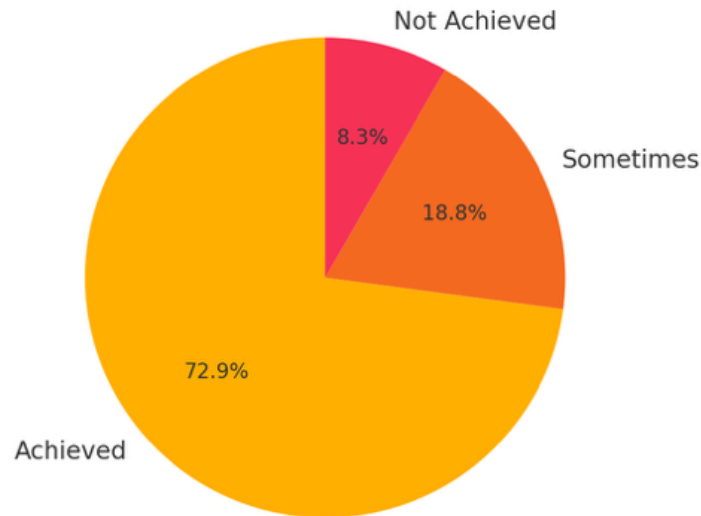
As seen on the graph above, when completing the “I see, section of the thinking routine, 79.2% of students were ranked under the “achieved” category since they provided relevant visual observations. 14.6% of students were ranked under “sometimes” since they had a few observations which were off topic leaving 6.2% of them under the “not achieved” category which were students who did not provide any relevant observations to the thinking routine.

**Thinking Routine Graph 3. Student expresses personal thoughts appropriately in the "I Think" section**



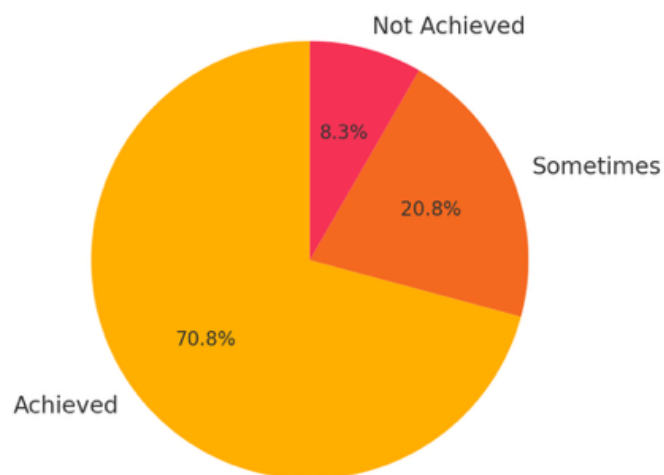
As seen on the graph above, only 6.2% of students did not express personal thoughts correctly during this part of the thinking routine by writing off topic thoughts. 16.7% of students were ranked under "sometimes" since most of their thoughts were relevant and expressed correctly leaving 77.1% of students expressing relevant, personal thoughts appropriately during this part of the thinking routine.

**Thinking Routine Graph 4. Student asks meaningful or curious questions in the "I Wonder" section.**



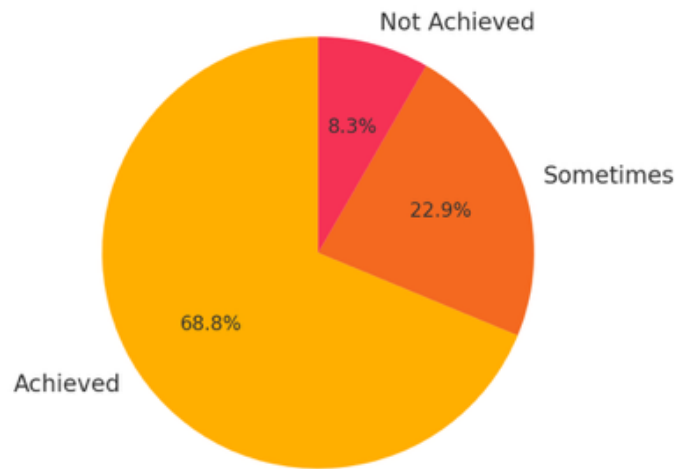
The graph above shows how 72.9% of students asked meaningful or curious questions, relevant to topic, during the “I wonder” section of the thinking routine. In this case, 18.8% of students were ranked under “sometimes” leaving a small percentage of 8.3% of them ranked under “not achieved”.

**Thinking Routine Graph 5. Student uses full sentences to express ideas.**



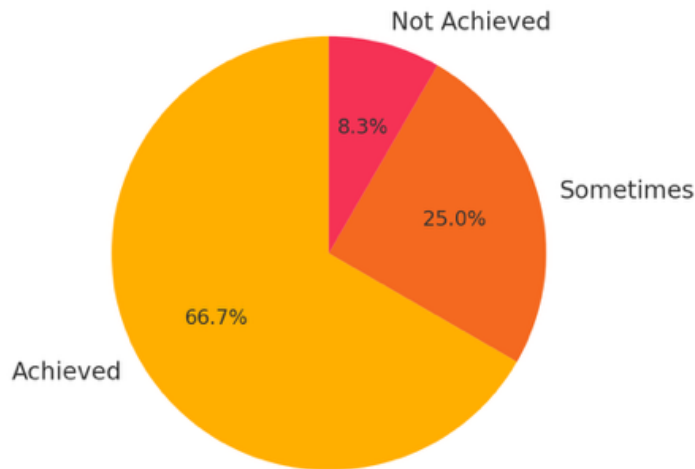
The graph above shows how 70.8% of students were ranked under the “achieved” category when expressing their ideas in full sentences. 20.8% of students were ranked under sometimes since they presented difficulty coming up with the correct words or did not use complete sentences, only certain ideas, to express their ideas. 8.3% of students had to rely on Spanish words to express their ideas fully.

**Thinking Routine Graph 6. Student shares their ideas during class discussion**



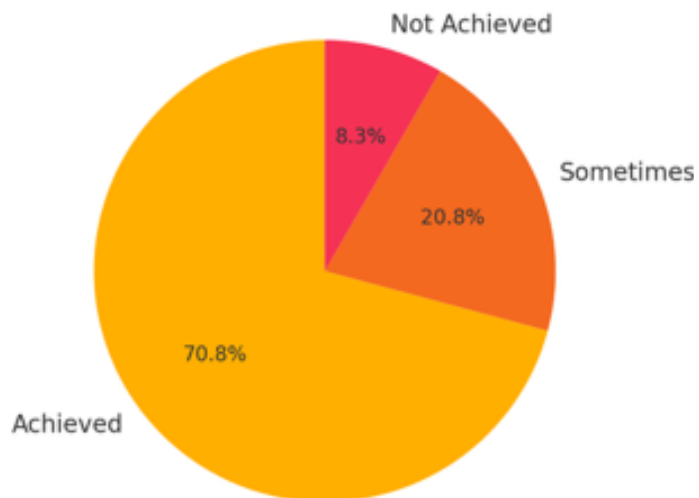
The graph above shows 68.8% of students ranked under the “achieved” category when expressing their ideas during class discussion, these kids were very participative when expressing their thoughts with the group. 22.9% of students were ranked under “sometimes” since they needed teacher encouragement to share ideas and they shared few. 8.3% of students were ranked under not achieved since they received teacher encouragement but didn’t want to share or didn’t know what to say.

**Thinking Routine Graph 7. Student demonstrates increased confidence when speaking in English during this activity.**



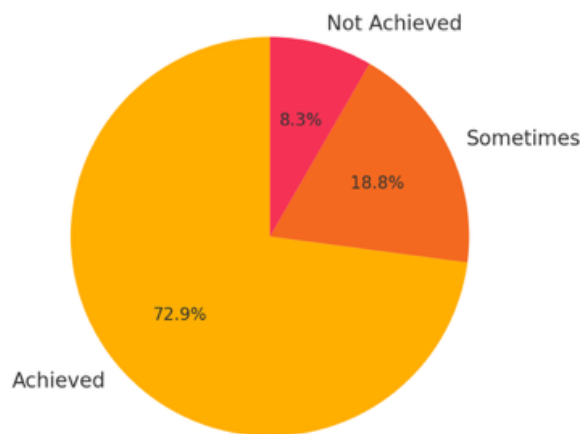
As seen on the graph above, only 8.3% of students did not show an increase in their confidence when speaking in English during the activity. 25% of students were ranked as sometimes since they shared information but did not really show the enthusiasm or confidence to continue in the discussion. 66.7% of students showed confidence when speaking and looked at the thinking routines when expressing their ideas.

**Thinking Routine Graph8. Student uses vocabulary relevant to the topic presented**



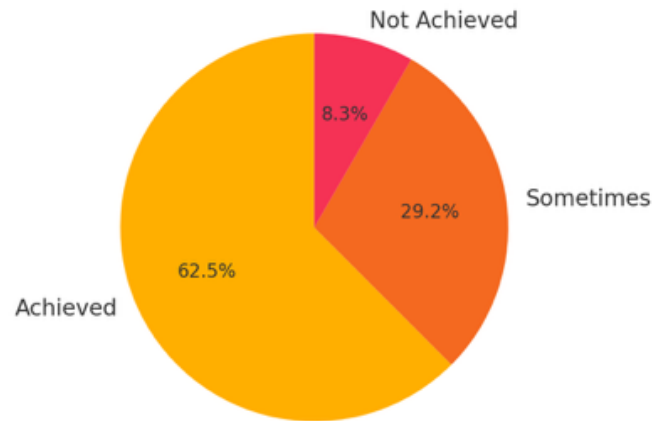
The graph above shows how more than 70% of students were ranked under the “achieved” category when expressing relevant vocabulary to the topic presented. 8.3% of them were ranked under “not achieved” since they still did not apply the new relevant vocabulary, leaving 20.8% of students under the “sometimes” category since they incorporated several words from the new topic.

**Thinking Routine Graph 9. Student actively participates in pair or group work during the routine**



The graph above shows how 72.9% of the students were ranked under the “achieved” category since they presented great participation in their pairs or groups during the thinking routine. 18.8% were ranked under “sometimes” since they faced several distractions and 8.3% of the students were ranked under “not achieved” since they did not complete the task or did not participate.

**Thinking Routine Graph 10. Student shows improvement in organization of thoughts and oral expression over time**



As seen on the graph above, only 8.3% of the students did not achieve improvement in their thought organization and oral expression during this time. 29.2% were ranked under “sometimes” and 62.5% of students were ranked as “achieved” since they showed great improvement during this time.

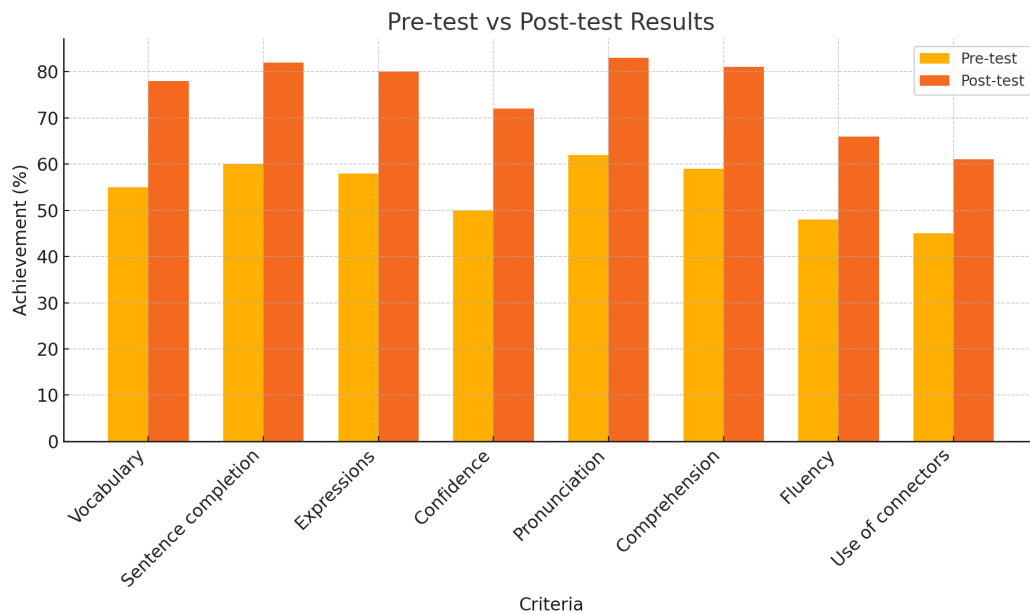
**4.1.4 Pre-test and post-test comparison**

The pre test and post test instruments were designed to evaluate students’ progress in oral expression through use of vocabulary, sentence completion, expressions, confidence, pronunciation, comprehension, fluency and use of connectors. The results showed consistent improvement across almost all the criteria. In the pre test, many students struggled with fluency and confidence, they would pause a lot to speak or ask how to say certain words in English. Vocabulary was limited or repetitive. In the post test results, students showed increase in their amount of vocabulary used when speaking about the topic we were studying (renewable and non-renewable resources) and more fluid sentences. It was interesting to see how other criteria

like confidence speaking and uses relevant vocabulary also increased which supports the idea of this thesis. Fluency and connector use also improved but not in the same way as the previous criteria which makes sense since it was a short intervention period.

The results of the comparison are presented below.

**Pre-test and Post-test Comparison Graph 1: Pre-test vs Post-test Results**



The chart above highlights the progress made by the students between the pre-test and post-test. Categories like sentence completion, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency showed notable improvement. There was an improvement in most categories reflecting the positive impact of having role play activities and thinking routines on students’ oral expression.

#### 4.1.7 Teacher surveys

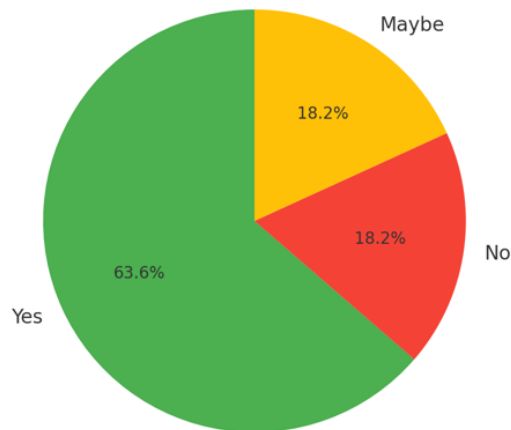
The teacher surveys were designed with ten multiple choice questions about the familiarity and perceptions of the thinking routine “I see, I think, I wonder”, and the use of strategies like role play. When analyzing the results, it was interesting to see that although the

majority of teachers had heard about thinking routines, they had not heard about the I see I think I wonder and had never implemented them in their classrooms. The responses show that although they know about them, they feel they don't have the strategies for integrating them into speaking classes. In relation to role play, most teachers had prior experience using role play in their classrooms and that students do enjoy the use of this strategy. They mention improvements in their student's fluency after using role play.

They believe that the use of thinking routines can help students to organize their thoughts before speaking about specific topics but would like the training to incorporate these strategies into their classrooms.

The result of the surveys is presented below.

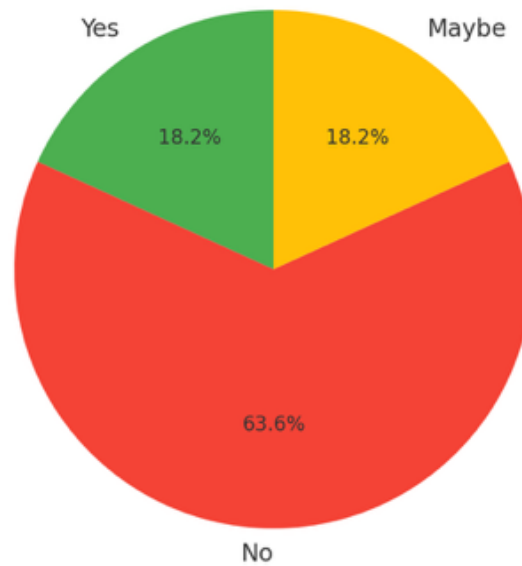
**Teacher Surveys Graph 1. Have you used thinking routines in your English classes?**



The graph above shows how 63.6% of the teachers marked that they had used thinking routines before during their English classes. It is interesting to see how the categories “maybe” and “no” received the same percentage with an 18.2% of teachers expressing that they might have used them or not completely.

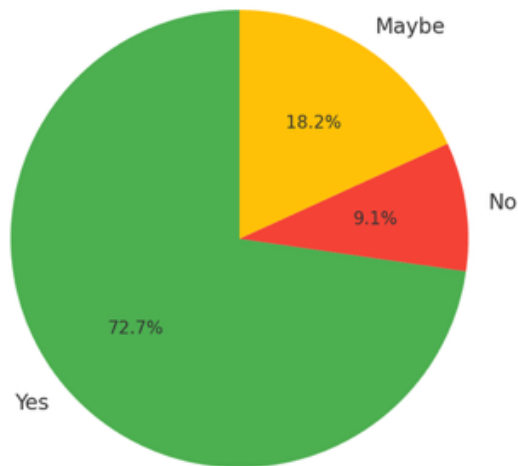
**Teacher Surveys Graph 2. Have you used the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" routine specifically?**

Have you used the 'I See, I Think, I Wonder' routine specifically?



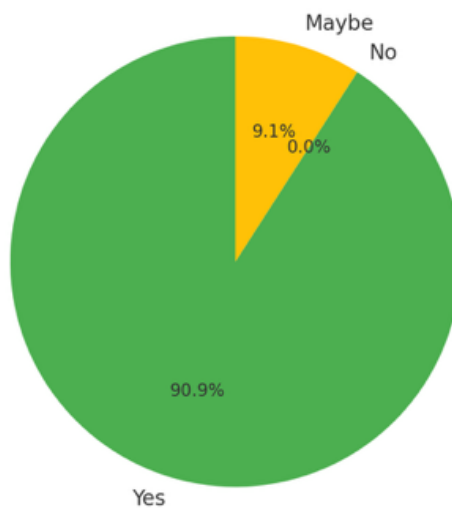
When asked about using the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine specifically, 63.6% of the teachers marked “no”, and again, 18.2% of them marked “yes”, and “maybe”. This might show that there is still certain confusion about thinking routines among teachers.

**Teacher Surveys Graph 3. Do you think thinking routines help students speak more English in class?**



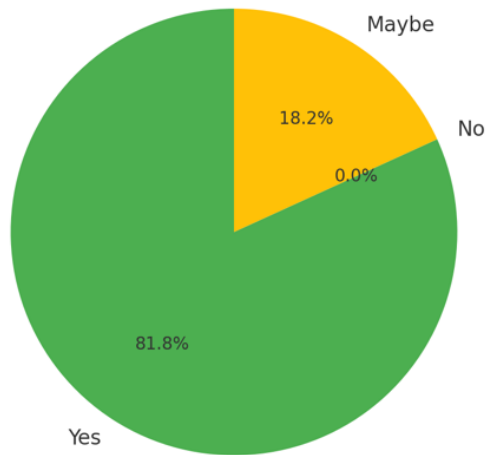
The graph above shows how only 9.1% of teacher didn't think that thinking routines could help students speak more English during class. 18.2% answered maybe leaving the majority of teachers with a 72.7% of them answering "yes".

**Teacher Surveys Graph 4. Have you used role-play as a strategy to develop speaking skills?**



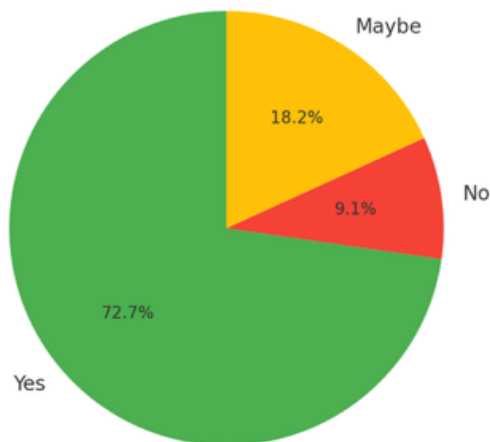
When asked about role play during class, more than 90% of the teachers answered that they had used role play as a strategy to develop speaking skills. 9.1% answered “maybe” and 0% of the teachers marked that they hadn’t used it.

**Teacher Surveys Graph 5. Do your students enjoy role-play activities in class?**



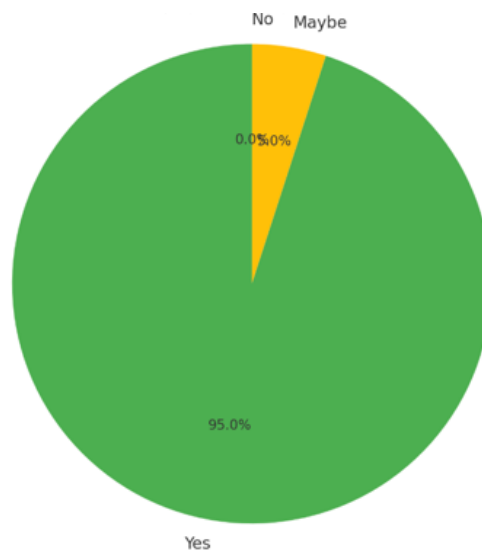
The graph above shows how 81.8% of the teachers marked that their students do enjoy role play activities during class. 18.2% marked maybe leaving a 0% of the teachers answering that their students did not like it.

**Teacher Surveys Graph 6. Do you believe that thinking routines are effective for organizing students' ideas before speaking?**



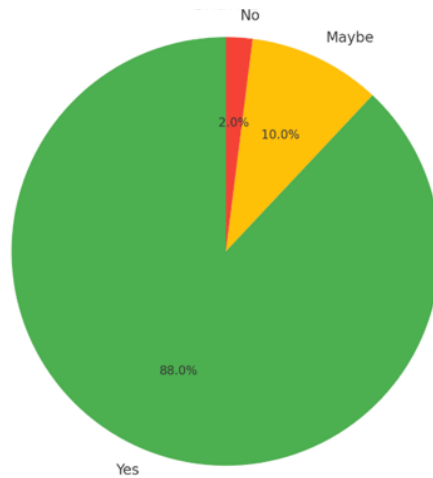
As seen on the graph above, when asked if thinking routines were effective for organizing students' ideas before speaking, 72.7% of teachers marked "yes", 18.2% marked maybe, and 9.1% marked no.

**Teacher Survey Graph 7. Have you seen improvements in student fluency after using role-play activities?**



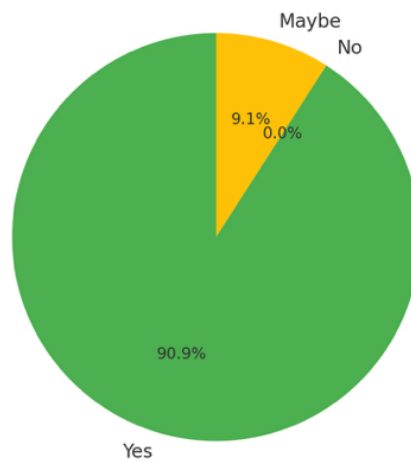
The graph above shows how 0% of teachers have not seen any improvement in student fluency when using role play activities during their classes. 5% marked "maybe" leaving a big percentage of 95% of teachers answering that they have seen improvement in fluency.

**Teacher Survey Graph 8. Would you be willing to incorporate more thinking routines into your speaking lessons?**



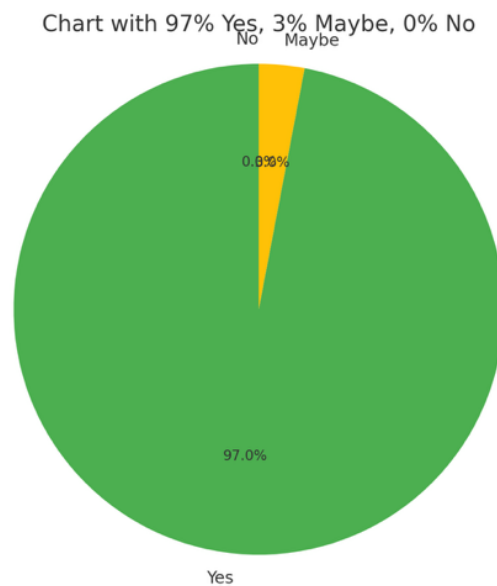
The graph above shows that 88% of teachers would be willing to incorporate more thinking routines into their speaking lessons. Only 2% marked no, and 10% marked that they might incorporate these methodologies into their classrooms.

**Teacher Survey Graph 9. Would you like to receive training on how to use role-play or thinking routines in class?**



As seen on the graph above, when asked about receiving training for role play activities and thinking routines during class, 0% of the teachers marked “no” and only 9.1% of the teachers marked maybe. This leaves a big percentage of more than 90% of the teachers wanting to receive more guidance or training for these methodologies.

**Teacher Survey Graph 10. Do you think combining thinking routines and role-play can help students speak more fluently?**



The graph above shows how 0% of teachers believed that thinking routines and role play could help students speak more fluently. Only 3% of them marked maybe, and 97% of them marked yes for this category.

#### 4.1.8 Teacher Interviews

When asking teachers about the use of thinking routines, they explained that although they have seen them and heard about them before, they had not applied them into their classrooms. After explaining more about the routines, they expressed enthusiasm and described it as a “super approach” to help students prepare their ideas to speak more clearly in English. They

appreciate the way that it promotes expression in students who are usually shy when sharing or are unsure about what to say.

When discussing role play, all teachers had prior experience with this strategy using scenarios like ordering food, hotel reservations, asking for directions, etc. they agree that is highly engaging for students, promotes spontaneous language use. Teachers emphasized that role play was especially useful when practicing real life scenarios and that that’s usually the way in which they use it. They also mentioned that one of the biggest struggles when using role play is keeping classroom management under control. Keeping students respectful and on task is difficult with large and mixed level groups.

Despite this challenge, teachers showed high interest in receiving further training to use role play and agreed that combined with thinking routines could enhance student confidence, vocabulary and participation.

The results of the interviews are presented below.

**Table 1. Results of teacher interviews.**

Question	Summary of Answers
How familiar are you with thinking routines such as 'I See, I Think, I Wonder'?	Most teachers had seen or heard of thinking routines, but none had applied 'I See, I Think, I Wonder' before.
Can you describe a time when you used a thinking routine in your classroom?	No direct experience; teachers expressed interest in trying it after explanation.

<p>What do you think are the main benefits of using thinking routines with ESL students?</p>	<p>They believe it can help shy students organize ideas and speak more confidently.</p>
<p>Have you used role-play activities in your English lessons?</p>	<p>All teachers have used role-play with scenarios like ordering food or making hotel reservations.</p>
<p>How do your students usually respond to role-play in class?</p>	<p>Students find role-play highly engaging and fun.</p>
<p>In your opinion, how effective is role-play in helping students improve their speaking fluency and vocabulary?</p>	<p>Teachers consider role-play very effective for real-life communication practice.</p>
<p>What challenges have you encountered when implementing role-play or thinking routines in your classroom?</p>	<p>Main challenge is classroom management, especially in large or mixed-level groups.</p>
<p>Do you think combining thinking routines and role-play can create a more engaging learning environment? Why or why not?</p>	<p>All teachers agreed combining both strategies would increase participation and confidence.</p>
<p>What support or training do you think teachers need to use these strategies more effectively?</p>	<p>Teachers requested training to effectively integrate thinking routines and advanced role-play.</p>

<p>Would you recommend thinking routines and role-play activities to other teachers? Why or why not?</p>	<p>All teachers would recommend these strategies due to their impact on fluency and vocabulary.</p>
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The table above shows a summary of the key points discussed during the teacher interviews. As seen above, the feedback provided by the teachers has positive perspectives of role play during class and shows curiosity of using thinking routines but with the appropriate guidance or training to use them. The table also shows how teachers believe that if the two strategies (role play and thinking routines) are combined, students can be more engaged during their classes and improve their oral communication skills.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **Introduction**

In this chapter, the main conclusions and recommendations for this investigation will be discussed. Conclusions are based on the general and specific objectives chosen for this thesis which answers the question What is the impact of using role-play and the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” thinking routine in fostering English Learning as a foreign language and speaking fluency in sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School, Coronado, Costa Rica, during the first trimester of 2025? Recommendations aim to provide clear strategies of implementing these strategies in the classroom.

### **5.1 Conclusions**

The findings in this investigation confirm that the use of strategies like role-play and thinking routines like the “I see, I Think, I Wonder” has a positive impact on fluency, on vocabulary, and confidence in students when speaking English. Students not only showed willingness to participate but also demonstrated great progress in their oral communication skills. The results align with what Ishak and Abdul (2022) say about how role-play is a comprehensive technique that promotes fluency, active participation, and motivation in real life contexts. Similar to Harvard’s Project Zero (2021) explain that thinking routines allow students to make their reasoning visible and in a structured way. This reflects students’ ability to organize ideas and speak with more confidence.

The general objective of this investigation aimed to find the impact of using role play and “ I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routines in fostering English Learning as a foreign language and speaking fluency in sixth grade students at Amadita Primary School, Coronado, Costa Rica, during the first semester of 2025. The findings show that using thinking routines like the “I see, I

think, I wonder” thinking routine and active methodologies such as role play have a positive impact in students’ fluency and overall English. Students showed use of new and improved vocabulary, willingness to participate and communicate, and also their fluency improved. The use of these strategies fostered motivation to participate proving the effectiveness of the strategies.

The first specific objective aimed to describe the impact of role play activities on the development of speaking skills in fourth-grade students at Amadita Primary School during the first semester of 2025. Role-play activities encouraged students to apply knowledge and communicate by simulating real life situations. The results show how there was a noticeable progress in pronunciation, confidence and fluency in the students. Because role play is such a natural way of interacting children were able to express themselves naturally and highlighting the importance of using this strategy to develop oral skills in students. The result connects with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CTL), which emphasizes competence in authentic situations rather than isolated grammar drills (Brandl, 2008). Also, Ghonosooly notes that active methodologies like role play reduce anxiety and increase motivation creating a more positive learning environment; confirmed by the students’ responses in surveys and observations.

The second specific objective aimed to identify the benefits of implementing thinking routines in fostering English as a foreign language learning among sixth-grade students at Amadita Primary School. The “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine encouraged students to reflect, to observe, and use their natural curiosity to articulate their thoughts in English. This thinking routine helped students expand their vocabulary and remain engaged during the process. As Harvard’s Project Zero suggests, thinking routines foster deeper engagement, they encourage

students to think with different perspectives, and build cognitive and linguistic skills. Using this thinking routine creates a more reflective and more participative classroom environment.

Finally, the third specific objective aimed to determine the combined effectiveness of role-play and thinking routines in promoting active participation and confidence in speaking English as a foreign language. When both the thinking routine and the role play activities were combined, they showed how great they work together and complement each other. They work unanimously to create a balance between reflection and creativity. Students showed higher levels of interaction within the lesson, collaborative learning, and the willingness to use English in different contexts. Using these strategies combined helped increase their confidence and created an environment within the classroom where learning is natural and enjoyable. This aligns with what Beckett and Slater (2020) who emphasize that project based and play based approaches enhance critical thinking, communication and collaboration. Recommendations

There are a few recommendations to add to this thesis. First, for teachers, try to incorporate role play activities regularly inside the classroom since they provide space for students to practice their English naturally through authentic communication, it reduces their anxiety, and they start to develop confidence when speaking. As supported by Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), real life tasks and simulations enhance authentic language use (Mudinillah et al. 2019). Implementing thinking routines such as the “I see, I think, I wonder” thinking routine will help encourage reflection, critical thinking, and participating within the students. Combining both activities balances reflection and creativity which is a great way to maximize student engagement in the classroom. Finally, provide continuous feedback inside the classroom to guide students towards better fluency and vocabulary use.

For students, it is recommended to engage actively in the role play and thinking routines since they are an opportunity to express English in a safe and supportive environment. Also, use the strategies in other contexts that are not necessarily school related like reading books, try to incorporate role play in everyday scenarios to reinforce the skills learned in class, finally, collaborate with friends and teachers during these activities to promote teamwork, communication, and eventually mutual learning.

For schools and administrators, it is encouraged to develop workshops for teachers that focus on innovative methodologies like role play and thinking routines so they can use them in the classroom as teachers themselves expressed interest in further training to use these strategies effectively. According to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), students acquire language more effectively when it is related to meaningful content and contexts (Darn, 2023). Also, provide classroom materials that support interactive learning like prompts for role play activities, or posters/visual aids for thinking routines. Try to foster a school culture that values these kinds of activities that involve participation, creativity and reflection for language acquisition.

For future research, it will be recommended to replicate this investigation in different grade levels or contexts to validate and expand the findings. As Creswell and Plano (2018) explain, the use of mixed methods provides comprehensive insights, and using these methods could strengthen the evidence regarding its effectiveness. Also, to study the long-term effects of role play and thinking routines on fluency and confidence to get a more complete view of the benefits, and finally, it would also be interesting to do this investigation in other grade levels and different contexts.

## **CHAPTER 6: PROPOSAL**

## **6.1 Proposal**

To create a Biannual English Role-Play Festival at Amadita Primary School designed to foster confidence, fluency, and creativity among second cycle (4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade) students.

## **6.2 Description**

Provide a space in which second cycle students can perform short, creative role play scenarios showcasing their English level to the rest of the schools and teachers. The idea of the event is to emphasize fun, collaboration, and communication rather than memorization. This will encourage students to apply vocabulary and grammatical structures they learn in class in a more natural and spontaneous way. The festival will alternate biannually with the Rana ABC to balance language learning in both areas.

## **6.3 Organization**

The festival will be coordinated by the English Department teachers and administration with support of the school administration. Each level will form small groups to prepare role plays on various topics guided by their teachers. Teachers will give students short rehearsal time, feedback, structure, etc. They will then perform live at the gym decorated with various scenarios and props.

## **6.4 Involved Population**

For this festival students from 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Amadita Primary School will be involved. As well as English teachers, school admin and the audience will be made-up by primary students and teachers. Parents are welcomed as optional guests.

## 6.4.1 Objectives

### 6.4.1.1 General objective

To foster speaking fluency, confidence, and creativity in second cycle students through a biannual English Role Play Festival.

### 6.4.1.2 Specific objectives

- \* To provide students with an authentic context to practice English in a spontaneous way.
- \* To strengthen student confidence and active participation in English
- \* To highlight the importance of English learning within the school community.

## 6.7 Chronogram of Activities

Activity	Week (trimester)	Responsible	To Do
Planning and teacher coordination	Week 1	English teachers	Define topics for role play, guidelines, and timeline for students and teachers.
Group assignment and brainstorming	Week 2	Teachers and students	Groups are assigned topics
Drafting a script and feedback	Week 3 and 4	Teachers and students	Students work on a quick

			draft to get their ideas flowing, teacher provides corrections.
Rehearsals in class	Week 5 and	Students	Students practice different scenarios without scripting
General rehearsal	Week 7	Teachers and students	Students practice on set at the gym
Festival day	Week 8	Primary students	Second cycle students perform different random role plays and first cycle students observe.
Feedback	Week 9	Teachers and students	Self evaluation for students and teacher comments.

#### **6.4.2 Budget for implementation**

The idea is not to buy anything since the school already has lots of props and settings students can use. Promote student participation and have them bring props from home. Have a maximum \$30 budget for miscellaneous random things that are needed to buy.

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## **ANEXES**

**Universidad Hispanoamericana**

**English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

**Thesis Project**

**Student Observation**

This observation is conducted in order to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"* and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom among sixth graders. All information provided will be used for academic purposes only and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To describe the process of implementing thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"* and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom among sixth graders from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025.

**Observation Checklist: "I see I think I wonder" Thinking Routine.**

Observation Criteria	Yes	No	Sometimes
Student understands how to complete each part of the thinking routine.			
Student completes the "I See" section with relevant visual observations.			
Student expresses personal thoughts appropriately in the "I Think" section.			

<b>Observation Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
Student asks meaningful or curious questions in the "I Wonder" section.			
Student uses full sentences to express ideas.			
Student shares their ideas during class discussion.			
Student demonstrates increased confidence when speaking in English during this activity.			
Student uses vocabulary relevant to the topic presented.			
Student actively participates in pair or group work during the routine.			
Student shows improvement in organization of thoughts and oral expression over time.			

**Observation Checklist: Role-play**

<b>Observation Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
Student understands the role-play scenario or prompt.			
Student speaks in complete English sentences during role-play.			

Observation Criteria	Yes	No	Sometimes
Student uses vocabulary appropriate to the situation.			
Student improvises when needed during the role-play.			
Student interacts naturally with peers in the role-play setting.			
Student shows confidence while speaking.			
Student pronounces words clearly and is understandable.			
Student maintains the role assigned throughout the activity.			
Student enjoys and actively participates in the activity.			

Observation Criteria	Yes	No	Sometimes
Student shows improvement in fluency and vocabulary use over time.			



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**English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

**Thesis Project**

**Survey to students**

This survey is being conducted in order to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"* and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom among sixth graders. All information provided will be used for academic purposes only and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To describe the process of implementing thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"* and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom among sixth graders from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Please read each statement below and circle the option that best represents your opinion.

1. I enjoyed doing the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” activity.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
2. The thinking routine helped me speak more in English.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
3. The thinking routine helped me organize my ideas before speaking.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
4. I felt more confident speaking English after doing the thinking routine.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
5. I enjoyed doing role-play activities in English class.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
6. Role-play helped me practice real conversations in English.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
7. I used new English words during the role-play activities.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
8. I felt less nervous about speaking English after doing role-play.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
9. I spoke more English because of these activities.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes
10. I would like to do more role-play and thinking routines in the future.  
A. Yes, I did. B. No, I did not C. Sometimes

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**English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

**Thesis Project**

**Interview to teachers**

This interview aims to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing thinking routines such as "*I See, I Think, I Wonder*" and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom among sixth graders. All information provided will be used for academic purposes only and will remain confidential. This interview explores your observations regarding using thinking routines and role play to improve students'

pronunciation. Your responses will be used solely for research purposes. Feel free to share your honest opinions and experiences.

**Objective:** To describe the process of implementing thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"* and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom among sixth graders from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions according to the information you have based on your experience as an English teacher.

### **Questions**

1. How familiar are you with thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"*?
2. Can you describe a time when you used a thinking routine in your classroom? What was the result?
3. What do you think are the main benefits of using thinking routines with ESL students?
4. Have you used role-play activities in your English lessons? If so, what kind of scenarios have you used?
5. How do your students usually respond to role-play in class?
6. In your opinion, how effective is role-play in helping students improve their speaking fluency and vocabulary?

7. What challenges have you encountered when implementing role-play or thinking routines in your classroom?

8. Do you think combining thinking routines and role-play can create a more engaging learning environment? Why or why not?

9. What support or training do you think teachers need to use these strategies more effectively?

10. Would you recommend thinking routines and role-play activities to other teachers? Why or why not?

## **Hispanoamericana**

### **English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

#### **Thesis Project**

#### **Survey for English Teachers**

This survey is conducted to collect data for a thesis focused on using thinking routines such as *"I See, I Think, I Wonder"* and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential. This survey explores your observations regarding using thinking routines and role play to improve children's speaking skills in ESL students. Your responses will be used solely for research purposes. Feel free to share your honest opinions and experiences.



**Objective:** To describe the process of improving speaking skills in ESL students using thinking routines such as “I see, I think, I wonder” and role-play strategies to improve speaking skills in sixth grade students from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, 2025.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions according to the information you have based on your experience as an English teacher.

### Questions

1. Have you used thinking routines in your English classes?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Maybe

2. Have you used the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" routine specifically?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Maybe

3. Do you think thinking routines help students speak more English in class?

- A. Yes
- B. No

C. Maybe

4. Have you used role-play as a strategy to develop speaking skills?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

5. Do your students enjoy role-play activities in class?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

6. Do you believe that thinking routines are effective for organizing students' ideas before speaking?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

7. Have you seen improvements in student fluency after using role-play activities?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

8. Would you be willing to incorporate more thinking routines into your speaking lessons?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

9. Would you like to receive training on how to use role-play or thinking routines in class?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

10. Do you think combining thinking routines and role-play can help students speak more fluently?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe

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**English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

**Thesis Project**

**Interview to students**

This interview aims to collect data for a thesis focused on using thinking routines such as "*I See, I Think, I Wonder*" and role-play strategies to improve students' speaking skills in the ESL classroom. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To describe the process of improving speaking skills in ESL students using thinking routines such as "I see, I think, I wonder" and role-play strategies to improve speaking skills in sixth grade students from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, 2025.

**Instructions:** Answer the questions based on your experience using the online guessing game Who Am I?

Questions.

1. What is the name of your school?
2. What grade are you in?
3. Have you ever used thinking routines to practice English before?
4. What did you think about the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” activity?
5. Which part of the thinking routine did you enjoy the most—*I see*, *I think*, or *I wonder*?

Why?

6. Did the thinking routine help you speak more in English? Can you tell me how?
7. Was it easy or difficult to use the thinking routine in class? Why?
8. What did you like about doing role-play activities in English class?
9. Can you describe a role-play you did in class that you really enjoyed? What happened?
10. Do you think role-play helped you learn new English words? Which ones do you remember?
11. Did you feel more confident speaking English after the role-play or thinking routine activities? Why or why not?
12. What would you change to make these activities even more fun or helpful?
13. Would you like to keep doing activities like role-play and “I See, I Think, I Wonder”?

Why?

### **Survey to students**

This survey is being conducted to collect data for a thesis focused the effectiveness of implementing of role-play strategies and the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" thinking routine in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To gather sixth-grade students' perceptions of the effectiveness and enjoyment of role-play strategies and the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" thinking routine in improving their speaking fluency and vocabulary in English in Amadita Primary School, Coronado, San José, 2025.

**Instructions:** Complete the check list based on your experience using the "I See I Think I Wonder" thinking routine and role-play.

<u>Statements</u>	<u>True</u>	<u>Indifferent</u>	<u>Not true</u>
I enjoyed doing role-play activities in class.			
I felt more confident speaking English during role-play.			
Role-play helped me practice speaking in real-life situations.			
I learned new English words while doing role-play.			
I was able to use English words I learned in the role-play activities.			
The “I See, I Think, I Wonder” routine helped me organize my ideas to speak more in English.			
I understood how to use the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” routine.			
<u>Statement</u>	<u>True</u>	<u>Indifferent</u>	<u>False</u>
The thinking routine helped me think more about what to say in English.			
I liked doing the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” activity.			

I spoke more English in class thanks to the activities we did.			
I felt less nervous about speaking English after doing these activities			
I would like to continue doing role-play and thinking routines in English class.			



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**English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

**Thesis Project**

**Pretest to students**

This pretest is being administered to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing of role-play strategies and the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" thinking routine in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025. All information provided will be used solely for academic purposes and will remain confidential.

**Objective:** To assess the initial speaking fluency and vocabulary use of sixth-grade ESL students before the implementation of role-play strategies and the "I See, I Think, I Wonder"

thinking routine in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025.

**Instructions:**

**Part 1: Vocabulary in Context (Oral)**

Look at the images the teacher will show you. Describe what you see and say one sentence using the vocabulary word in English. (5 images)

**Part 2: Short Role-Play Prompt (Spontaneous speaking)**

*Instructions:* Student chooses a basic prompt card that the teacher provides (e.g., "You are buying fruit at the market. Ask the vendor for two things."). Teacher records how the student responds orally.

**Observation Checklist:**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Partially Achieved</b>	<b>Not Achieved</b>
Uses vocabulary relevant to the topic.			
Speaks in complete sentences.			
Uses appropriate expressions for context.			
Pronunciation is understandable.			
Demonstrates confidence when speaking.			

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Partially Achieved</b>	<b>Not Achieved</b>
Responds fluently without long pauses.			
Understands and answers questions appropriately.			
Uses linking words or connectors when speaking.			

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**English Teaching for I and II Cycles**

**Thesis Project**

**Posttest to students**

This posttest is being administered to collect data for a thesis focused on the effectiveness of implementing of role-play strategies and the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" thinking routine in 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from Amadita Primary School in Coronado, San José, in 2025. All information collected will be used solely for academic purposes and will be handled confidentially.

**Objective:** To evaluate the improvement in speaking fluency and vocabulary use of sixth-grade EFL students after the implementation of role-play strategies and the "I See, I Think, I Wonder" thinking routine.

**Instructions:**

**Part 1: Vocabulary in Context (Oral)**

Look at the image. Describe what is happening in the picture using full sentences. (Use 5 new but related images to compare vocabulary expansion and sentence complexity.)

**Part 2: Short Role-Play Prompt (Oral Production)**

*Instructions:* Choose one scenario provided by the teacher. Student acts out the role-play with the teacher or a peer.

**Evaluation Criteria (Checklist):**

Scenario Chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Partially Achieved</b>	<b>Not Achieved</b>
1. Uses a wide range of vocabulary related to the unit topic			
2. Applies newly learned words correctly in context			
3. Speaks using complete and grammatically correct sentences			
4. Demonstrates clear and fluent speech without frequent pauses			
5. Pronounces key vocabulary words accurately			
6. Uses intonation and rhythm appropriate to the conversation			
7. Responds confidently and spontaneously			
8. Actively participates in the role-play scenario			

Criteria	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
9. Uses appropriate expressions for the chosen situation (e.g., ordering, asking, greeting)			
10. Understands and responds to follow-up questions from peer or teacher			
11. Uses the structure of the “I See, I Think, I Wonder” routine correctly			
12. Demonstrates critical thinking through their "I think" and "I wonder" answers			
13. Shows improvement in comparison to the pre-test			
14. Maintains eye contact and uses basic body language when speaking			