

**BUILDING UP SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH A GRAMMAR OF MEANING  
AND COMMUNICATIVE GAMES**

**Thesis to obtain the Bachelor's Degree in Basic Education with Emphasis on Spanish  
and Foreign Languages**

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## NOTE OF ACCEPTANCE

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## **DEDICATORY**

I would like to dedicate my work firstly to God for leading me unconditionally through my academic life and being my companion and counselor in the most crucial decisions. Thank you, Lord, for having blessed me immensely with amazing people and valuable situations that steadily contributed in a positive way to my academic development during this important stage of my life. This achievement is also dedicated to my family, especially my father Jorge, for always encouraging me to do my best and supporting me through life regardless of my mistakes. Thank you, dad, for your love and strong faith in me, for always encouraging me to do my best and teaching me to firmly believe in myself to achieve any goal I set in life.

To my lovely life companion, Enzo, for having witnessed this unforgettable dream come true from the very beginning: its ups and downs, my happy and sad moments throughout this journey.

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<b>2. Descripción</b>	
<p>El presente trabajo de grado busca construir habilidades comunicativas a nivel oral en 24 estudiantes de nivel intermedio I del centro de lenguas de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional a través de la implementación pedagógica de una gramática del sentido junto con juegos comunicativos. Durante la etapa de inicial de observación y diagnóstico se pudo evidenciar que los estudiantes presentaban dificultad a la hora de consolidar estructuralmente sus intenciones comunicativas de manera precisa luego de haber aparentemente comprendido las reglas gramaticales. Esta dificultad se intensificaba de manera significativa en momentos de interacción cuya puesta en escena resultaba poco atractiva para los estudiantes desembocando en una disposición negativa hacia las actividades de práctica de la lengua extranjera. Atendiendo a esta problemática, la presente investigación se consolidó como una propuesta pedagógica que fomentó en los estudiantes un proceso colectivo de conceptualización gramatical la cual privilegia al sentido como punto de partida hacia la realización formal del mensaje. En consecuencia, lo anterior encaminó a los estudiantes desde un estadio de exposición al idioma hasta la etapa final de producción no sin antes atravesar un proceso riguroso de práctica e interacción el cuál fue enriquecido por múltiples juegos comunicativos.</p>	

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#### **4. Contenidos**

El presente trabajo de grado contiene la siguiente información:

Capítulo 1: Contexto de la investigación: Se presentan las características más relevantes tanto de la institución donde se llevó a cabo el estudio, como de la población que participó en el mismo. A partir de la descripción del diagnóstico inicial, se plantea el problema que suscita la pregunta de investigación seguida de los objetivos de la investigación.

Capítulo 2: Marco teórico: Se presenta un estado del arte que da cuenta de investigaciones anteriores que se han hecho sobre las temáticas principales de la investigación seguido de la documentación teórica de los pilares del estudio.

Capítulo 3: Metodología de la investigación: Se ubica a la investigación dentro del paradigma cualitativo regida bajo los principios de la investigación acción. De igual manera se ofrece una descripción detallada de los instrumentos de recolección de datos.

Capítulo 4: Intervención pedagógica: Se presenta una descripción detallada de la propuesta pedagógica la cual se divide en tres grandes fases. De igual forma, se presenta la planeación de las actividades en concordancia con el plan de estudios propuesto por el centro de lenguas,

Capítulo 5: Análisis de los datos: Se presenta un análisis detallado de los datos recolectados a lo largo de la investigación con sus respectivos resultados siguiendo el modelo de triangulación.

Capítulo 6: Resumen de resultados: Se presenta una descripción detallada de los resultados basada en las categorías de análisis propuestas para la investigación.

#### **5. Metodología**

La investigación se enmarca dentro de los principios de la investigación acción teniendo en cuenta que el investigador propone una intervención para atender y hacer frente a una problemática determinada. De esta forma, el estudio atraviesa cuatro etapas claves como lo son la planeación, la acción, observación de resultados y finalmente la reflexión. Los principales instrumentos de recolección de datos durante la investigación fueron diarios de campo, grabaciones de audio y video, fotografías y artefactos creados por los estudiantes al final de cada actividad.

#### **6. Conclusiones**

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Al final de investigación se concluye que la intervención pedagógica tuvo un impacto positivo primero que todo en la percepción de los estudiantes hacia el lenguaje, su estructura y su verdadero propósito en la comunicación. De igual manera, el uso de juegos comunicativos estimuló de manera positiva el acercamiento de los estudiantes a la fase de práctica de la lengua extranjera a través de desafíos de análisis y descubrimiento como también la delimitación de reglas y roles cuya implementación desembocó en el desarrollo de cierto grado de liderazgo y sentido de responsabilidad de los estudiantes para con su equipo de trabajo. El estar expuestos al sentido o significado de una situación antes de la consolidación formal del mensaje tuvo un impacto positivo en las habilidades orales de los estudiantes ya que estos analizaban si intención comunicativa, los participantes y contexto de la misma antes de escoger las estructuras formales para construir el mensaje.

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## Abstract

The present research aimed at building up speaking skills of 25 intermediate I students of the Language Center at Universidad Pedagógica Nacional who had difficulty structuring language accurately and fluently when producing spoken discourse. Consequently, a pedagogical implementation of a grammar of meaning and communicative games was planned and displayed throughout the research encouraging the students to undergo a cooperative process of grammar conceptualization which privileged meaning as the starting point towards the choice of linguistic forms. It led the pupils from the language exposure stage to the production stage with a rigorous intermediate passage through practice, enriched by the display of communicative games. Data collected through several instruments such as field notes, audio-video recording, photographs and classroom artifacts showed that the students succeeded in improving their speaking skills while analyzing language forms in relation to meaning and adopting a specific role in games that stimulated interaction within a determined real life situation. These results suggest further and deep research on the Colombian language learning context that provide effective methodologies taking into account the real advantages as well as the limitations of our foreign language learning environment.

*Key words:* grammar, meaning, communication, games, speaking skills.

## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

This section aims at describing the participants and context where the research was conducted. A detailed analysis of the students is presented taking into consideration relevant details linked to the cognitive, socio- affective, cultural and linguistic areas followed by a discussion of relevant observations made accordingly and synthesized in the statement of the problem. Finally, a set of general and specific objectives are announced.

### **1.1 Context**

The UPN's language center is a language teaching establishment opened in 2000 as an educational institution of Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. It aims at implementing an integrated language learning program whose vision of teamwork encourages collaborative actions. Consequently, and according to the vision of Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, this perspective permits proposing a responsible educational praxis that rejects individualism. The institution aims at being recognized as a social establishment which displays a series of pedagogical actions to face social challenges and needs arising in Colombia. To achieve such a proposal, serious engagement is guaranteed towards the education of critical citizens with clear goals and values willing to follow the guidelines of the Colombian political and pedagogical project.

The branch where the current research was carried out is the main building of UPN (Calle 72) which hosts hundreds of children every Saturday. Language classes take place in buildings A, B, C and E. Classrooms have a capacity of approximately 23 students each who attend class from 8 in the morning to 12 noon with a half-hour break starting at 9.30. All the university's facilities are available for pupils' and parents' use except the university's administrative areas of each

faculty. Instead, the language coordination room is situated in building E and it operates only on Saturdays.

One facility directly linked to language learning is the language laboratory where class groups are assigned to a specific schedule during which they sign up to an online platform called Edmodo and find interactive exercises related to the topics they are studying in regular classes as well as homework given by the teacher during the week.

Additionally, students aged 10 to 12 use a textbook called *Live Beat* by Pearson publishing house. It is an English learning book series designed for teenagers whose language contents is correlated with the Global Scale of English. The book depicts typical everyday situations for teenagers such as school, friends, leisure, fashion and travel which become key elements to fund language functions on.

Finally, the Language Center situates language learning/teaching within the framework of the communicative approach proposing language functions as the leading principle in the development of an individual's integral communicative competence. The institution's official document of pedagogical and methodological alignments also makes a clear integration of the teacher and student's roles highlighting their active roles in the learning process.

### **1.1.1 Population**

The participants of this research are a group of 24 children (12 boys and 12 girls) whose ages range from 10 to 12 and their strata from 2 to 4. According to the survey (Annex A), a large majority of the students (95%) are positively related to their school life as they claim to like the educational institution they attend mainly because of the interpersonal relations with their friends while others attribute their positive response to the attractive physical spaces their school is

provided with. These previous reasons allow us to see that children mostly keep a social approach to school as they conceive it as a space where they can cultivate their social lives rather than consolidating strictly academic knowledge.

With regards to the subjects they are keenest on, 60% of students show special interest in areas involving kinetic activity such as physical education and dance. This fact can be supported by the in-person observations (Annex B) since students always respond enthusiastically to any activity implying physical movement and music in class. Information technology, on the other hand, is the second most favorite subject; students are clearly in frequent contact with technological resources and thus affectively close to it. Not only do they have access to technology at school but also at home as stated by all of them (100%) in the survey when mentioning computers, iPads, tablet, cellphones, internet access as the main resources available in their houses to study with. Also, some students suggest visiting the language laboratory at the language center more frequently as one of the complementary activities they would like to include in class.

The students' conceptions towards the language center are clearly positive. The survey reflects that all of them claim to like to attend classes pointing out the importance of learning English. Most of them (90%) acknowledge the contribution that all the knowledge they gain at the UPN's language center makes to their language education at school. Regarding the skills, they find more difficult, 85% state both listening and speaking as the most complex areas of English; the remaining 15% chose reading as the most troublesome skill. At this point it is important to remark that students seem to have trouble in the skills which normally require immediate response and fluency when understanding (listening) or performing (speaking) related tasks/activities.

Concerning suggestions about activities that should be included in class, all the students show interest in games and contests as well as a more frequent use of the laboratory or the planning of outdoor activities to make a change in their typical class routine. This information sheds light on eventual pedagogical and methodological proposals that ensure effectiveness in students' motivation towards the learning of English.

Briefly, students have a very positive attitude towards the learning of English and seem to be fully convinced of the reason(s) why they study the language. However, the common suggestions among them about bringing games to the class shows a firm desire for either a change in the types of activities they might not be finding attractive or the implementation of activities commonly absent in class.

### **1.1.2 Diagnosis**

The different activities aiming at evaluating the students' communicative competence in English were designed by the language center and integrated in the monthly exam providing a complete initial diagnosis (Annex C). The speaking test was separately designed by the head teacher and it was worth 10 points as well as the other skills to sum up an overall maximal score of 50.

The first section evaluated students' reading skills. A list of short descriptive job ads was provided followed by a list of propositions related to the texts. The students were asked to carefully read each ad and then match the items from one list to the other. Although the degree of complexity of the texts was not particularly demanding thanks to the recurrence of short and simple sentences with familiar vocabulary such as days of the week and numbers, the results show a poor performance in this task where the average score was 3.8 points out of 10.

The second section evaluated grammar and vocabulary. In the first exercise students were required to do a gap-filling task aiming at testing the structure of the present simple. A general overview on the results suggests poor performance in this aspect especially when it came to filling in with the auxiliaries *do* or *does*. The second exercise asked students to put a set of words to form a correctly structured sentence containing adverbial phrases of frequency as the focus form. Students' general performance was good, yet the way they organized sentences showed a remarkable interference of Spanish in the way they build up phrases in English. The vocabulary task consisted of finding the right collocation to a set of words from a given word bank. At this task, students did particularly good as most of them (95%) got all the items correct.

The third part of the exam dealt with listening and proposed two kinds of tasks. The first was a multiple-choice exercise containing five short recordings with their respective questions. At this stage, students were required to listen for specific information; nonetheless, the dialogues included all the options given in the choices, which demanded full attention to the whole conversations. Analyzing students' choices, it was possible to observe that most of them selected the option of what they heard first; it proves that their attention might not be focused on the recording's content but that instead it seemed to be completely drawn to the key words of the respective question. On the other hand, the second listening task proposed a true-false exercise related to one recording. Students' performance in this was particularly poor as all the choices, as in the first exercise, were mentioned throughout the conversation.

The fourth section of the exam aimed at assessing students' writing skills. The task was to write a text describing the routine of the student's parents using related time expressions such as adverbs of frequency. The main criteria to evaluate were task fulfillment, organization, grammar and vocabulary. A general overview of the results suggests accurate and wide routine-related

vocabulary; however, few cohesive elements were used making the writing seem a chain of isolated events.

The speaking test was designed prioritizing the principle of spontaneity and to a lesser extent the preparation stage required to carry out a task implying such a skill. Students were firstly asked to work in pairs and prepare a one-minute dialogue where they discussed their daily routines. Since they were given approximately ten minutes to prepare it, rehearse their lines and correct possible upcoming mistakes during practice, the results were satisfactory: good and accurate phrases were produced as well as fluent speech and correct pronunciation. Some hesitations came up during speaking as a result of the pressure and nervousness the students were under.

On the other hand, the second task consisted of students taking a random piece of paper from a bag and answering a question about the frequent activities they do. The results show that although they succeeded in communicating what they want, the structures or forms of the language were not sufficiently accurate: also, their time of reaction to the answer was considerably long as well as the hesitations that came up while trying to link one idea to another.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Grammar has undoubtedly been one of the most debatable and controversial issues that language learning deals with as its mastering usually causes considerable difficulty affecting the development of the target language's communicative competence. Larsen-Freeman (2000) considers that it is not grammar itself what represents a problem but the way it is originally conceived alongside with the methodologies developed to teach it.

The misconception of grammar is at the core of the problem. Grammar is simply regarded as a set of rules that make up a language ignoring other important dimensions inherent to its social nature. The repercussion of such a conception in the field of language teaching noticeably causes grammar methodologies to be based on knowledge transmission or rule memorization instead of dealing with it as a dynamic skill needing to be mastered. The common mechanical drills such as excessive repetition reinforces the idea of grammar as inert knowledge that is not available for spontaneous use in the purpose of conveying meaning.

With regards to speaking, Brown (2000) considers that the most challenging and troublesome aspect of developing the speaking skill in a foreign language is the right balance between two important goals: accuracy and fluency. There always tends to be a biased perspective of teaching speaking that ends up prioritizing one of the previously mentioned goals and thus turning speaking performance into either only clear, articulate, grammatically and phonologically correct language (which lacks appropriate natural speed and good rate of delivery) or flowing language producing barely comprehensible messages.

From the above-mentioned cases, the latter seems to be more common than the former due to another factor that, according to Brown (2010), makes speaking difficult: interaction. If a learner trains hard to master a language and “produces waves of language in a vacuum” (p.271) that is, without interlocutors, he is not overwhelmed by what to say but by how to say it. He may have a wide repertoire of grammatical sentences in response to a comment but just does not know which one to choose.

Moving to personality factors and their relation to language learning, Brown (2007) considers that most of the times, failure is strongly linked to demotivation. Such a problem arises when “one fails to see the rewards, connects the learning only to superficial needs, and sees no

possibility of a social context in which this skill is useful” (p.161). Consequently, demotivation is likely to emerge in a language learning context where learners seem not to find relation between what they learn and the actual application of such knowledge in real life.

In conclusion, these three major aspects set a solid problem needing to be dealt with by an integral pedagogical proposal that not only provides a practical solution but also an initial reflection stage capable of provoking a proper environment for learning.

### **1.3 Justification**

Within the framework of language development, it is important to differentiate between language acquisition and language learning. According to Krashen (1982), the former is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the one children go through when making their first attempts at their mother tongue. Language acquisition occurs within a social context where the target tongue is the main means of communication thus flowing naturally among the participants. On the other hand, language learning or *the learned system* results from formal instruction that undergoes a conscious analysis of the target language taking place in a fabricated environment whose means of communication is not necessarily the target language.

Taking into consideration these theoretical elements, it is essential to classify foreign language development in Colombia into one of the above cases. The answer is evident: language learning. In consequence, speaking (being the most interactional skill) is affected by what Porquier (1984) called *communication exolingue*. This phenomenon occurs when individuals whose mother tongue is the same, learn and interact with each other in a foreign language while immersed in their home context.

As a result, speaking skills are usually disturbed by a continual language interference (in this case Spanish) whose initial nature turns into a troublesome issue which prevents learners from fluently mastering the target language not only affecting the structural system but also the pragmatic requirements of it. Thus, the present research seeks to deal with this phenomenon as naturally as possible understanding its importance in the language learning process as well as the eventual limitations it implies making a solid proposal that responds to the language needs of a learning population whose mother tongue is not English. It is crucial to conduct continual and deep research on one of the most complex abilities that humans have developed but whose complexity has sometimes been reduced to the practicality of modern life.

In connection with the above, grammar emerges as one of the most complex language components to master within a learning context. Larsen-Freeman (2000) uses a three-dimensional grammar framework to illustrate how only the dimension of form or structure is usually considered when defining grammar while semantics and pragmatics, on the other hand, are often isolated dimensions reducing grammar's role to express meaning appropriately in a specific context. Therefore, the current research revitalizes the nature of grammar as a language skill that needs to be inevitably linked to meaning and social language use. Additionally, it promotes an active role for language learners in their own learning processes that leads them to continuous reflection and autonomy.

Moving to motivation in language learning sceneries, Brown (2007) argues that class activities are generally based on extrinsic motivational behaviors, that is, the anticipation of reward from outside to obtain a particular response. In this case such rewards normally consist of prizes, candies, points or grades which become the main goal of activities relegating the actual value and role of language itself. As a result, a kind of superficial motivation emerges but its

decontextualized relation to language makes it virtually useless in the long run, especially when pursuing long-term retention. In relation to this problem the present research proposes the use of communicative games as an interaction-based proposal that optimizes students' motivation as they are encouraged to take part in a discovery process whose main reward is to feel and prove that they can build up knowledge.

Taking into account the previous elements, it is essential to conduct deep research on language learning pursuing coherence between the language context where students are immersed and the methodologies developed.

#### **1.4 Research question**

How does implementing a grammar of meaning alongside with communicative games build up speaking skills in intermediate I students of the UPN language center?

#### **1.5 General objective**

To determine how implementing a grammar of meaning alongside with communicative games builds up speaking skills in intermediate I students of the UPN language center.

#### **1.6 Specific objectives**

- To assess the outcomes of a dual grammar teaching approach: inductive and deductive
- To evaluate the impact of communicative games on the students' speaking skills
- To analyze the impact of interactive communicative games on the development of students' grammar of meaning.

## Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the research background and the theoretical support that serve as basis for understanding, analyzing and enriching this study. Taking into account the key elements of the identified problem the main categories chosen to delimit both in the state of art and the theoretical framework were: speaking skills, teaching of grammar and the use of games in language learning.

### **2.1 State of art**

In order to consolidate an appropriate state of art, a careful selection of former related research studies was carried out as well as special attention was devoted to the procedures carried out to obtain the results connecting such information to the present research and highlighting their valuable contributions. The following chart presents an overview of such studies whose brief summary and discussion are subsequently introduced.

STATE OF ART				
No.	TITLE	INSTITUTION	YEAR	KEY WORDS
1	Communicative grammar: an effect tool to teach a second language in today's classes	Universidad Nacional de Colombia	2013	Communicative language teaching, grammatical competence, communicative competence, deductive approach
2	Teaching grammar for active use. A framework for comparison of three instructional techniques	Sahid Beheshti University	2011	Dialogue, role-play, game, unfocused task, focus on form, cooperative learning
3	Les jeux: l'outil utile	Universidad	2016	Games, oral expression,

	pour s' exprimer a l'oral en FLE	Pedagógica Nacional		participation, reality, active role, task.
4	Communicative activities to promote communication	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional	2016	Communication, communicative activities, oral skills, interaction
5	Improving speaking skills in the students of third, fifth and seventh level at La Salle Language Center (CLUS) through teaching techniques such as role playing, students' presentations, games and group/pair work	Universidad de La Salle	2013	Improvement, teaching, speaking techniques, skills
6	Encouraging teenagers to improve speaking skills through games in a Colombian public school	Colegio Federico García Lorca	2010	Oral communication, games, motivation, teenagers
7	Application of games for the development of speaking skill in fourth graders from Remigio Antonio Cañarte School	Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira	2012	Games, speaking, situation, context
8	The implementation of role-playing to improve grammar accuracy for sentence structure in oral utterances	Universidad de la Sabana	2016	English, grammar, teaching, foreign language, social skills

Table 1. Former research studies related to speaking skills, grammar and communicative games

The first study *Communicative grammar: an effective tool to teach a second language in today's classes* was carried out in Bogotá, Colombia, with students of the English teaching bachelor's degree at Universidad Nacional. Its main objective was to gather students' opinions about how grammar was taught to subsequently analyze such data and propose new grammar teaching techniques. The findings showed the students' disappointment about the grammar activities used in their classes highlighting the over-use of isolated writing tasks. Students'

suggestions such as integrating rules and meaning and adjusting activities in a varied way rather than forcing them into a single pattern led researchers to propose a communicative approach to grammar regarding language as communication, learners as discoverers and the teacher as a facilitator. This study is valuable to the present research as it promotes the role of student and teacher from a communicative perspective when teaching/learning grammar. Such a feature is strongly supported by the action strategy of developing a conceptualization stage in class where students discover the functioning of language as the teacher facilitates the process.

The second study *Teaching grammar for active use: A framework for comparison of three instructional techniques* aimed at comparing the effectiveness of three instructional grammar techniques at the Kish language Institute in Iran. Three experimental groups made up of 16 pre-intermediate female students aged 20-25 were assigned a series of games, role-play dialogues and unfocused tasks, respectively. The three of these techniques shared a single grammar structure to be learnt: (*wish*) and implemented the principle of active use of grammar. The findings showed positive grammar production in all the students and encouraged researchers to conduct a more careful analysis of this common characteristic. Two major features were found common: the three techniques were developed in oral acts of communication and were essentially interactional. The previous study highlights three key elements similarly implemented in the present research: games, role-play dialogues and unfocused tasks. The idea of implementing unfocused tasks which draw students' attention to grammar implicitly during the stage of practice seems to be a good way of adapting target structures to a variety of contexts making a more dynamic and thus motivational class.

The third study *Les jeux: l'outil utile pour s'exprimer à l'orale en FLE* was conducted at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño in Bogotá, Colombia, and primarily focused on analyzing the

impact of implementing games with female fifth-graders' speaking skills. The researchers proposed a series of interactional, teamwork-stimulating games whose main basis was the girls' real context. Consequently, a stage of context exploration was necessary to display a complete simulation of real life situations. The findings showed a positive transition from students' initial speaking performance to that at the end of the research. For example, the girls' participation in class was fostered as not only did they do it voluntarily but also in the target language; also, they showed high appropriation of their role in the activities, and teamwork was encouraged to accomplish the goals of the games. A valuable contribution of the previous study to the present research is the context exploration as a useful component of games. As stated by the researcher, the fact of making games from personal experiences and known reality motivates and engages students more in their language learning process.

The fourth study *Communicative activities to promote communication* was carried out in Bogotá, Colombia, at IPN with a group of 32 sixth-graders with poor oral production in English. The main objective of this research was to identify which oral skills were developed through the implementation of communicative activities in class. A five-stage methodology was incorporated starting from a *silent period* and *focus on comprehension* level to a *production of language chunks* level. The classroom was transformed into a stage where multiple situations took place and encouraged students' oral production in English. The findings showed a change in students' perceptions towards language: they stopped conceiving English as a meaningless set of rules to start considering it a tool for communicating with their classmates. The most remarkable speaking skill developed during the research was the pragmatic since students learnt how to use the language in community respecting each other's turns, practicing peer correction and interacting. An important contribution of the previous study to the present research is the fact of

conceiving and consequently shaping language oral production as a complex process requiring stages.

The fifth study *Improving speaking skills in the students of third, fifth and seventh levels at La Salle Language Center through teaching techniques such as role-playing, students' presentations, games and group work* aimed at improving the speaking skills of 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> level students at La Salle Language Center using role playing, students' presentations and games. The data were collected through observation, journals, and questionnaires being the latter an introductory tool for better class planning. Taking into account students' suggestions, the activities were designed focusing on their interests and likes without relegating the communicative essence in them. The findings showed the positive effectiveness of the three techniques thanks to the innovative way they were developed: creating the script of role playing based on one's interests and likes instead of merely repeating it, the fact of not only presenting a topic but also giving an opinion and arguing on it as well as allowing peers to ask questions and discuss are some of the key practices where this study's innovation relies. The main contribution of this study to the present research is the way conventional class activities turn into a tool for promoting authentic communication. Spontaneous speech comes up naturally inviting students to convey meaning in a determined situation.

The sixth study *Encouraging teenagers to improve speaking skills through games in a Colombian public school* was conducted at Federico García Lorca school in Bogotá, Colombia. Its main objective was to find games that encouraged a group of 40 tenth-graders to improve their speaking skills. Since one of the most influencing aspects related to their difficulties was shyness and fear of being mocked, data was collected with video recordings and questionnaires to analyze non-verbal language and students' impressions on speaking. Three kinds of games were

implemented: story games, sharing and guessing and speculation games. The findings reported that students felt a lot less stressed during the class and an environment of cooperation was created as they got engaged in a particular goal as a team. The fact of displaying different roles also ensured the participation of all the students with a determined function in their team. The most important contribution of this study to the present research is the deep look it takes on extra-verbal circumstances that may affect one's speaking performance. Developing students' self-confidence when speaking a foreign language should be conceived and thus studied as a vital aspect that makes part of the development of the communicative competence.

The seventh study *Application of games for the development of speaking skill in fourth-graders from Remigio Antonio Cañarte School* was carried out in Pereira, Colombia. It counted with four students aged 8 to 10 who were exposed to language games to help them develop their speaking skills. The activities were designed simulating real life situations where a determined player's role was essential to achieve a particular goal with the others; thus participation was encouraged and so was cooperation. The findings showed that students were highly engaged in the games since the need to speak was continuously created and the activities were full of emerging challenges. Meaningful interaction took place and meaning was required to be accurately structured depending on the social roles games demanded. One of the most valuable contributions of this study to the present research is the advice it provides on carefully planning interactional games that not only entertain but also require complete engagement from all team members. This suggestion can be applied to the research since it has 25 participants and full participation is needed to prevent the games from becoming boring.

The eight study was conducted at Emilio Valenzuela School in Bogotá Colombia. Twenty students aged 8 to 9 were exposed to role-play activities to observe, analyze and create strategies

for their grammar accuracy. Such activities were chosen within a framework of learning from mistakes, more specifically peer-assessment. This approach allowed students to work cooperatively in overcoming common difficulties such as omission and wrong word order, both of them a result of Spanish interference. The findings suggest a meaningful reflection on one's own learning process while improving speaking skills as well as the effectiveness of team work on building up mutual knowledge. The previous study re-values the mistake as an active learning tool. While doing so, it also re-creates the role of the students as active and dynamic. This communicative approach to grammar learning makes a significant contribution to this research, especially to the grammar conceptualization stage as it promotes a cooperative hypothesis-making process.

In conclusion, exploring and analyzing the previous research studies contributes in a significant way to the design of an integrated pedagogical proposal for the present research. Not only the positive aspects are taken into account but also those whose development was either neglected or not successfully attained.

## **2.2 Theoretical framework**

In order to establish a solid theoretical support for the present research, three main constructs are explained in depth: speaking skills, grammar of meaning and communicative games

### **2.2.1 Speaking**

Being the target skill to develop it is necessary to delimit, shape and enrich the theoretical implications of speaking. To do so, this construct was approached from a communicative perspective highlighting and integrating the major contributions of Bygate (1987), Burns and

Siegel (2018), Levelt (1938) and Brown (2000). Not only was the definition of speaking discussed but also the most common components of it that keep an interdependent bond with one another.

Taking into account the previous elements, Bygate (1987) defines speaking as a complex social skill that requires two essential elements to be fully developed: knowledge and action. Knowledge comprises the understanding and memorization of all grammar structures of a language alongside with its vocabulary; on the other hand, action requires the speaker to take such knowledge and use it or act on it by producing sentences and adapting them to specific communicative circumstances.

Consequently, speaking is a productive skill resulting from an individual complex cognitive process within a social environment as stated by Levelt (1938). The dual complexity of this skill, that is, individual and social, serves from two secondary types of skills: motor-perceptive skills and interaction skills. Motor-perceptive skills “involve perceiving, recalling and articulating in the correct order sounds and structures of the language” (Bygate, 1987, p. 5). While interaction skills “involve making rapid decisions about communication, such as: what to say, how to say it, and whether to develop it, in accordance to one’s intentions, while maintaining the desired relations with others” (Bygate, 1987, p. 6).

The previous concept of speaking highlights the importance of a common neglected side of the discussed skill: interaction. The fact of being immersed in a language learning context usually tends to leave aside aspects of language that in appearance are not immediately necessary. Speaking practice activities are normally fabricated leaving out natural phenomena that come up in real communication such as unpredictability, comprehension mistakes, spontaneous replying etc.

Following this perspective, Burns & Siegel (2018) regard speaking as a “highly dynamic skill without the benefit of the planning” (p.10). Unlike writing, for example, speaking requires immediate decision making and provides immediate feedback among interlocutors creating a transactional bond between them. Dynamism takes place when meaning becomes the core of interaction and the participants’ utterances are continuously adjusted to the context as the conversation flows.

Such dynamic adjustments in meaning that reinforces the idea of speaking as a planned skill add another aspect to its already discussed complexity: communication strategy skills are required to speak. The spontaneity of speaking makes interaction unpredictable and thus especial action is required to repair the possible arising breakdowns during conversation. Some common communicative strategies involved in speaking, according to Bygate (1987), are circumlocution (the choice of alternative ways to express an idea when determined structures or vocabulary are not familiar to the speaker) or paraphrasing (the ability to repeat using other words from the original source).

At this point it is important to point out the role of society in constructing and modeling speaking. This skill is also as stated by Bygates (1987) as “a vehicle of social solidarity, of social ranking” (p.8). Speaking is at all times a social skill even when its cognitive making takes place as a response to a social demand. A learner’s performance is always colored by that of the person he or she is talking with.

Due to the social nature of speaking, interaction arises as the medium par excellence through which negotiation of meaning takes places. Brown (2000) regards interaction as “the greatest difficulty that learners encounter in attempts to speak” (p, 269) given the collaborative

nature of conversation and the rapid complex decisions the speaker has to make when trying to choose a particular word or grammar structure from a wide repertoire.

Having considered the multiple facets of speaking and its implications, it is important to remark that this research was thoroughly developed following the vision of speaking as a dynamic social skill whose main basis is interaction. Although considered a productive skill physiologically talking, from a pragmatic viewpoint it could also represent a receptive skill since it not only *understands* or *codifies* the meaning of messages but also *interprets* the social implications of spoken language as one speaks.

Such concepts are integrated in the class planning and class development of this research at the UPN Language Center starting with simple implementation such as using English as the continuous language of instruction letting students naturally perceive the meaning existing beneath grammar forms and encouraging them to take part in the class using their language repertoire. Further treatment of speaking by the present research also includes group activities with a common goal expressed in a language function that can only be reached by a series of interactions featuring multiple previously studied language functions. It all aims at making students perceive the usefulness and reactivation of language.

### **2.2.2 Grammar of meaning**

In pursuit of creating teaching strategies to develop the model of speaking proposed by Bygate (1987), the construct of *grammar of meaning* is inserted in the present research to create a medium that encourages both the development of language structure building and language use skills. Consequently, a special look at recent innovative ways of conceiving grammar was taken as well as at some reflections on a teaching approach that benefits both skills.

Concerning grammar definitions, Freeman (2000) refers to grammar as “a skill to be mastered, rather than a set of rules to be memorized”. Such conception broadens the traditional views on grammar as a static component of a language waiting to be systematically learnt and transforms it into a dynamic corpus whose learning requires more complex processes than just arranging structures.

Having this feature of being active and changeable, Freeman (2000) considers that grammar is a three-dimensional complex construct made up of structure or form, semantics or meaning, and pragmatics. Grammar as a system of linguistic structure comprises all “the overt lexical and morphological forms” (p. 252) alongside with the way they are constructed and how they are normally sequenced in relation to any other structures around them. Grammar viewed as vehicle of meaning can refer to both lexical meaning (the definition of a particular word) and grammatical meaning (e.g. the conditional states both a condition and an outcome or result). Lastly, pragmatics is the dimension of grammar which influences it the most as it controls the use of particular structures over others depending on particular social situations.

At this point it would be necessary to complement and expand Freeman’s initial definition of grammar as a skill by adding the adjective *social*. Consequently, grammar cannot be conceived as a “set of meaningless decontextualized static structures” (Freeman, 2000, p. 251). Instead, it has to be valued as a vehicle to express meaning in an appropriate way according to the context where communication takes places. Reflecting society in its core, grammar is also described as a continuously flowing system that orbits social contexts and adapts itself allowing its limited number of forms to create an endless multiplicity of meanings.

Such a strong bond between grammar, meaning and social context is also referred to by Charaudeau (1992) when referring to grammar and communicative intentions as *inseparable* and

interdependent. Grammar serves meaning in a particular social situation where communication is naturally unpredictable following the principle that “the world is not initially given, it is made by the human strategy of signification” (Charaudeau, 1992, p. 124). Grammar is constantly renewable having meaning as its initial starting point but also as its target, thus transforming it into the core of any language-form building process.

Complementing Charaudeau’s views on grammar, Courtillon (2001) defines it as “the capacity to organize phrases in order to convey meaning being an intrinsic part of the communicative competence” (p.153). This notion implies a communicative *know-how* a particular situation which comprises the display of lexical, phonetical, syntactic and phonological skills; an interactive *savoir-faire* or psychosocial skills and extralinguistic *savoir-faire* that implies all non-verbal skills that still make part of communication and play an important role in expressing meaning.

Gathering all these principles, Purpura (2004) provides a more integrated perception of grammar as he considers that its intrinsic systematical descriptive nature should not be completely left aside; instead it should be taken as one of the many facets adopted by the discussed language component. Thus grammar is a skill that becomes more complex as it transcends the declarative or static knowledge to simultaneously reach the social sphere transforming into dynamic procedural knowledge. Such complexity makes grammar a tool for analyzing communication where the structural description of the language is not only the primary object of concern” (Purpura, 2004, p. 6).

Knowing and integrating all the previous concepts leads to a subsequent reflection on the most appropriate way of dealing with grammar in the present research context. The previously discussed authors situate grammar teaching within the framework of the communicative

approach. In consequence the participants (student and teacher) play well defined roles which highlight the active role of learners in their own learning process. Among the class stages this research designed and segmented sessions into several phases; one of them was called *grammar conceptualization*. During this phase, students participated in groups actively attempting to discover the functioning of language as they interacted with each other. On the other hand, the teacher facilitated learning while making strategic questions that led to analyzing the target language. An earlier step in grammar conceptualization called *global approach to key material* encouraged students to first observe and identify the situation, the participants and their relation to each other; this kind of activities allowed learners to understand the core meaning of the exchanged messages and prepared them for the next step which consisted of building forms or structures

### **2.2.3 Communicative games**

To fix language structures and develop pragmatic skills, this research selected games as the most appropriate means taking into account students' ages and interests. To prevent games from transforming into simple time fillers deep insights into the concept of games are offered to make such a learning tool fit the main objective of the present research.

When defining games, Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (2006) describe them as “an activity that is entertaining and engaging, often challenging, and an activity in which the learners play and usually interact with others” (p.1). Such common features of games make them an ideal tool for language learning since motivation is stimulated being the departure point into game development and then followed by engagement keeping players focused on a previously agreed goal.

However, the previous definition limits the quality of games to being always challenging

or interactive. To clarify this, Hadfield (1999) divides language games into two groups: linguistic and communicative. The first taxonomy comprises all the activities focusing on accuracy, e.g. finding the opposite of a word; the second taxonomy focuses on the successful exchange of information or ideas with others.

Following Hadfield's notion of communicative games, a deeper reflection of their use and effects on language teaching/learning can be carried out. One of the most positive advantages of such games in developing communicative skills is the fact that they lead learners to experience the target language: many contexts are likely to be created making language a useful tool for conveying meaning. "The learners want to take part, and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information." (Hadfield, 1999, p.2)

Also, communicative games provide a repeated use of language items in a more vivid situation. Many games are based on limited linguistic forms that enhance the practice of a particular language function and its associated structures. The dynamism of turn-taking and repetition transforms the game into a drill generator "with the added opportunity to sense the working of language as living communication" (Hadfield, 1999, p.2).

On the other hand, interaction can be referred to as the most relevant component of communication and consequently of communicative games. Group work is essential in such activities serving as a bridge between the players and their final goal. Within the framework of communicative games, the nature of any activity has to be challenging instead of competitive. Such a requirement is scientifically supported by Lee (1995) who considers that playing a game wakes a variety of emotions affecting students' performance positively or negatively. Challenges

invite everyone to have a go and do their best instead of classifying learners into *winners* and *losers*.

The present research takes both of Hadfield's game categories (1999) assigning them to different stages of the class. During the pedagogical intervention, games are designed in such a way that students use the target language and previously learned structures while working in teams in the pursuit of a common objective. Additionally, there is presence of more than one reward in a single game which does not necessarily consist of physical objects but clues to go further into the game based on the correctness of the group activity they develop. This method enhances motivation towards the class and engages students into a positive commitment with their team since they are always assigned a specific role whose absence or poor performance negatively affects the team's results. The success of games is not necessarily measured by the final result of the activity but by the interacting processes it provokes as well as good team commitment.

## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The following chapter presents the methodological issues intrinsic to the current research. Key concepts such as research paradigm, type of study, data collection instruments, and data analysis methodology are defined within the framework of the present study.

### 3.1 Paradigm

The current research is developed within the framework of qualitative research with elements of mixed research. The most evident reason for the choice of this paradigm is the object of study implied: language. As stated by Philipps and Carr (2004), qualitative research conceives knowledge as fluid and subjective being continuously enriched and transformed by a multiplicity of viewpoints. In keeping with this perspective, language is a product of social interaction which clearly implies dynamism and change since it is an artefact created by societies and through which thought is developed and expressed (Vygotsky, 1978). Hence it needs to be studied from a perspective that suits such characteristics.

In addition, this paradigm regards reality as not only quantifiable but also as a qualifiable scenery where culture, history and specific settings contribute to the transformation of knowledge. The current research displays a dialogue among multiple sets of voices and perspectives gathering, for instance, the main observable features of the population in the study highlighting their specific cultural and social traits, their personal approaches to language learning, the analysis of their performance in the target language, the researcher's conceptions towards language inferred from her pedagogical actions in the classroom and her voice, among others.

### 3.2 Type of study

The present research was carried out under the principles of action research. First of all, because the investigator simultaneously became an active participant in the research scenery intervening in a deliberate way to solve a previously defined problem, as stated by Burns (2010). On the other hand, the improvement expected by the current research in the pedagogical proposal, which is carefully explained in chapter 4, is firmly based on systematic data collection rather than on mere assumptions from the researcher making it an objective solid study which constantly leads to a reflective practice.

As an evidence of such an exhaustive process the current document fully testifies the four phases that make up action research, according to Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), as cited in Burns (2010). The initial phase or planning stage is widely contemplated throughout the first four chapters which deal with the delimitation of the area of study, identification of participants, presentation of literature accordingly and organization of equipment and material. The second phase, defined as act by Burns (2010) was carried out during the application period of the research (2018-2 and 2019-1) while data was systematically collected. Further theoretical and practice insights into this issue can be consulted in the current chapter and chapter 5 respectively. The third phase that concerns the observation of results situated the present research within a cycle of action and reflection as stated by Burns (2010). There was a continual analysis of the results even from the very beginning of the data collection phase since some pedagogical actions were modified and shaped in order to suit unexpected arising research situations.

Finally, the reflection stage can be formally found in chapter 8 where further recommendations are given based on the obtained results. This section sheds light on the direction research should follow.

### **3.3 Population and sample**

The present research was carried out with a population of 24 students (12 boys and 12 girls) aged 10-12 years who attended English classes at the UPN language center. The observation and application phases took place on Saturdays from 8am to 12am. It is remarkable to point out that the students belonged to one of the Intermediate I level courses offered by the UPN language center at that time. The sample taken into account for the present study corresponds to the third part of the total number of students, approximately 9 students. This sample was selected taking into account three major categories based on students English level and general performance: upper-intermediate leveled students, intermediate leveled students and basic leveled students.

### **3.4 Data management procedure**

Concerning data management, the present research was developed following the principles of data collection and analysis proposed by Burns (2010).

The first issue taken into account during the initial approach to data was the necessary coherence between what the researcher wanted to know and the technique used to collect such information. It was necessary to carefully analyze the observable and non-observable methods available to check their eventual effectiveness in obtaining valuable information to be analyzed.

Following with the second aspect to take into account in data management, it was essential to balance the teaching time in relation with data collection. However, most of the time the researcher succeeded in integrating both actions into her pedagogical proposal achieving what Burns refers to as “adjusting the cycles, processes and methods to meet your needs creatively in your teaching context” (Burns, 2010, p.56). Additionally, the present research always conceived

data as an active resource that linked action, observation and reflection; hence it was used as an element to increase knowledge and understand the main concern of the study.

### **3.5 Data collection instruments and procedures**

Concerning the instruments and procedures that were used and applied to data collection throughout the implementation of the current research, it is important to mention four: field notes, audio-video recording, photographs and artifacts/documents.

#### **3.5.1 Field notes**

Concerning the use of field notes, a reflective observation is adopted as not only does it allow the researcher to register all the important events occurring within the classroom but it also promotes the instant record of the researcher's interpretations and hypotheses right next to the observable facts, as stated by Burns (2010). For this author, this double function of the field note format allows to clearly differentiate a fact from an opinion and thus make the observations more transparent while a more critical view and constant dialogue are integrated to the process of observing.

#### **3.5.2 Audio-video recording**

Burns (2010) states that audio-video recording is one of the most comprehensive data collection instruments since it not only captures oral interaction exactly as it was said but it also witnesses other important class features such as facial expressions, body movement or the general look and feel of the class. Audio-recording was frequently used throughout the present study as the main data collection instrument to get trustworthy and accurate evidence from students' speaking performance. Additionally, video-recording was the privileged technique to gather essential evidence that illustrated group work, peer-to-peer interaction and individual performance within a team.

### **3.5.3 Photographs**

A photograph is an excellent data collection instrument that significantly supplements the researcher's observation, according to Burns (2010). This resource brings multiple advantages for the research as it captures specific teaching moments that in other cases (such as using video-recording) could be less practical to be attached as evidence for the research. The present research illustrates valuable moments of the study through photographs aiming at showing the authenticity of the captured events while counting on grounded evidence to analyze, for example, students' interaction.

### **3.5.4 Artifacts**

According to Divita (2011), artifacts are physical or symbolic objects resulting from any human action. They can usually be observable and represent a complex net of meanings and individual marks within a determined cultural context. The current study presents artifacts in the form of class workshops, charts, mind maps and other evidence since they are the result of students' cognitive work that can be interpreted in the class context.

## **Chapter 4: Pedagogical intervention**

The following chapter deals with the essential visions of language and learning, necessary to design a solid pedagogical intervention. Following these constructs, a whole pedagogical proposal is described in detail based on a teaching approach. A chronogram shows the time management of the lessons followed by some possible impacts of the research.

### **4.1 Pedagogical approach**

The language teaching approach this research is based on is communicative language teaching (CLT) as it proposes an assembly of pedagogical actions whose common aim is to develop students' communicative competence within the conception of language as a social instrument of communication.

The starting point of such pedagogical actions is the setting of learning/teaching objectives in terms of language functions which determine what students are able to do using language (promising, describing, apologizing etc.) rather than stating isolated grammar or structural goals with no communicative purpose. To do so, the present research adopts Hymes's view of communicative competence that consists of acquiring not only the knowledge of a language's formal structure but also the development of a dynamic ability to easily act through language depending on one's needs and the characteristics of a particular sociocultural context (Hymes, 1972).

Following such principles, the present study introduces the use of authentic material in class as a faithful representation of the complex role of language in a situation reflecting what Breen, Candlin, Morrow & Widowson (as cited in Canale, 1995) referred to as real communication. It is a form of social interaction which always aims at fulfilling a certain purpose within a social context, likely to be developed under psychological limitations or other conditions

such as memory restrictions or distractions and ending up in the production of authentic language instead of artificial expressions made exclusively for language learners.

During the pedagogical intervention of the research this tool is really useful as it is used to start a discussion activity in class consisting of identifying the people, places and situations in the class material as students express their opinion on the possible relation that might exist between them. This type of activity leads students into analyzing the pragmatic features of a situation in relation to the language forms chosen to achieve a particular purpose.

To complement the aspects above mentioned the following paragraphs will focus on broadening some important CLT paradigms taken into account when carrying out the pedagogical intervention planned for the present research.

#### **4.1.1 Vision of language**

Concerning the vision of language, the present research adopts a communicative perspective without setting aside its indelible systematical nature. Although framed within the communicative approach, CLT does not ban the learning of the structural nature of language. Instead, it proposes a new way of conceiving as well as teaching and learning it.

In congruence with the communicative approach, language is an instrument of social interaction; it is the means of communication par excellence. It is essential to point out that language is not only a system of structures but also a social construct that constantly revitalizes and provides flexibility to grammar forms. Germain (1993) defines the role of language in the communication process from a communicative perspective using a model he calls the double adaptive dimension of language. According to this model, successful communication results from accurately adapting language forms to both a determined language function (greeting,

complaining etc.) and a communicative situation (participants' status, age, place etc.). Such a perspective transforms the traditional static conception of language into a more dynamic social tool used to take action in the speaker's world.

However, the structural nature of language and its degree of priority within the principles of the communicative approach have been a matter of considerable concern since such linguistic movement seeks to fight any traditional grammar-centered conception of language teaching. In consequence, the current research aims at dealing with this complex but essential part of language stressing its importance in communication and conceiving it as a system-vehicle through which meaning is passed, following Courtillon (2001).

Privileging the above conception of language, the present research aims at creating strategies that encourage students to use the target language as a means of communication modeling their performance in agreement with their pragmatic needs and interests as well as those existing in the social context where they interact. Hence, language is presented as an instrument through which students can take action in society becoming negotiators of meaning in a given situation where other participants also take part.

#### **4.1.2 Vision of learning**

Developed under the principles of communicative language teaching, the current research conceives learning as experiential. The students are exposed to the target language as much as possible and the use of games allow them to recreate real-life situations in which they must use English to achieve a communicative purpose. This kind of activities also encourages interactive work among learners, another important feature of experiential learning, according to Tudor (2001). Supporting the previous idea of interactive work, the present study also explores and conceives learning as a result of social interaction. Vygotsky (1978) claims that "every function

in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)." (p.57). This vision strongly supports the role of learners as negotiators of meaning, as stated by Richards & Rodgers (1986); they build up knowledge as a result of their interaction with others.

This principle is widely supported by the type of activities designed and developed during the pedagogical interventions, especially during the grammar conceptualization stage. Such a phase boosts interactive work through communicative games since students are assigned a particular role whose importance is crucial to achieve a particular goal. Students are encouraged to carry out a group inductive-deductive grammar learning process taking authentic material as model and discussing their opinions with their team members. Not only do they have to state their particular choice or opinion but also to explain how they come to such a conclusion creating an enriching class debate where everyone takes part, contributes and builds up knowledge

With regards to the role that learners play in their English learning process during the lessons at UPN language center, a type of interdependent learning is developed as students are constantly invited to take part in the construction of knowledge within the classroom through cooperative work where everyone contributes. Students propose hypothesis by expressing their opinions or beliefs. Each one has their own time to take part as concepts and constructs are simultaneously enriched until there is a final consensus resulting from the previous fruitful group work.

On the other hand, the role adopted by the teacher-researcher is in strong concordance with the principles of student-centered lessons proposed by the CLT. Following this perspective, the teacher plays the role of an independent participant who takes part in the teaching-learning

process as she guides the processes and maximizes communication among the learners bringing resources (considering herself as one) that reflect and simulate a real communicative scenery of the target language in the class.

## **4.2 Implementation phases**

The pedagogical proposal for the present research is divided into three main phases that integrate learning objectives, target class activities and the indicators expected to be attained during each stage.

### **4.2.1 Phase 1: Discovering meaning**

This initial phase focuses on determining students' previous conceptions on grammar and language as well as proposing a wide range of activities that lead them into discovering meaning through language structures before formally reflecting on grammar. In doing so students take part in prediction activities related to familiar topics that are normally carried out before presenting a new topic; brief discussions are started off within the framework of a language function delimiting a context and allowing students to anticipate what is going to be learnt. A specific example of this moment of the phase is the use of the home page of the Guinness World records to lead students into anticipating the learning of superlatives.

On the other hand, the re-construction of a unit of meaning while checking the comprehension of authentic material is also a key activity whose design aims at eliciting meaning from students. Students are exposed to the material and are subsequently asked about the people, places and main topic in it as well as the interrelation of these elements. Then, extracts containing target language are taken from the original material and some other odd pieces are deliberately added before proposing the main task to be developed; such tasks usually involve matching, organizing, guessing etc. During this phase, students are expected to use cohesive devices when

building up meaning as well as to use specific grammar forms according to situations, participants and goals. An example of this stage is the use of a domino that contains a person's daily routine; students are required to play the game while re-constructing a person's typical day. Previous knowledge from personal experience and information from a video they previously watched determines important aspects such as coherent chronological order and false information presented in some cards.

#### **4.2.2 Phase 2: Discovering grammar**

Discovering grammar is a teaching period in the current research whose main objective is to articulate meaning and language structures. To do so the researcher proposes a dual approach to grammar which seeks to integrate both the inductive and deductive methods following different principles to what traditionally is done with regards to teacher-student roles and moment of implementation.

Taking the above into account, the activities during this phase are mainly based on discussion-creating questions that encourage students to carefully observe, contrast, compare etc., in a word: reflect about a particular language form after having situated it in a particular situation. This is a group activity which benefits interaction and starts off a collaborative hypothesis-making process where students actively take part and contribute to the construction of grammar rules. Once the hypothesis has been confirmed students are required to explain the target grammar rule; they have to make explicit what they discovered during the previous step.

The previously mentioned activities result in an integration of inductive and deductive methods of grammar learning privileging the active role of the students as discoverers and pertinence of applying the inductive before the deductive. During this phase, students are expected to formulate hypothesis to discover grammar rules, explain orally grammar rules

justifying their answers and interact with each other working in teams in the pursuit of a common objective.

#### **4.2.3 Phase 3: Language practice**

Once students count with an adequate conceptualization of grammar in relation to meaning, the language practice phase represents the consolidation of language expression in their speaking skills. At this stage the researcher makes use of communicative games to provide motivational controlled practice that allows students to internalize and automatize grammar structures.

In consequence, group work is a key strategy to enhance their performance and stimulate interaction while trying to achieve a specific goal. Games are carefully designed or adapted taking into account the importance of roles to keep the control of the class and assign specific responsibilities to each team member improving everyone's attention and provoking a close relation between participants that fosters interaction.

Taking the above into consideration, students are expected to take part in games playing a specific role previously assigned, use the target language during the development of the games and use a particular number of lexical units to accomplish a particular language purpose

#### **4.3 Academic program**

The following charts illustrates the learning objectives proposed by the UPN language center to be developed within the two semesters of the research.

Date	Learning Objective	Activity	Category	Indicator
August 4th 2018 Unit 6. Every day	1-To ask and answer questions about time	Students write on the board an activity they can attend outdoors. The teacher will subsequently start making questions about their answers leading students to the relation event-schedule. 2. Teacher passes around a piece of paper containing a number activity to check ss prior knowledge about numbers	Developing oral skills	1.1 Students use cohesive devices in spoken discourse
August 11th 2018 Unit 6. Every day	To describe daily routines	In 5 groups students are given a set of 12 cards (seven of these cards represent routine actions, the other 5 contain isolated objects or places). Each group describes what they can generally and leave out the "odd" ones and organize the cards in the right order. Each group exposes the reason(s) for their choice.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.1 Students use specific grammatical forms according to situations, participants and goals
August 18th 2018 Unit 6. Every day				
August 25th 2018 Unit 6. Every day	To use some phrases to express surprise.	Students think of a surprising fact about themselves. They write it down. Teacher passes the papers around and encourage students to read and guess who the surprising fact belongs to. Students express a certain degree of surprise using the sample phrases. e.g. Wow! really? , I can't believe it.	Developing oral skills	1.2 Students produce chunks of language of different lengths
September 8th 2018 Unit 7. Activities	1-To ask about what people are doing	Students go on a short tour around university. They are given some strips of paper where they write the actions that are happening while they wander several sceneries such as the corridors, the courts, the library etc. Once they are back in the classroom there is a short discussion about their observations.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.1 Students use specific grammatical forms according to situations, participants and goals
September 15th 2018 Unit 7. Activities	To name their own and their friend's abilities	A talent show is organized in class. Each student performs an action that the others cannot probably do. They have to apply the expression "I can" that they previously saw in a reading exercise	Developing oral skills	1.2 Students produce chunks of language of different lengths
September 22nd 2018 Unit 7. Activities	1-To make and respond to suggestions	Students think about a particular leisure activity that they like. Following the patterns in the book, they try to invite someone from the class to do something. The other student answers using the	Developing oral skills	1.2 Students produce chunks of language of

Unit 8. The past	using phrases	response sample in the book		different lengths
September 29th 2018 Unit 8. The past	1-To ask and answer questions about past activities 2-To express feelings about simple problems	Students read some extracts telling past experiences during Childhood. After identifying the people, places and situations in the reading students are invited to carefully read again. On the board a timeline will be drawn with the labels "past" and "present". Students have to classify the events in the reading into one of the given tenses and explain why they made such a choice. Once they get to situate themselves correctly in time, they will be given a set of cards containing both the subjects of the sentences and the pronouns. In groups of five they have to match the cards.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.2 Students formulate hypothesis to discover grammar rules
October 13th 2018 Unit 9. Going places	1-To describe past trips 2-To ask and answer questions about past holidays	Each group was given cards containing vacation activities and were asked to make a timeline of Goofy's activities including three wrong or false activities. The teacher walked around the classroom forming sentences and writing them on the board. E.g. <i>Goofy went to the mechanic but he didn't ride a bike</i> . Then, students were invited to do the same following the sample sentences given by the teacher. After the "mistake round" each group explained how they had formed the sentences: All of them mentioned the sample sentence on the board as the base sentences they took.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.3 Students explain orally grammar rules justifying their answers
October 20th 2018 Unit 9. Going places	To ask for directions in a town	The gambling game: After having finished the hypothesis making process, students are divided into teams. Each team has a total of 15 candies. They will gamble at the grammar game. Teacher reads aloud a sentence containing a mistake and encourages students to determine if it's wrong or correct. whatever their answer is, they have to justify it.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.3 Students explain orally grammar rules justifying their answers
October 27th 2018 Unit 10. Making choices	To compare different objects	The class is divided into 5 groups. A template of the popular game "Who wants to be a millionaire" has been previously adapted to a grammar game. The main variation consists of a team of five participating at a time instead of individual turns. Several slides containing grammar questions are displayed. Each team discusses their possible answer and then explains the reason of their choice. Points are accumulated as rounds go on.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.3 Students explain orally grammar rules justifying their answers
November 3rd 2018 Unit 10. Making choices	To describe people and things			

November 10th 2018 Unit 10. Making choices	1-To tell about plans and intentions	A secret invitation has just been put on your doorstep. Students have to find out who left it there by asking questions and inviting him/her to do something	Developing oral skills	1.2 Students produce chunks of language.
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**Centro de Lenguas Universidad Pedagógica Nacional  
English Intermediate I syllabus - 2019-1  
Kids 10-12 years old**

Date	Learning Objetive	Activity	Category	Indicator
February 16th Welcome	To exchange personal information	Students design a personal survey containing the information they feel the most curious about their classmates. Afterwards they chat and share personal information.	Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.1 Students use specific grammatical forms according to situations, participants and goals
February 23rd Welcome	To describe people's physical appearance	In groups, students pretend that they make part of a police team that draws composite sketches. To do they choose a messenger with access to the criminal. The messenger will have the chance to look at it only once and quickly try to describe the criminal in detail so that his workmates can draw an accurate picture of the person they're looking for.	3. Language practice through communicative games	3.1 Students interact with each other working in teams in the pursuit of a common objective
March 2nd Welcome	To talk about daily routines	Students watch a video. This time, they have to organize a set of cards containing sentences from the video on the board. Other extra question and negative sentences will also be provided to enrich the linguistic repertoire they will be using later. Students are divided into groups of five. Each group member needs to correctly ask another member a question about his/her daily	3. Language practice through communicative games	3.3 Students use the target language structures during the development of the game .

		routine to get one of the five jigsaw pieces they need to gather		
March 23rd Unit 1. My Life	1-To describe someone's job 2-To say who an item belongs to	A jeopardy board is displayed on the room's wall. The cards' front side contains a prize that gets bigger as it approaches to the end. The cards' back side contains incorrect or correct sentence. Each group decides which card to choose and discusses the corresponding sentence.	3. Language practice through communicative games	2.3 Students explain orally grammar rules justifying their answers
March 30th Unit 1. My Life	To tell what food and drink there is	A new version of the popular game Clue is created. Students need to find out who ate what and how. The game consists of asking a general questions or stating a judgement. In any of these cases the group next to the playing students has to secretly answer their question.	3. Language practice through communicative games	3.3 Students use the target language structures during the development of the game .
April 6th Unit 2. Free time	To express emotions about sports	Class is divided into two rows facing each other. Each row represents a team. Each team must keep the same or bigger number of members. To do so, one student from a row will be given a card with a leisure activity. He will have only the chance to ask three questions for the person opposite him trying to guess if that person likes it or not. Once the three questions have been asked the enquiring student will state his opinion.	3. Language practice through communicative games	3.3 Students use the target language structures during the development of the game .
April 13th Unit 2. Free time	To give instructions and tell rules	Students state a set of five rules for conversation as a group. For example: Don't move your eyes/ Look at	3. Language practice through communicative	3.1 Students interact with each other working in

		people's hands when you speak. Etc. Every minute within a period of 5 minutes, a spy from another group will be part of the group for 1 minute. He has to try to discover the secret rules and will tell his group members what he saw.	games	teams in the pursuit of a common objective
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#### 4.4 Lesson plan

The lesson plan format implemented during the present research was elaborated taking into account the alignments of CLT. Consequently, it requires the teacher researcher to fill in essential initial information about the class and objectives (communicative and linguistic); it also proposes a detailed segmentation of class key moments whose objective, duration, procedures and interaction observations have to be specified.

LESSON PLAN - MARCH 23rd 2019			
UNIT 1a I LOVE THIS JOB			
Head Teacher: Janet Amaya			
Participants: Intermediate I students - Language Center			
Lesson objectives: <b>Communicative objective:</b> To talk about one's occupation, routine <b>Linguistic objectives:</b> To correctly use the simple present. Vocabulary: Jobs, every day verbs			
Stage	Aim	Procedure(s)	Interaction
Warm-up (Activity: let's find him/her)	To check students prior knowledge and create expectations about what is going to be learnt.	students think of a particular job and then say it aloud, the student next to him / her immediately mentions two actions normally done by this kind of worker and says another job.	T&SS
Vocabulary and pronunciation check	To present key words before authentic material is played ensuring futher comprehension and correct pronunciation.	vocabulary dice roller: each side of a dice will determine the way students will be explained to key vocabulary. Defintion, hungman, example, mime the action, pictionary	t&SS&SS
Global approach to	To situate students in a familiar	Video is played while students are required to simply watch it focusing	T&SS

key material (Unusual jobs: video)	situation where they can identify the context and the participants	on people, places, objects and their relation. After the video is over teacher gathers students' ideas and writes them on the board. A brief discussion starts off.	
Detailed approach to key material - First part	To check students' understanding of key material,	Students are asked to organize a mind map that summarizes the video and highlights the target language to study. Once they have done so key phrases will be glued on the board for students to use them as a prompt	T&SS
Detailed approach to key material- Jeopardy	To create a cooperative hypothesis-making process which enables ss to discover the linguistic tools they need to express real fact	The class is divided into 5 groups. A jeopardy board is displayed on the room's wall. The cards' front side will contain a prize that gets bigger as it approaches to the end. The cards' back side will contain incorrect or correct sentence. Each group decides which card to choose and discusses the corresponding sentence	T&SS/SS&SS

## Chapter 5: Analysis

This chapter deals with the discussion of the research categories and respective indicators in order to evaluate their effectiveness throughout the whole study. To do so, some theoretical support is given while relating it to the way each indicator was evaluated. Additionally, some examples of real activities implemented in class are also referred to in order to provide evidence.

### 5.1 Analysis management

Taking into account that the present research sought to determine how grammar of meaning alongside with communicative games built up oral skills, it is necessary to explore in depth both the success and limitations that the researcher came across while collecting and analyzing data.

Concerning the development of speaking skills, the most serious limitation occurring primarily during the first phase of the research was the low English level that students had. It was difficult to get them to use English in class all the time since most of their interactions were in Spanish. At first there was very little interest in using English as the means of communication in class, so it was a factor that affected negatively the first pedagogical interventions.

With regards to grammar of meaning, the most limiting situation was trying to change the traditional grammar learning model to which they were used, to the student-centered approach the research fomented. Students used to deal with very specialized grammar terms such as *present perfect* or *past progressive* but did not know what those structures were used for. Consequently, they were expecting the researcher to start the class with a chart explaining the grammar rule before starting using their book.

Concerning communicative games, one of the most limiting situations was the large number of students in the class, especially during the first phase of the research in 2018-2 (30 students). It was a complex task trying to distribute them into small groups because the assigned classroom was very small, so the researcher could barely monitor all the groups.

On the other hand, turn-taking was also one of the most challenging habits students had difficulty with. The willing of them all to speak at the same time had a negative impact on the first activities that were developed as a class. However, such a problem stimulated the researcher's imagination to develop turn-taking techniques that were properly adapted to each type of activity developed.

Concerning the positive aspects that facilitated this research it is possible to say that the media devices the Language Center provides teachers with was a powerful tool that greatly enriched the lessons. The researcher had the opportunity to present a wide range of material which fostered students' attention and interest while they explored other sources where English was the means of communication.

In addition, students' suggestions on traditional games they enjoyed were also a valuable contribution to the present study since the researcher took such information to adapt classic entertaining material and turn it into a learning artifact. This shift in the games they liked motivated them and offered a familiar context where language flowed more naturally.

## **5.2 Data analysis**

The procedure to analyze data adopted by the present research builds up on the principles of triangulation. According to Burns (2010), triangulation is a trustworthy method that combines more than one angle aiming at examining data and reach objective strong conclusions. The

researcher compares, contrasts and cross-checks information to make sure that what is being evidenced by one source is backed up by the others.

Taking the above into consideration, the three main sources used to analyze the data of this study were the theoretical evidence, the data collection instruments and the researcher's reflections. The assembly of these three aspects provided the researcher with strong angles to start off an objective discussion of results which was always supported by evidence.

## **5.2 Categories of analysis**

<b>UNIT OF ANALYSIS : BUILDING UP ORAL SKILLS</b>	
<b>CATEGORIES</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>
1. Developing oral skills	1.1 Students use cohesive devices in spoken discourse 1.2 Students produce chunks of language of different lengths 1.3 Students use an adequate number of lexical units to accomplish a particular language purpose
2. Consolidation of a grammar of meaning	2.1 Students use specific grammatical forms according to situations, participants and goals 2.2 Students formulate hypothesis to discover grammar rules 2.3 Students explain orally grammar rules justifying their answers
3. Language practice through communicative games	3.1 Students interact with each other working in teams in the pursuit of a common objective 3.2 Students take part in the game playing a specific role previously assigned 3.3 Students use the target language structures during the development of the game .

### **5.2.1 Category 1: Developing speaking skills**

Learning how to speak fluently in a foreign language is one of the most remarkable challenges that both students and teachers take up especially when they make part of a language learning context. However, the teaching of such a crucial skill is usually neglected and limited to the mere repetition of drills and memorization of fixed dialogues, according to Kayi (2006). The present category built up on the following three indicators aiming at consolidating an integral proposal that led students to develop their speaking skills within the framework of the communicative approach.

### **5.2.1.1 Indicator 1.1: Students use cohesive devices in spoken discourse**

In order to evaluate this category, it is essential to explore the nature of cohesion first.

According to Hallyday & Cassan (1976) cohesion is a semantic relation that exists between the parts of a written or spoken text which in turn constitutes a unit of meaning. This close relation is usually set by ties or cohesive resources which relate items within a text to form a meaningful interdependent assembly of meaning. Hallyday & Cassan (1976) also argue that continual exposure to language steadily makes us all sensitive to the distinction of what a text is and what not or, in other words, what is coherent and what is not.

Taking all of the above into account, the main strategy applied by the researcher throughout the study to improve cohesion was the continual use of English as the privileged means of communication since such a habit progressively raised awareness in students of what makes sense and what does not and helped them shape their speech more accurately. The use of communicative games encouraging reflection on semantic relations such as consequence, contrast, addition etc. was equally widely applied as students carried out tasks that required building meaning nets.

One of the most remarkable class activities that illustrates the achievement of this category was the game *interconnected holidays* which consisted of telling a past imaginary event with the contribution of the whole class. The researcher proposed building someone's anecdote of a vacation trip by starting with the phrase *Last December Mark went to Cartagena for his holidays* followed by another phrase said by the person next to her. However, there was a condition which consisted of taking a card from a plastic bag that contained several connectors and using the corresponding word to link the phrases. The following extract from the class-audio

transcription illustrates an important moment during the task developed on October 27<sup>th</sup> 2018  
 (See field note # 9)

- Teacher: so he was very happy to see his cousins.  
 (connector from the bag: but)
- Student 14: but he didn't saw his favorite cousin, Esteban  
 (connector from the bag: because)
- Student 15: because he was sick in the hotel  
 (connector from the bag: and)
- Student 16: and he have a lot of homework
- Student 17: eso no tiene lógica, ¿no ve que están de vacaciones?
- Student 16: and she was sleeping.

*Figure 1: Extract from class transcription while playing Interconnected Holidays*

The previous imaginary story told by the students highlights important aspects of cohesion. First of all, the adaptation of the connector from the bag into the story was successfully attained; it is possible to see that the idea expressed by student 14 corresponds to a type of contrast that disturbs the main character's happiness, while on the other hand, when it is student 15's turn, he clearly gives a cause for the absence of Mark's favorite cousin. Finally, when student 16 tries to insert his phrase using the addition connector *and*, the activity is interrupted by another student who points out that the phrase does not make sense because people do not do homework on holidays. These elements show that students not only can establish cohesive relations in English but they also privilege meaning and sense over form correctness.

### **5.2.1.2 Indicator 1.2: Students produce chunks of language of different lengths**

One of the most remarkable observations during the diagnosis stage of the research was students' difficulty to produce units of language proper of English, that is, natural language expressions free of any Spanish incidence. As stated by Harmer (2000), any language is highly likely to set certain groups of words together that through custom and practice end up being normal and acceptable. These word combinations are usually referred to as collocations, or

chunks of language that consist of prefabricated building units. Baigent (as cited in Harmer, 2010) distinguishes three types of such chunks: functional phrases such as by the way, however; idiomatic or fixed expressions such as only child, in love; and verbal expressions such as verb patterns.

Consequently, the present research funded its language conceptualization stage on a collective reflection which consisted of deeply analyzing language forms in relation to meaning while opening a group debate. The use of authentic material during this stage was essential since it showed natural fluent language and offered a faithful source of language accuracy. This phase strengthened students' understanding of how English differs from Spanish and provided them with useful and common chunks of language that they eventually started to use as part of their repertoire to communicate.

One of the moments in research that best illustrates the achievement of this indicator was a class activity called *A situation, a phrase*. It consisted of forming a response to a determined situation by arranging isolated pieces of paper containing words. The researcher had previously prepared some familiar situations and their response as well as deliberately inserting some literally translated phrases coming from Spanish.



*Figure 2: Final artifact resulting from the activity A situation, a phrase*

This picture shows the situation proposed by the researcher. It reflects a sad moment in the life of a friend, so students decided to form the phrase *I'm really sorry*. At this point it is important to remark that among the pieces of paper there was the option *I feel it* which would be the direct English equivalent of the Spanish for *lo siento*. However, none of the groups made this choice and when they were asked why they hadn't selected that option, some of them said “porque en inglés uno no dice así, suena raro”. On the other hand, for situation 2 they formed a similar response leaving out *I'm* and the intensifier *really*. Class audio recorded on March 30<sup>th</sup> 2019 shows that when asked why they had not chosen exactly the same phrase for both situations they said that the first situation was a serious and painful moment with someone they knew well while the second situation was a brief accident with a stranger.

Gathering the previous evidence, the discussed indicator was positively attained since students succeeded in picking up the right collocation basing their choice on valuable aspects of language such as natural prefabricated forms, context pertinence and participants. First of all, students formed the response *I'm really sorry* leaving out other options such as the adverbs *highly, strongly, very* and the verb *feel* which, as explained above, was included to measure the interference of Spanish in students' decision. The question *Why not “I feel it” to mean “Lo siento”?* caused a general common response in class that argued the weirdness of such an expression in the English Language; this shows what Harmer (2000) called “the acceptance of a collocation” (p. 14). Students consider *I'm sorry* as a natural common English expression to communicate sorrow that is normally intensified by the adverb *really* instead of highly or strongly. On the other hand, their arguments about the pertinence of adding *I'm* and *really* to the

expression *sorry* in the first situation while leaving them out in the second shows students' reflection on the choice on forms in accordance with a determined situation and participants.

### **5.2.1.3 Indicator 1.3: Students use an adequate number of lexical units to accomplish a particular language purpose**

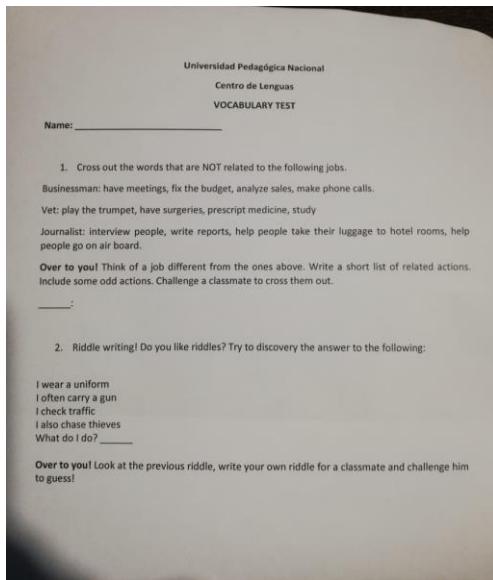
One of the greatest challenges in language learning and thus language teaching is picking up new words. At first, it is usually seen as simply learning by heart the equivalent word of the English term; however, knowing a word for real implies complex processes that go far beyond denotation. Harmer (2010) points out that words have a double dimension: meaning and use. Meaning is a complex characteristic of words that is normally affected by certain linguistic phenomena such as polysemy or synonymy; in either case a word's meaning depends on its relationship to other words and the context where it is produced. On the other hand, word use depends entirely on where, in which situation and with whom it is intended to be produced. Words have a pragmatic charge that should be carefully learnt and used.

Having remarked such elements of words, it is important to point out that the present research sought to implement the learning of vocabulary in context highlighting the memorization of words in groups instead of in isolation. A specific section of lessons was devoted to check vocabulary offering examples where the target words were used before introducing the key material which would bring back the previously seen words and reinforce their correct use.

Additionally, the researcher proposed cycles of two-week self-study routines through vocabulary workshops (Annex J) in which students were supposed to have extra practice following the implications of learning a new word effectively, as stated by McCarthy & O'Dell

(1999), who describes it as a process requiring continual activation of it through frequent practice that allows the speaker to internalize not only the term but also the way it is used.

However, these complex implications of knowing and using a word ended up being a troublesome challenge for the present research that clearly affected the achievement of the discussed indicator. Elements such as the time conditions under which the research was conducted (an overall of 4 hours' class every week) and poor commitment on students' side with the proposed workshops represented an obstacle for the researcher.



*Figure 3: Sample of vocabulary test prepared by the teacher in order to assess vocabulary activation process*

The previous photograph corresponds to one of the vocabulary tests proposed to monitor the home activities. It aimed at assessing vocabulary integrally as it encouraged students to relate words in chunks instead of reproducing them in isolation while also featuring a short production part that required students to build up their own language phrases. A careful analysis of the tests results shows that 90% of students regularly failed the tests since they had difficulty remembering word associations and also found it hard to use the target words in a more complex

language task. Consequently, poor commitment with the proposed activities and results in class performance led the researcher to conclude that this indicator was not successfully achieved.

In general terms, it is possible to conclude that this category was successfully attained except for some methodological aspects that for external reasons are out of the researcher's reach. It is important to integrate class processes with self-study strategies that contribute to better results.

### **5.2.2 Category 2: Consolidation of a grammar of meaning**

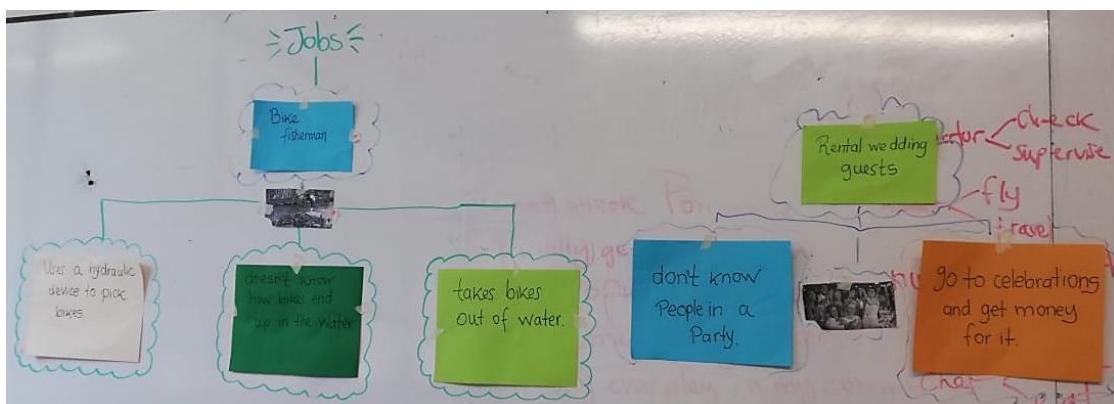
Grammar teaching has always been one of the most debated issues in language learning, especially because of its necessary mastering and the way it should or should not be taught. Consequently, it is believed that only language specialists are responsible for building up methodologies and advances in this field while learners play a receptive or passive role. The following indicators were built up on a different conception of language that proposes a new treatment of grammar but above all a re-creation of the roles of participants involved in the language learning process.

#### **5.2.2.1 Indicator 2.1: Students use specific grammatical forms according to situations, participants and goals.**

Following the principles of grammar teaching proposed by McLaughlin, Rossman & McLeod (as cited in Mart, 2013), it is essential to provide learners with a meaningful framework when offering language structure instruction given the fact that "by dealing with related units of information rather than isolated bits, more efficient processing becomes possible" (Mart, 2013, p.126). Thus, introducing grammar forms within isolated sentences affects connection with reality and reinforces the idea of language as a mere rule system instead of using it as a means of communication.

In accordance with this view, contextualizing students before analyzing grammar forms was one of the main concerns involved in the present research. To deal with it a stage called *global approach* was incorporated into the lesson plans as an essential tool for analyzing authentic material (Annex D). After being exposed to the material students were encouraged to analyze the main topic of the video/recording/reading as they also drew special attention to the number of people, their mutual relation and the place where it possibly took place. This provided learners with a logical scenery where language occurred: it was a proposal to succeed in integrating content and grammar since the subsequent stage called “detailed approach” consisted of recreating the meaning of the previously shown situation using the target language forms to do so.

One of the activities that illustrates all of the above is a group task whose main objective was to recreate the main ideas of a video about jobs in a mind map on the board (Annex E). Students formed groups of five and were given a set of cards containing key sentences related to the video. However, the researcher had deliberately included some odd cards with decontextualized information altering participants, places and even the main topic itself. As students worked on their mind maps, some of them came up to the researcher asking what to do with specific cards that they considered strange or extra, while others simply left the odd cards aside and built their map with the ones they considered pertinent. However, the most remarkable comment some of them made was that the strange cards did not even have to do with jobs.



*Figure 4. Artifact of two groups that illustrates card organization based on meaning*

In conclusion, it can be said that this indicator was successfully achieved since students were able to identify the global elements of a situation and relate them to specific grammar forms following a particular functional goal, e.g. describing one's job. All of this using a video as a unit of meaning made up of correlated bits.

#### **5.2.2.2 Indicator 2: Students formulate hypothesis to discover grammar rules**

One of the most remarkable principles developed by the communicative teaching approach in regards to grammar is the active discovery-based role that learners should adopt in their own learning process. In accordance with this view, Thornbury (1999) considers that inductive learning meets the most essential characteristics to ensure a type of grammar conceptualization where learners find language structures meaningful, memorable and serviceable as their mental effort involves more cognitive depth. According to Thornbury "in an inductive approach, without having met the rule, the learner studies examples and from these examples derives an understanding of the rule (p.49)."

Following this perspective, the present research devoted one section of each class to display a cooperative hypothesis-making process which encouraged students to work in groups in order to discover the grammar rule of a determined language function. The first moment of this stage consisted of having students carefully observe sample sentences (taken from previously contextualized material) followed by a series of questions made by the researcher in order to stimulate their ability to compare, contrast and infer a determined rule. As hypothesis flowed

within a framework of what Thornburry called “cycles of trial and error” (p.52) the researcher wrote students’ assumptions on the board to subsequently prove them and record them in a consolidated chart.

One of the activities that illustrates the previous information was a team task aiming at discovering the rules of the present progressive to express actions happening at the moment of speaking. According to the observations in field note #5 (Annex F), the class was divided into groups of five after having read a dialogue between three people talking about the activities they were doing at that moment. Each team was given three envelopes with colored strips of paper that contained sentences from the dialogue (One containing positive sentences from the dialogue, another containing negative sentences and another containing questions).

Once the envelopes were opened, the students were asked to analyze and discuss with their group why the papers were classified the way they were. After some minutes, the students began to share their opinions: “the yellow papers are positive sentences, the red papers are negative sentences, the blue sentences are questions” Responding to the question: How do you know that it is positive, negative sentence or a question? The students pointed out that they could see “isn’t” and “aren’t” typical signs of a negative sentence and that was how they had found out that it was a negative sentence. In the case of questions, they mentioned the question mark as the most important clue and the change in word order as a secondary sign of a question.

Gathering all the previous elements it is possible to see that students identified common morphological traits in the sentences and related them to a change in meaning. The colored strips of paper stimulated their observation and led them to infer the grammar rules as they proposed several examples. In the case of the negative sentences, for example, the suffix *n’t* was automatically associated to a negative because “the verb to be have the same termination *n’t* and

it is the abbreviation of not" (Field note # 5. Consequently, it can be concluded that the discussed indicator was successfully achieved as students were continuously motivated to share their opinions and thoughts about grammar. Mistakes were a valuable part of this phase since they showed students' efforts to contribute to the discovery of rules and encouraged them to work harder to get the right answer.

#### ***5.2.2.3 Indicator 2.3: Students explain orally grammar rules justifying their answers***

Throughout the history of language learning there has been a long debate on the most appropriate way to teach grammar depending on the methodology or approach adopted. There is a usual distinction between inductive and deductive approach that seems to be equivalent to talking about implicit grammar vs explicit grammar. For the present indicator special attention is drawn on the latter. According to Harmer (2010), the deductive method is an *explain and practice approach* that consists of mastering grammar structures taking rule explanation as the starting point of the process. Learners are given the rule and they apply it to other similar sentences in order to conceptualize and automatize such a structure.

Taking into consideration the previous points, the present research took some elements from the deductive approach for the last stage of the cooperative hypothesis making process. However, it is important to point out that important adaptations were made in the pursuit of a communicative approach in class. The first major change in relation to general literature on the deductive approach was that the researcher shifted it from the beginning to the end of the grammar learning process. As stated in the previous indicator, the grammar conceptualization stage was primarily funded on students' initial exposure to examples to later lead them to rules. Once their hypothesis had been proven right, students were exposed to a series of sentences containing mistakes whose main objective was to create a reflection and team discussion;

afterwards students had to make a choice explaining why their answer was correct. Consequently, the deductive approach was inserted into the research as a concluding step in grammar learning instead of as a starting point of it.

On the other hand, the present research activated the role of students in the deductive approach provoking a swap with the researcher as learners were encouraged to explain grammar rules to the teacher, not the opposite.

Taking into consideration the previous elements, the activity that best illustrates this category was a game called “Who wants to be a grammelier” (Annex G) (adapted from the traditional game Who wants to be a millionaire. It was played in teams of five and consisted of finding the correct or incorrect sentence in a group of four choices. Students were given some time to make a choice and prepare an explanation for the jury (the researcher) who would determine the coherence between both parts of the answer.

The following transcription of the students’ answer reflects how the grammar rule for comparatives was successfully conceptualized. The relation between the length of an adjective (number of syllables) and comparative marks was explained in their own words as well as the clear difference in meaning between *than* and *that* in spite of their similar spelling.

15 ● \$1 Million	Student 1: The answer is C, teacher.
14 ● \$500,000	Researcher: ok, why is that the correct answer and not A, for example?
13 ● \$250,000	
12 ● \$125,000	Student 2: because we don't say "more cold"
11 ● \$64,000	
10 ● \$32,000	Student 3: because cold is a word short not long. Colder is the comparative of cold
9 ● \$16,000	
8 ● \$8,000	Researcher: Ok, so the correct answer could also be C. Why not C?
7 ● \$4,000	
6 ● \$2,000	
5 ● \$1,000	
4 ● \$500	
3 ● \$300	
2 ● \$200	
1 ● \$100	

Which is correct?

50:50      ☎      ⌂

A: New York is more cold than Bogotá  
B: New York is more colder than Bogotá  
C: New York is colder than Bogotá  
D: New York is colder that Bogotá

Student 1: The answer is C, teacher.  
Researcher: ok, why is that the correct answer and not A, for example?  
Student 2: because we don't say "more cold"  
Student 3: because cold is a word short not long. Colder is the comparative of cold  
Researcher: Ok, so the correct answer could also be C. Why not C?  
Student: 2 because in C say "colder that" and is "colder than" with n

*Figure 5: Sample slide of Who wants to be a grammelier and extract from class transcription*

In conclusion, this indicator was successfully achieved since students could put in their own words the language relations they had previously established themselves. Having been a student-centered grammar building process, they expressed themselves more confidently and enthusiastically.

Generally speaking, it is possible to affirm that this category was completely achieved. Thanks to some mistakes during grammar conceptualization, the researcher made sure and confirmed that students were putting in cognitive effort to work out grammar rules. This category enriches the previous one in the measure that students practice argumentation when explaining grammar rules.

### **5.2.3 Category 3: Language practice through communicative games**

Practicing a foreign language in a place where it is not the official one can be quite challenging and at times discouraging especially for children, whose expectations are always demanding. In proposing an effective strategy that integrates high motivation, fun, interaction and effective communication skills in English, the present research designed the following indicators privileging team work and interaction.

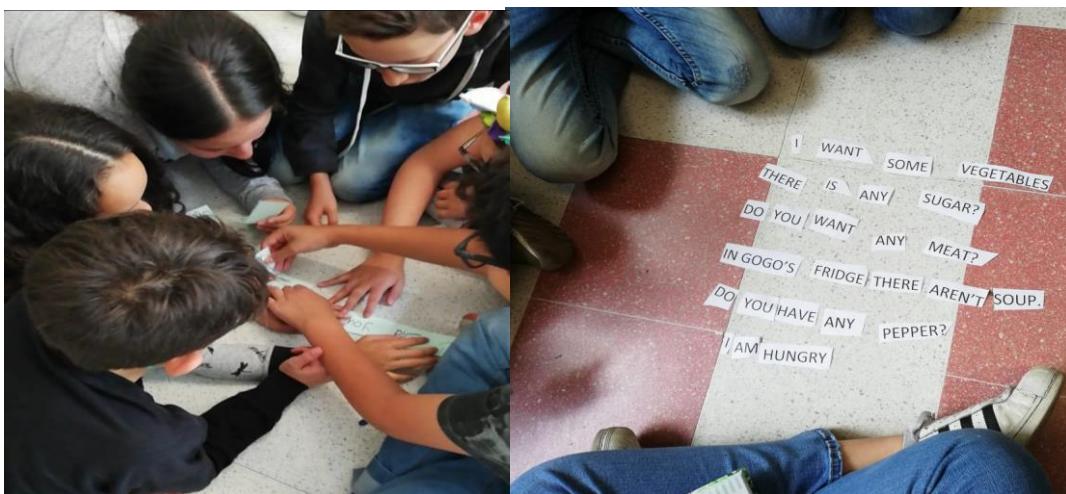
#### **5.2.3.1 Indicator 3.1 Students interact with each other working in teams in the pursuit of a common objective**

Concerning interactive language teaching, Brown (2000) mentions group work as an advantageous pedagogical practice made up of a “multiplicity of techniques in which two or more students are assigned a task that involves collaboration and self-initiated language” (p.177).

One of the most positive aspects of group work is the generation of interactive language since it provides situations in which students are face to face trying to negotiate meaning in the pursuit of a common objective. In order to bring the most out of group work, Brown (2000) recommends games as one of the most effective tasks to enhance class interaction. This particular type of activity proposes two essential components: a situation, where students adopt certain roles in relation to an initial goal, and scores or rewards, which highly motivate to work together.

Taking the above into consideration, the present research privileged the use of games as a tool for promoting interaction, especially in small groups. All of the tasks developed contained a determined number of participants (six maximum), a goal to be achieved and a set of rules that were carefully followed. The language needed for interaction was based on specific target language functions which reinforced class objectives while providing extra oral practice.

One of the activities that illustrates students' interaction in class was a game called "Many parts, one idea". The objective of the activity was to re-create the main ideas of a video they had previously seen using some small cards with isolated words. The class was divided into five groups (five students in each group) and the researcher announced a reward for the first group to finish putting words together to form meaning.



*Figure 6. Students interacting as they form phrases/ Final artifact of interaction*

During this activity it could be observed that the students were highly engaged with the process to achieve the goal. All of the team members took part voluntarily while orally agreeing, disagreeing, contrasting etc. on the right way to organize the cards. It can be firmly said that the final result of the activity was a consequence of hard group work and good peer interaction.

In conclusion, it can be said that this indicator was successfully achieved thanks to the implementation of games that involved discovery and challenge related topics. Students were so motivated that they seemed to leave aside shyness to express themselves in English and use the language to express their opinion and debate as a vital part of their team.

**5.2.3.2 Indicator 3.2: Students take part in the game playing a specific role previously assigned**

According to Martinez, Pérez & Portillo (2007), one of the most determining characteristics of a game is the setting of rules. “Rules establish the patterns and codes in which the game should be played” (p.50). Thus they shape and determine the specific roles that participants have in the games, the responsibilities they adopt and their restrictions. Once the roles of the game have been explained, the participants follow the logic of the activity adapting themselves to what they are expected to do as well as committed to do their best in order to contribute positively to their team.

Taking the above into consideration, the type of games displayed during the present research primarily aimed at establishing solid rules that developed students’ sense of responsibility towards their team and consequently better attention and performance. Game conditions were carefully designed to make all roles equally vital for the group’s functioning.

This feature produced a sort of interdependence that positively encouraged students to bring the best out of themselves.

One of the most remarkable games gathering such characteristics and applied during the present study was *Your ears, my eyes*. The activity consisted of each group creating five secret speaking rules to be used only by members, e.g. Ask in English but answer in Spanish. Once the rules were written down on a piece of paper, the team had to start off a spontaneous dialogue about a familiar topic while applying the rule. An opponent team chose and sent a spy to gather information from the talking group during one minute and a half. The spy's function was to carefully listen and observe the conversation and then go back to his team and describe in detail what he had seen and heard. The group discussed their spy's observations and made guesses about what the possible speaking rule was.

During this activity it was possible to observe different degrees of commitment in students depending on the role assigned. First of all, the talking team had to discuss which rule they wanted to apply, then they had some minutes to determine the speaking turns and roles each one would have in the conversation. The spy, on the other hand, listened to the speakers carefully and decided to take notes so that he could keep a more accurate record of the dialogue. When he got back to his team he read his notes aloud and added some oral comments trying to be as clear as possible, his teammates listened carefully and began to make guesses about the speaking rule using the information brought by their spy.



*Figure 7. Spy recording information while the team members interact*

#### **5.2.3.3 Indicator 3.3: Students use the target language structures during the development of the game.**

One of the main reasons why the present study used games as a means of language practice is the positive effect these activities had on students' attitudes towards the class. The high level of motivation achieved by games created a confidential learning environment where shyness, insecurity and other negative speaking-related aspects were left aside letting language practice flow more naturally.

Consequently, all the games designed or adapted throughout the present research were inspired by what Black & Butzkamm (as cited in Klippel, 1984) used to call message-oriented communication. This term refers to the situations in language teaching when the target language becomes the actual means of communication; students find themselves interacting with classmates to exchange messages that do not have an evident academic purpose such as creating a

dialogue to use the simple present; instead, they communicate in the pursuit of an objective of their interest.

One of the activities that best illustrates the above mentioned was the game *Opposite liars*. This game consisted of dividing the class into two big groups that sat in two lines facing each other. The objective of the game was to weaken the opposite team by stealing one of their members. Students had previously filled in a form about likes and dislikes (Annex H) where they ranked certain activities according to how much they liked to do them. When playing the game, the researcher randomly chose one of the questions from the form and said it aloud along with the name of the person who had filled the form. However, the answer given by that person was not revealed. One student from the opposite team of the mentioned player was given the chance to ask four questions avoiding the direct question *Do you like...?* and trying to find out the answer. Once questions were made the opposite player made his guess; if it was correct, he could take any player from the front team into his own team; if it was incorrect, the opposite happened.

During this activity it could be proved that restricting the secondary target structures deliberately (in this case the direct question *Do you like...?*) served an excuse to lead students into actually using the primary target language structure present simple as a means of communication. Also students' creativity to ask was noticeably more expanded in comparison to the limited combinations that could have been obtained if the expression "do you like" had been permitted.

**Question: How much do you like going on Instagram?**

Student A: Do you use the social networks? /	Student B: sometimes
Student A: How many photos you have in your cell phone? /	Student B: I have many
Student A: Do you interest famous people? /	Student B: yes, very much
Student A: Do you take selfies? /	Student B: No

*Figure 8: Extract from class transcription while playing the game Opposite liars*

The above transcription shows that student A made use of alternative phrases to obtain the target answer. The restriction of the structure *Do you like...?* resulted in a variety of other valid structures which stimulated his creativity and led him to bring the most out of his language repertoire

In conclusion, this indicator was successfully achieved as students' motivation was stimulated by the goal of the game itself making them feel more comfortable and use language as a creative tool for expressing meaning and fulfilling certain purposes.

In general terms, it is possible to say that this category was fully achieved. Based on the results, it offered an integration of the previous categories and represented a powerful tool for promoting class interaction and motivation.

## Chapter 6: Summary of results

Having integrated the theoretical sources, the data collection instruments and the researcher's voice into a rich reflection leading to a consolidated analysis of data, the results generally show a positive response from students towards the research taking into account the three main categories to analyze: development of speaking skills, implementation of a grammar of meaning and language practice through communicative games.

Concerning the analysis category *development of speaking skills*, the results show that there was a gradual improvement in students' performance not only in terms of fluency but also with regards to their emotional approach to language when talking to others. This aspect was steadily achieved through the frequent use of communicative games that empowered students' social skills and helped them leave behind shyness and fear to express themselves.

Another important remark regarding the discussed category was the habit of speaking in English that they picked up as a previously established class rule. The class became a small scenery where language was constantly updated and activated since the participants used English as the privileged means of communication. Simultaneously, students began to adopt a wide variety of pre-fabricated language chunks such as *how do you say? I think that..., it is important to... among many others* which provided them with a useful communicative tool that would be formally analyzed in later phases.

Additionally, creating imaginary situations in communicative games which encouraged them to interact with others showed great impact on their interest level towards lexical units in such a way that they deliberately searched unknown words in the dictionary or asked the researcher about their meaning.

Talking about the category *implementation of a grammar of meaning*, the results show that students' discovery skills were highly stimulated through the frequent use of inductive and deductive activities aiming at structuring language from meaning. The analysis of structures offered them a different perspective of treating and conceiving language as well as their actual role in the learning process.

In relation with the above, the results also show that privileging meaning over linguistic structures led students to describe grammar forms highlighting their function or purpose in language instead of merely relating them to their specialized equivalent terms. Postponing grammar consolidation for the last moment of the learning process provided students with a set of steps required for an appropriate grammar conceptualization such as predicting, inferring, contrasting and exemplifying; elements that are normally excluded in traditional grammar teaching-learning approaches.

Moving to the category *language practice through communicative games*, the results suggest very positive engagement on the students' part with the proposed activities. Students were assigned a specific role to develop in their team while trying to achieve a common objective. This type of game organization had positive impacts on how students related to each other and to the task itself, they were focused on playing their role as best as possible as well as using language correctly in their attempt to follow all previously given instructions in the most appropriate way.

In keeping with the discussion, the results also show how motivation (obtained from communicative games) achieved to immerse students into a communicative situation in such a way that they even seemed to forget that they were in a classroom and acted naturally trying to speak all the time in English while making their best effort to do so.

Finally, the articulation of a grammar of meaning alongside with communicative games provided strong methodological tools for developing speaking skills in the target population. The students had the chance to explore the English language through the language itself creating a continual reflection of language that progressively shaped and modified as students discovered the functioning of English from both a meaning and a form perspective.

## **Chapter 7:Conclusions**

Having stated the development of oral skills as the main concern of the present research and simultaneously proposed the implementation of a grammar of meaning and communicative games as valuable pedagogical tools to build up such language skills it can be generally concluded that students developed a different perception towards language, its structure and its actual purpose in communication. This shift in thought progressively prepared them to face language learning in a different way that permitted them privilege meaning and pragmatics over language structures without excluding their importance.

Concerning the implementation of the grammar of meaning it was possible to prove that during the first phase of this proposal called *global approach* students gathered important information that helped them predict or anticipate the learning objective they were about to face. Also, they could establish relations between the participants and the places where language took place; this fact helped them assign to language forms a contextual value that was determined by who spoke, when, where and to whom. With regards to the phase detailed approach, students' comprehension of authentic material was successful when odd elements were introduced not only to alter lexical order but also and mostly to alter meaning. It could be observed that this type of activity encouraged them to analyze and identify the semantic relation between a series of isolated units in the pursuit of putting pieces together into a whole.

Concerning *the cooperative hypothesis-making process*, it can be said that this technique promoted not only students' participation and motivation but also mistake-making which proved that learners were following patterns, deducing, generalizing and many other internal processes, in other words, they were being cognitively active.

It was also concluded that both grammar teaching approaches, that is deductive and inductive, are equally valid and effective. What should be carefully determined is the right moment to use them in the teaching process and the roles that teachers and learners should adopt within both approaches.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned, it was also concluded that exposure to meaning before formal structures had a positive impact on students' speaking performance as they analyzed the language situation before deciding what to say and how to say it. At the end of the research they referred to grammar structures saying what they used them for instead of assigning them a specialized name such as adjective or adverb without actually knowing the language function of these words.

Regarding language practice, it could be concluded that the fact of implementing English as the main means of communication during the classes represented a source of continual effort and valuable practice that always reactivated vocabulary and structures they had already worked on before. Meaningful repetition was also another important element that enhanced students' speaking skills, the students were progressively picking up fixed expressions they would later use to communicate in class.

Moving to the impact of using communicative games on the development of speaking skills, the design and application of such resources allow concluding that students' motivation was highly stimulated by games involving discovery and roles implying a certain degree of leadership. Thus, they tried hard to speak correctly paying special attention to grammar accuracy and pronunciation. It could also be proved that adopting roles in a game engaged students emotionally in such a way that they were highly committed to achieve the set goal. This resulted

in a constant concern for mastering the target language forms and keeping good interaction with the team members.

## **Chapter 8: General recommendations**

Conducting research within the context of language learning is undoubtedly a complex process that is not only characterized by the multiplicity of pedagogical principles and theory available but also and above all by the specific and individual features of learners who paradoxically represent a whole.

Consequently, trying to fix one's pedagogical actions to a determined methodology might be useless at times and even disappointing in the long run. Therefore, it is important that language teacher-researchers adopt an eclectic vision of language teaching that permits them explore the contrastive nature of it as well as the diversified existing processes to deal with it. Adopting this position will bring back old language debates such as the role of memorization, repetition and drills as well as the most controversial of them all: grammar teaching.

Grammar should start being considered a skill that transports meaning through its structure system instead of a passive static combination of rules. To do so it is important to start by changing the vision of language that still exists today and change it to language as a tool for communicating, for taking action in the world.

In accordance with this, teachers, institutions and researchers should start analyzing English learning methods to determine their pertinence in terms of content, methodology, frequency of use and many other essential aspects. It is urgent to adopt a critical view on who actually is leading our country's language learning and take up responsibility for continuously evaluate any situations that might come up.

Another important recommendation to strengthen and promoting language learning in a context of learning is the use and preparation of authentic material as a valuable teaching tool that

situates learners in a real language situation with participants whose relation is natural and fluent. In doing so there would not be total rejection of constructed material for learners but a reflection on the teaching-learning stage where both kinds of materials should be introduced alongside with their implications.

Concerning grammar of meaning, it is important to continue doing research on the complex cognitive processes that such an issue requires from students. The active role of students in discovering and building up grammar rules should be a must in the consolidation of language structure. Hypothesis making, discussing and brainstorming not only empower language learning but also promote autonomy and metacognition.

Last but not least, language institutions should constantly be monitoring the maximum number of students assigned to a single teacher. Although group working is valuable since interaction takes places, an over-numbered class might be likely to affect negatively everyone's participation and teacher's ability to monitor all the students. Another important aspect to take into account, especially at the Language Center, is the time students are exposed to the target language. Within their pedagogical and methodological alignments, there is a proposal of self-work that is supposed to cover only 5% of a term's score; taking this into account, it is important to implement a solid monthly self-work routine that ensures students' activation of the contents they see in class.

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## List of annexes

### Annex A: Survey



UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA  
NACIONAL

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL

LIC. EN ESPAÑOL Y LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

CUESTIONARIO

POR: Janet Amaya Pisco

¡Hola! En esta hoja encontrarás una serie de preguntas que me llevarán a conocerte mejor. Lee atentamente las instrucciones para cada pregunta y responde de acuerdo a tu experiencia personal. Muchas gracias por tu colaboración. ¡Empecemos!

1. ¿Cómo te llamas? \_\_\_\_\_



2. ¿Eres niño o niña? \_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Cuántos años tienes? \_\_\_\_\_

4. ¿En dónde vives? \_\_\_\_\_

5. De las siguientes actividades, marca con una X cuál(es) te gustan. Luego, en frente de cada escribe tu ejemplo favorito.

ver programas de televisión ¿Cuál? \_\_\_\_\_

Jugar video juegos      ¿Cuál? \_\_\_\_\_

Leer libros      ¿Cuál? \_\_\_\_\_

Escuchar música      ¿Cuál? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_      ¿Cuál? \_\_\_\_\_

6. ¿Con quién vives? \_\_\_\_\_

7. ¿En qué colegio estudias? \_\_\_\_\_

8. ¿Te gusta tu colegio? Sí  NO

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

9. ¿Cuál(es) es/son tu(s) materia(s)  
favorita(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

10. ¿Te gusta hacer tareas? SI \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

11. ¿Alguien te ayuda a hacer tareas en tu casa? SI \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

¿Quién? \_\_\_\_\_

12. ¿Qué recursos tienes para estudiar en tu casa? \_\_\_\_\_

13. ¿Te gusta estudiar inglés en el centro de lenguas? SI \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

14. ¿Te gusta trabajar en grupo durante la clase? SI \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

¿Por qué? \_\_\_\_\_

15. ¿Qué actividades te gusta hacer en la clase de inglés?  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. De la siguiente lista de actividades ¿Cuál(es) te parece(n) más difícil(es)?  
 leer en inglés       escribir en inglés  
 escuchar conversaciones en inglés       Hablar en inglés

17. ¿Qué actividades te gustaría que se hicieran en la clase de inglés?  
\_\_\_\_\_

¡Terminaste!  
¡Muchas gracias!

The survey was a useful data collection instrument implemented on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 whose main purpose was to gather information about the most remarkable cognitive, social, affective, cultural and linguistic features of the present study's population. It was applied only once during the contextualization phase of the research.

## Annex B

### Field note # 2

	<b>FIELD NOTE #2</b>  School: Centro de lenguas UPN	<b>Grade:</b> Children Intermediate II	<b>Date:</b> August the 19th 2017
	Room Teacher: César Moreno	Practitioner: Janet Amaya	
	<b>Number of Students:</b> 20	<b>Number of Students with special needs:</b> 0	
	<b>OBSERVATION:</b>	<b>INTERPRETATION:</b>	
	Class begins at half past 10 (10.10am) as it took approximately 10 minutes to wait until the class was complete.	This seems to be a usual situation given the fact that the students are in a 30-minute recess before the class re starts at 10.00am.	
	Students are organized in lines. It can be observed that they choose different places to the ones they did the last class. Yet they maintain sort of "small groups" made up of the same students each class.	Looks like it is students who choose where to sit and the teacher makes no points on this fact even if they speak to each other while he is explaining or other students are participating	
	Teacher asks them to open their books on page 27 and listen as the read. Without being asked to, students begin to sing out loud, move their heads and hands while they sing.	Students enjoy singing in English, especially when the song poses a challenge in terms of pace, they seem to put in effort to sing along correctly.	
	Teacher asks students to identify the comparatives in the song. Students on the front row raise their hand as they start giving their answers "bigger" "smaller" "slimmer". Teacher chooses two students at the back and invites them to speak, they speak though very low.	Teacher encourages participation in class even from those who seem to be very shy to speak.	
	Teacher asks students to turn to the next page (28) and do the gap-filling exercises which consists of writing a comparative that suits best in a group of 10 sentences. Students work individually as teacher monitors them.	The class seems to be book-centered. Yet, students work quietly and seem to like the activities in their book.	
	Teacher corrects the previous activity by asking 5 students on the front row and copies their answers on the board as he corrects spelling mistakes such as " <u>tinver</u> ". He asks the students to copy in their notebooks what he writes on the board.	There doesn't seem to be a collaborative evaluation process. It is teacher who says if something is wrong or right. He doesn't ask for students' hypotheses on their own answers.	
	Teacher asks students to turn to page 29 and do a pair – work activity which consists of completing a comparison questionnaire whose answers are found on the other's book. Students ask each other questions and give each other answers while writing them down in their books.	Students like activities involving discoveries. Their attention is automatically grabbed when the words "guess" "discover" are mentioned to them.	

Field notes were the privileged data collection instrument that permitted recording information in both an objective and subjective way. Its design facilitated the distinction between the observation stage and the researcher's further interpretations allowing the study to be more trustworthy.

## Annex C

### Diagnosis test



UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA  
NACIONAL  
*Educando para educar*

**LANGUAGE CENTER**  
**LEVEL: BASIC 2**  
**FIRST EXAM**  
**TOTAL SCORE: 50 POINTS**  
**KIDS 10-12**  
**FORM C**

**DO NOT WRITE ON THIS BOOKLET. USE THE ANSWER SHEET**

#### **READING**

Read the texts and match the sentences (0–7) to the jobs (A–D). (1,25 each)

**A**

Part-time jobs on London River Boat!

We need four young people to work in our boat restaurants on Saturdays and Sundays, seven hours per day. We pay £7.50 per hour.

**B**

Are you fifteen years old or more? We need a babysitter on Wednesday and Friday evenings, from 6.00 to 9.00 p.m. for two children, three and five years old. We pay £21 per evening.

**C**

Do you want to be a plumber? I need a young person for seven hours per day to help me in the summer holidays. I pay £5.00 per hour.

**D**

Do you like films? Are you 16–18 years old? We need part-time cleaners for our film studio. Every evening (Monday–Saturday) from 6.00 to 8.00 p.m. We pay £8.00 per hour.

**E**

Do you like music? We need young people to work in our ticket office five hours per day on Saturdays and Sundays. Hours are from 11.00 to 16.00. We pay £6.50 per hour.

- 0 This job is for ten hours per week. E.
- 1 These jobs are at the weekends only. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 This job is for two evenings per week. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 This job is good for you if you like music. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 This job is for six hours per week. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 This job needs four people. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 This job is for a short time only. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 This job is for six evenings per week. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 You can't do this job if you are nineteen years old. \_\_\_\_\_

#### **GRAMMAR**

**A. Complete the conversation with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.**

**A:** What time <sup>0</sup> does the bus leave ? (the bus/leave)?

**B:** It <sup>1</sup> ..... (leave) at 9.30.

**A:** <sup>2</sup> ..... (it/arrive) at the bus station before ten?

**B:** Yes, <sup>3</sup> .....

**A:** When <sup>4</sup> ..... (the city tour/ start)?

**B:** It <sup>5</sup> ..... (start) at 10.15 from the bus station.

**A:** How often <sup>6</sup> ..... (tours/leave)?

**B:** Every thirty minutes.

**A:** <sup>7</sup> ..... (they/go) to the same places?

**B:** No, <sup>8</sup> ..... Some tours <sup>9</sup> ..... (go) to the south part of the city and others to the

**B. Put the words in the correct order.**

- 0 goes / she / week / a / once / jogging  
**.She goes jogging once a week.....**
- 1 has / always / one o'clock / lunch / he / at
  - 2 day / friend / emails / I / my / every / write / to
  - 3 a / has / month / party / once / Jo / a
  - 4 watch / do / how / TV / often / you
  - 5 play / week / tennis / twice / they / a

**C. Rewrite the sentences with the words in brackets in the correct place.**

- 0 **They have breakfast at seven o'clock. (always)**  
**.....They always have breakfast at seven o'clock.**

- 1 Nancy has a party. (twice a year)
- 2 They get up late. (never)
- 3 The bus arrives late. (sometimes)
- 4 We go to concerts. (hardly ever)
- 5 I ride my bike to school. (usually)

**D. Complete the sentences with verbs from the box.**

brush • chat • do • get • go • have • listen • play • surf • wake • watch

- 0 I ..... **brush** ..... my teeth in the morning.
- 1 I ..... home from school at two o'clock.
- 2 We ..... lunch at school.
- 3 How often do you ..... computer games?
- 4 When do you ..... to bed?
- 5 I ..... my homework after school.
- 6 We never ..... up after nine.
- 7 They ..... TV in the evenings.
- 8 Do you ..... to music in your room?
- 9 I often ..... to my friends online.
- 10 Do you ..... the net every day?

## **LISTENING**

**Listen to two different tracks and complete the exercises.**

**A. Listen and choose the correct options.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 0 How often does the girl babysit her little sister? | 3 The girl thinks Johnny Depp is ..... |
| a) every day   | a) awful.                              |
| b) once a week                                       | b) brilliant.                          |
| c) three times a week                                | c) old.                                |
| 1 How much are the red flowers?                      | 4 When does the first boat tour leave? |
| a) £4.30   | a) 9.30                                |
| b) £13.20  | b) 9.45                                |
| c) £2.30   | c) 10.00                               |
| 2 Where does Frank come from?                        | 5 How often does the boy go swimming?  |
| a) Wales   | a) never                               |
| b) France  | b) every morning                       |
| c) Brazil  | c) three times a week                  |

**B. Listen and answer true (T) or false (F).**

- 0 Mark works in a food shop. .... **F**
- 6 He is a shop assistant. ....
- 7 He thinks the office job is boring. ....
- 8 He doesn't meet many people in his job. ....
- 9 He doesn't like his job. ....
- 10 He gets £6.00 per hour. ....





**LANGUAGE CENTER  
LEVEL: BASIC 2  
WRITING SECTION  
TOTAL SCORE: 10 POINTS  
KIDS 10-12  
FORM C**

**Write about your parents' daily routine. Include fixed times and adverbs of frequency.**

The diagnosis exam was a data collection instrument designed by the UPN language center and used by the researcher to assess students' language abilities before the pedagogical intervention stage. This instrument provided further objective insights into students' performance in English and also contributed to identify problems related to language learning.

## Annex D

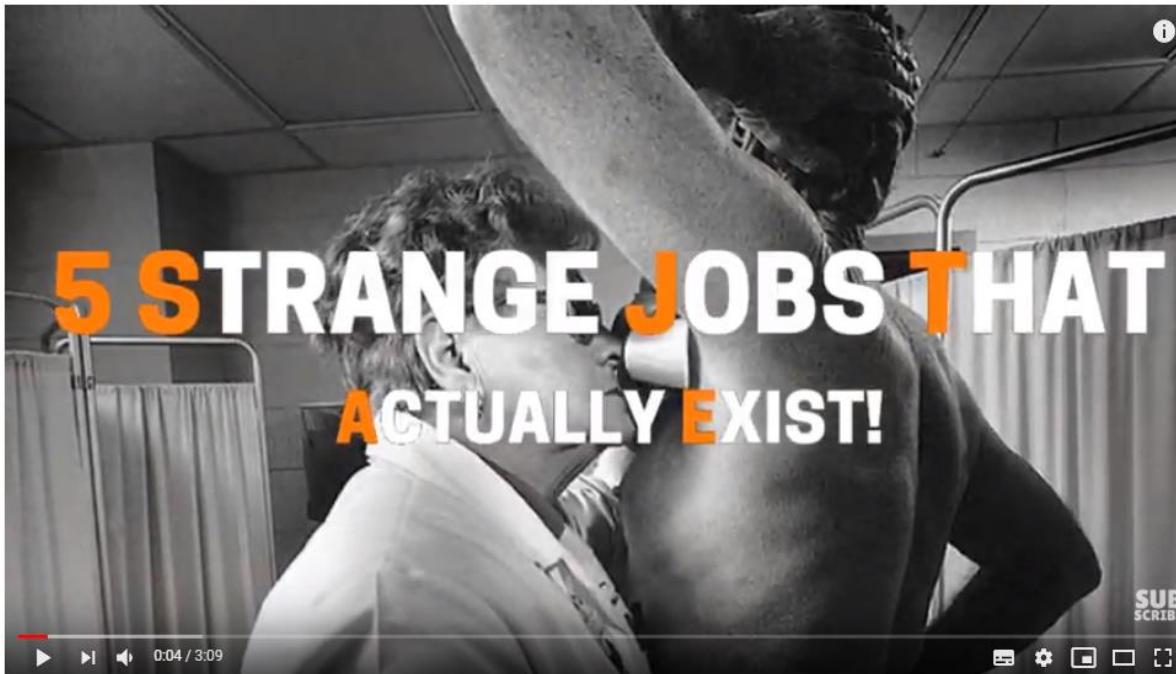
### **Lesson plan showing the *Global approach* stage**

LESSON PLAN - MARCH 23rd 2019 UNIT 1a I LOVE THIS JOB				
<b>Head Teacher:</b> Janet Amaya				
<b>Participants:</b> Intermediate I students - Language Center				
<b>Lesson objectives:</b> <b>Communicative objective:</b> To talk about one's occupation, routine <b>Linguistic objectives:</b> To correctly use the simple present. Vocabulary: Jobs, every day verbs				
Stage	Time	Aim	Procedure(s)	Interaction
Warm-up (Activity: let's find him/her)	15'	To check students prior knowledge and create expectations about what is going to be learnt.	students think of a particular job and then say it aloud, the student next to him / her immediately mentions two actions normally done by this kind of worker and says another job.	T&SS
Vocabulary and pronunciation check	15'	To present key words before authentic material is played ensuring further comprehension and correct pronunciation.	vocabulary dice roller: each side of a dice will determine the way students will be explained to key vocabulary. Definition, hungman, example, mime the action, pictionary	t&SS&SS
Global approach to key material (Unusual jobs: video)	15'	To situate students in a familiar situation where they can identify the context and the participants	Video is played while students are required to simply watch it focusing on people, places, objects and their relation. After the video is over teacher gathers students ideas and writes them on the board. A brief discussion starts off.	T&SS
Detailed approach to key material - First part	15'	To check students' understanding of key material,	Students are asked to organize a mind map that summarizes the video and highlights the target language to study. Once they have done so key phrases will be glued on the board for students to use them as a prompt	T&SS
Detailed approach to key material- Jeopardy	30'	To create a cooperative hypothesis-making process which enables ss to discover the linguistic tools they need to express real facts	The class is divided into 5 groups. A jeopardy board is displayed on the room's wall. The cards' front side will contain a prize that gets bigger as it approaches to the end. The cards' back side will contain incorrect or correct sentence. Each group decides which card to choose and discusses the corresponding sentence. If the team explains their choice correctly, gets the award that they chose. Teacher might write any useful explanations coming out in order to register grammar rules	T&SS/SS&SS

The lesson plan was a class tool whose main aim was to provide prior structuration and planning of the lessons. The pedagogical intervention proposed a series of class stages that were carefully delimited and described in each lesson plan highlighting their procedures and interaction-relations that they boosted.

## Annex E

### Video 5 strange jobs that actually exist



To watch full video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cgwu41LcYA4>

Videos were the main media resource to introduce new topics throughout the research.

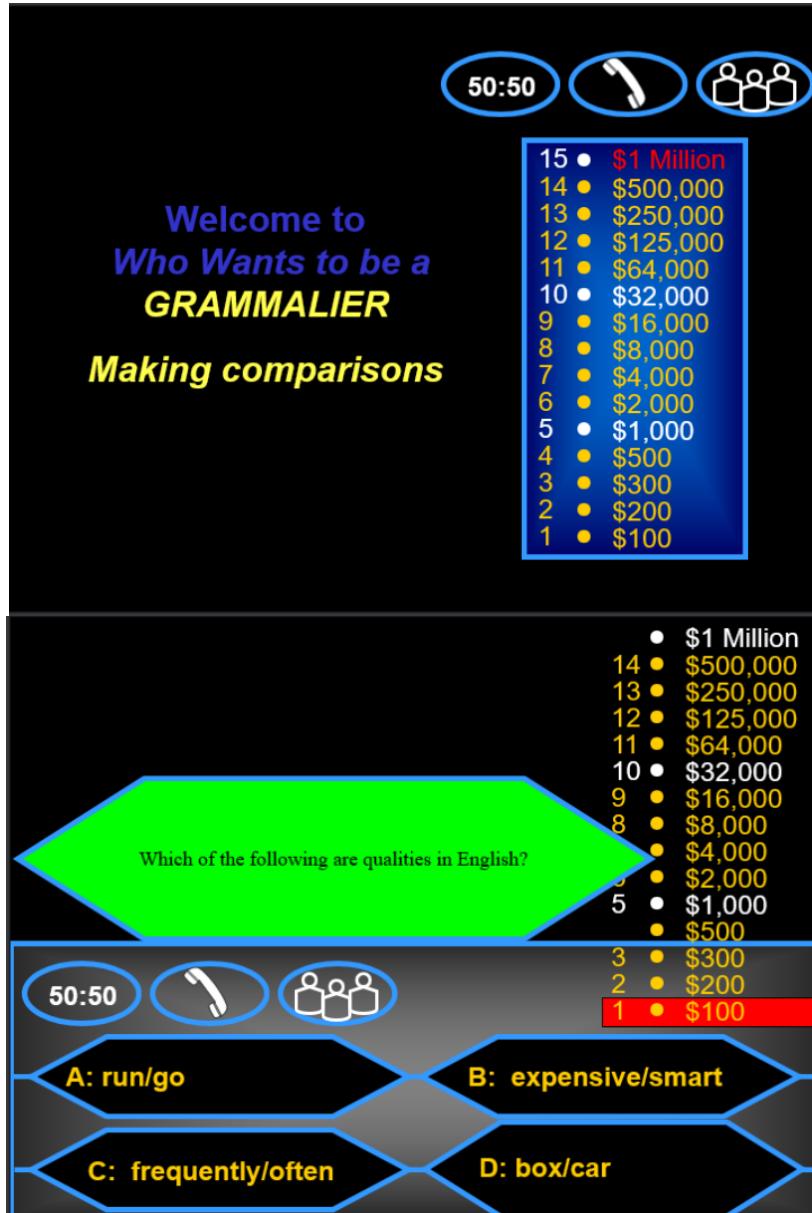
They were highly motivational and attractive for children. The researcher's strategy was to find unusual videos that illustrated familiar everyday issues. The above video, for example, offered a different interesting perspective of jobs.

## Annex F

LESSON PLAN - 8th September 2018 UNIT 7a What are you doing? Head Teacher: Janet Amaya Participants: Basic II students - Language Center Lesson objectives: <b>Communicative objective:</b> To talk /ask and answer questions about actions that are happening at the moment of speaking/ to e <b>Linguistic objectives:</b> To correctly use the present continuous tense				
Stage	Time	Aim	Procedure(s)	Interaction
Introductory activity Controlled practice (Contrasting information) Speaking activity- ↗	15'	To check homework and have students share their experiences while doing it as well as discuss their answers with a classmate ↗	Students pair up and discuss with a classmate the differences or similarities they find in their homework, then they choose the most relevant comments and share it with the class ↗	T& SS / SS&SS
Exam feedback	60'	To give students complete feedback of their first exam / To clarify important concepts or topics on which students didn't perform as expected		<<
Warm-up (new topic)	20'	To create expectations in the class about what is going to be learnt / To check prior knowledge	Students are invited to go on a short tour around university. They are given some strips of paper where they will write the actions they observe are happening while they wander several sceneries such as the corridors, the courts, the library etc. Once they are back in the classroom there will be a short discussion about their observations.	T&SS
Global approach to key material (Book Recording: Right Now)	6'	To situate students in a real life situation where they can identify the context and the participants	Students listen the recording for the first time. They are previously asked to just listen without taking notes or focusing on particular information. After doing so, teacher asks them questions about the people, the places, the objects and their possible relation to one another. As they brainstorm, teacher writes their ideas on the board. They may also mention some words they consider key to understand the recording	T&SS
Detailed approach to key material	30	To create a cooperative hypothesis-making process which enables ss to discover the linguistic tools they need to describe events happening at the moment of speaking	Students are invited to carefully listen to the recording again. This time, they have to take as many notes as possible to subsequently, in five groups, organize a set of cards containing the pictures of the situation mixed up with odd pictures .After a brief discussion, each group will receive three envelopes with a specific colored piece of paper in each.(one containing positive sentences from the recording, another containing negative sentences from the recording and another containing questions) The students will be given some time to analyse, contrast and discuss with their group why the sentences on the papers are classified in that way. How are the sentences organized? Do we express the same idea with the sentences on all the papers? After a short brainstorming the members of each team will get a label with a verb pasted on their forehead. One member of each team will visit the other teams asking "What are you doing?". As the members of the asked team cannot see their label on the forehead, the students who ask has to mime to action to lead them to the answer. Once they have answered (we are watching tv) they will get a piece of a scenery. Once the five pieces are gathered, students organize them. They will discover the scenery of a park with many people doing different things. The whole class explain what is happening in that place. t	

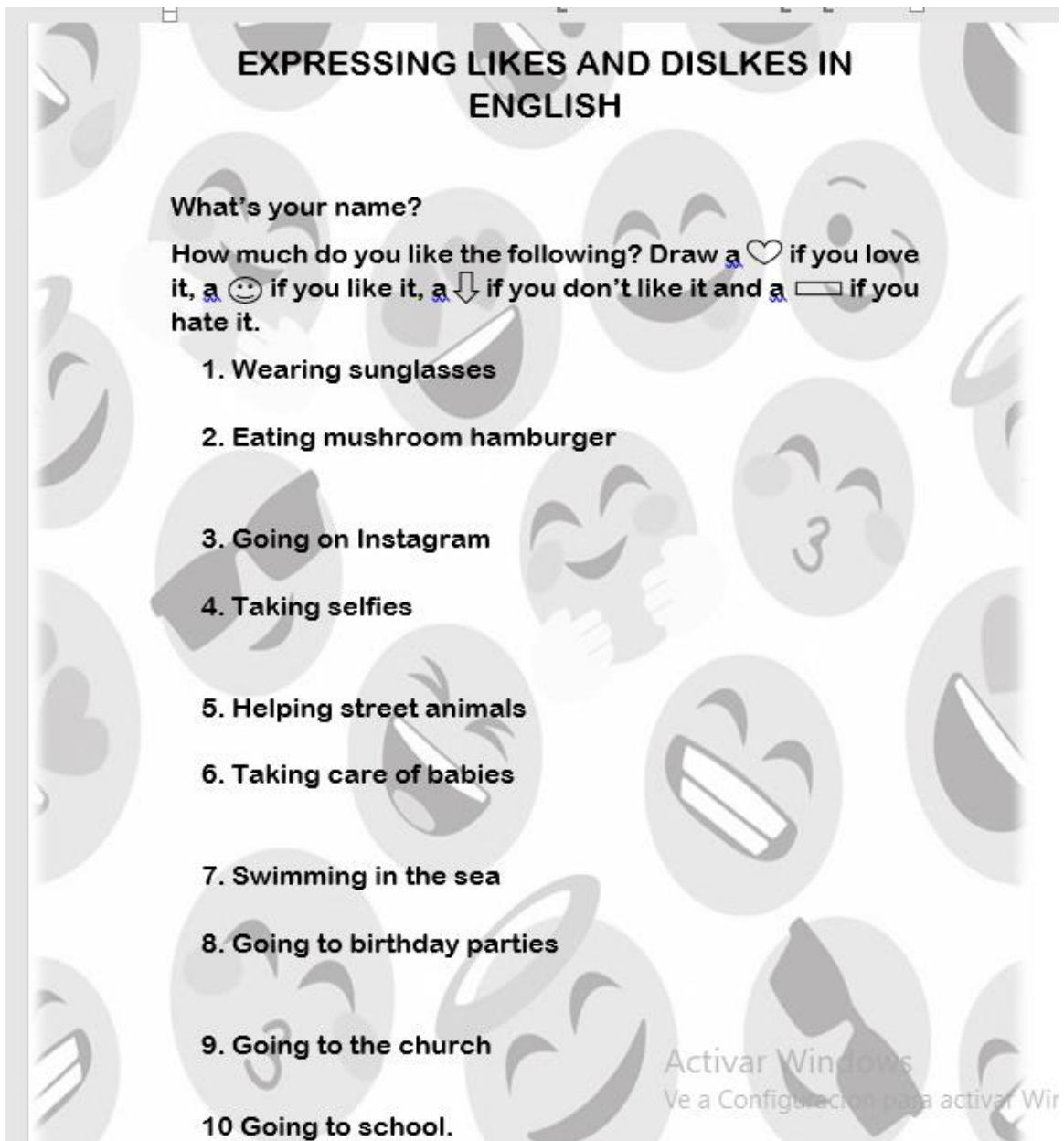
## Annex G

### Extracts from communicative game: Who wants to be a grammelier



Communicative games were the main pedagogical tool for encouraging and stimulating speaking skills. Thanks to continual communication with students, the researcher was able to adapt some traditional games for the class and get students more engaged and motivated.

## Annex H



**EXPRESSING LIKES AND DISLIKES IN ENGLISH**

What's your name?

How much do you like the following? Draw a  if you love it, a  if you like it, a  if you don't like it and a  if you hate it.

1. Wearing sunglasses
2. Eating mushroom hamburger
3. Going on Instagram
4. Taking selfies
5. Helping street animals
6. Taking care of babies
7. Swimming in the sea
8. Going to birthday parties
9. Going to the church
10. Going to school.

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## Annex I

 UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL	<b>FORMATO</b> <b>AUTORIZACIÓN TRATAMIENTO DE DATOS PERSONALES Y DE MENORES DE EDAD</b> <small>Resolución 767 de 18 de junio 2018</small>		
FOR009GSI	Fecha de Aprobación: 18-06-2018	Versión: 01	Página 1 de 2

### AUTORIZACIÓN TRATAMIENTO DE DATOS PERSONALES

Ciudad y fecha \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ identificado con C.C.  C.E.  No. \_\_\_\_\_ expedida en \_\_\_\_\_, declaro que he sido informado por LA UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL (en adelante la UPN), identificada con NIT. 899.999.124-4, con domicilio en la ciudad de Bogotá y sede principal en la calle 72 No. 11 – 86 de Bogotá, que, de conformidad con los procedimientos establecidos en la Ley 1581 de 2012, Decreto Reglamentario 1377 de 2013 y el *Manual de política interna y procedimientos para el tratamiento y protección de datos personales de la Universidad* disponible en la página web [www.pedagogica.edu.co](http://www.pedagogica.edu.co), actuará como Responsable del tratamiento de mis datos personales<sup>1</sup>, necesarios para el cumplimiento de la misión de la UPN, obtenidos a través de canales y dependencias institucionales y que podrá recolectar, almacenar, usar, actualizar, transmitir, transferir y poner en circulación o suprimirlos, mediante el uso de las medidas necesarias para otorgar seguridad a los registros, evitando su adulteración, pérdida, consulta, uso o acceso no autorizado o fraudulento incluso por terceros.

Que tratándose de datos sensibles<sup>2</sup> y de menores de edad no está obligado a autorizar su tratamiento, salvo las excepciones consagradas en la ley o que medie su consentimiento expreso. Que es de carácter facultativo responder a las preguntas que traten de datos sensibles o menores de edad.

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Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, autorizo de manera voluntaria, previa, explícita, informada e inequívoca a la UPN para tratar mis datos personales de acuerdo con el *Manual de política interna y procedimientos para el tratamiento y protección de datos personales de la Universidad* y para los fines relacionados con su Misión.

Leido lo anterior, manifiesto que la información para el Tratamiento de mis datos personales la he suministrado de forma voluntaria y es veraz, completa, exacta, actualizada, comprobable y comprensible.

#### FIRMA

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Identificación: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> La UPN garantiza la confidencialidad, libertad, seguridad, veracidad, transparencia, acceso y circulación restringida de mis datos y se reserva el derecho de modificar su Política de Tratamiento de datos personales en cualquier momento. Cualquier cambio será informado y publicado oportunamente en la página web.

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Annex J  
**VOCABULARY ACTIVATION WORKSHOP**

Universidad Pedagógica Nacional

Centro de Lenguas

Intermediate I

Vocabulary- Activation Workshop

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Do the following activities taking into account the vocabulary related to jobs seen during the last class.

1. Add three actions to each one of the following jobs

Example:  
Doctor → Heal people  
→ Work in shifts  
→ Study a lot

Teacher

Vet

Hairdresser

Journalist

Secretary

2. What's your dream job? Imagine you are a \_\_\_\_\_ (Write your dream job). Make a small poster explaining what you do in your job and why you like it so much.