

IMPROVING THE COMMUNICATIVE GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE THROUGH
GAMES BASED ON FLASHCARDS

MAURICIO GÓMEZ ARÉVALO

THESIS DIRECTOR
NELSON MELLIZO

STUDY SUBMITTED AS A REQUIREMENT FOR OBTAINING THE TITLE OF
“LICENCIADO EN EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA CON ENFASIS EN HUMANIDADES: ESPAÑOL
E INGLÉS”

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL
FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES
PROGRAMA: LICENCIATURA EN EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA CON ÉNFASIS EN ESPAÑOL E
INGLÉS
BOGOTÁ D.C

2017

1

NOTE OF ACCEPTANCE

Signature

Signature

Signature

Bogotá D.C., November 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to pay special thankfulness, warmth and appreciation to the persons who made my research successful and assisted me at every point to cherish my goal:

In the first place, I would like to take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude and deep regard to my thesis advisor Nelson Mellizo, for his guidance, significant feedback and encouragement throughout the duration of the project. His assistance and valuable suggestions were of significant help throughout my project work. Working under his direction was an enriching experience.

I would also like to give my whole-heartedly gratitude to my Mom and Dad, family members, friends, specially Valeska Bretón, and colleagues; they not only assisted me financially but also extended their support morally and emotionally. Their encouragement made it possible to achieve the goal.

Thanks to Universidad Pedagógica Nacional and everything it represents and involves. Thanks for giving me the opportunity of becoming a teacher. Undoubtedly, all the experiences lived throughout this university process enriched me as a human being.

For your help, support and incommensurable patience thanks to all of you from the bottom of my heart.

 UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL <small>Escuela de Pedagogía</small>	FORMATO	
	RESUMEN ANALÍTICO EN EDUCACIÓN - RAE	
Código: FOR020GIB	Versión: 01	
Fecha de Aprobación: 10-10-2012	Página 1 de 4	

1. Información General	
Tipo de documento	Trabajo de grado.
Acceso al documento	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Biblioteca Central.
Título del documento	Improving the communicative grammatical competence through games base on flashcards. (Mejora de la competencia comunicativa gramatical a través de juegos basados en flashcards).
Autor(es)	Gómez Arévalo, Mauricio.
Director	Mellizo, Nelson.
Publicación	Bogotá. Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. 2017. 94p.
Unidad Patrocinante	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.
Palabras Claves	COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE, GRAMMATICAL COMPETENCE, GAMES, FLASHCARDS.

2. Descripción
<p>Trabajo de grado llevado a cabo en el Centro de Lenguas de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, con un grupo de estudiantes de entre diez a doce años de edad. El objetivo principal del estudio era determinar el impacto que tiene la implementación de diferentes juegos comunicativos basados en flashcards en la competencia comunicativa gramatical de los estudiantes que participaron en el proyecto. A través de la implementación de juegos comunicativos basados en flashcards se abordan aspectos gramaticales específicos, que les permiten a los estudiantes fortalecer su competencia gramatical al abordarla mediante actividades comunicativas y significativas.</p>

3. Fuentes
<p>Avedon, E.M. (1971). The structural elements of games. In Avedon, E.M and Sutton Smith, B. (Eds) <i>The study of games</i> (pp 419-426). New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.</p> <p>Baleghizadeh, S. & Ashoori, A. (2011). The Impact of Two Instructional Techniques on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge: Flashcards versus Word Lists. <i>MEXTESOL Journal</i>. pp.</p>

35(2), 70-82.

- Bekiri, R. (August, 2003). Playing with questions-A game for young learners. *The Internet TESL Journal*. Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Bekiri-QuestionGame/>
- Beltran, P. (2015). Vocabulary Learning Through Pictures. (Under-graduate thesis) Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Bogotá
- Brown, H., Malmkjaer, P. & Williams, T. (2002). *Teaching by Principles: Interactive Language Teaching Methodology*. New York: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: a guide for Practitioners*. New York: Routledge.
- Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*. pp. 1-47.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (1980). *Research methods in education*. Routledge.
- Cross, D. (2000). *A practical handbook of language teaching*. Harlow: Longman.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Díaz-Rico, L. T. & Weed, K. Z. (2010). *The crosscultural, language, and academic development handbook: A complete K-12 reference guide* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Ehri, L. C., & Roberts, K. T. (1979). Do beginners learn printed words better in context or in isolation? *Child Development*, 50(3), 675-685.
- Elgort, I. (2011). Deliberate learning and vocabulary acquisition in a second language. *Language Learning*, (61), 367-413.
- Elgort, I., & Nation, P. (2010). Vocabulary learning in a second language: Familiar answers to new questions. In P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh, & C. Jenks (Eds.), *Conceptualizing Learning in Applied Linguistics* (pp. 89-104). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Elliot, J. (1993). *Action Research for Educational Change*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Ellis, R., & Fotos, S. (1999). *Learning a second language through interaction*. Amsterdam, NL: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Gunn, C., & McCallum, A. (2005). Climbing grammar mountain: An interactive learning experience. *English Teaching Forum*, (43), 38-41.
- Hussein, A. (2009). The use of triangulation in social sciences research: Can qualitative and quantitative methods be combined? *Journal of Comparative Social Work*, 4(1), 1-26.
- Hulstijn, J. H. (2003). Incidental and intentional learning. In C. J. Doughty, & M. H. Long (Eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 349-381). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

- Hymes D.H. (1972). On communicative competence. In Gumperz J.J. & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics*. Holt: Rinehart & Winston.
- Komachali, M. E., & Khodareza, M. (2012). The effect of using vocabulary flash card on Iranian pre-university students' vocabulary knowledge. *International Education Studies*, 5(3). 134-147. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n3p134>
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2001). Teaching grammar. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 251-266). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Leech, G. & Svartvik J. (2013). *A communicative grammar of English*. Great Britain: Routledge.
- Lyster, R. (1996). Question forms, conditionals, and second-person pronouns used by adolescent native speakers across two levels of formality in written and spoken French. *The Modern Language Journal* (80), 165-182.
- McCallum, G. P. (1980). *101 word games: For students of English as a second or foreign language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCarthy, M., 1990. *Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCullough, C. (1955). Flash cards-The opiate of the reading program? *Elementary English* (32), 379-381.
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Introduction to qualitative research. Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Nagy, W. E., Herman P. A., & Anderson, R. C. (1988). Learning words from context. *Reading Research Quarterly* (23), 122-134.
- Nation, P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2011). Research into practice: Vocabulary. *Language Teaching*, 44(4), 529–539.
- O'Donoghue, T. & Punch K. (2003). *Qualitative Educational Research in Action: Doing and Reflecting*. London: Routledge.
- Pham, V.P.H. & Binh, N. T. (2014). The effects of communicative grammar teaching on students' achievement of grammatical knowledge and oral production. *English Language Teaching*, 7(6), 15-20.
- Nguyen-Giao, Q. & Nguyen-Hoa, T. N. (2014). Applying Communicative Methods to Teaching Grammar: An Experiment. *Teacher's Edition*, (pp. 16-25).
- Richards, J. C. (2016). *Teaching listening and speaking*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Rixon, S., Flavell, R. H. & Vincent, M. (1991). *How to use games in language teaching*. Hong Kong: Modern English.

Sagor, R. (2005). *Guiding school improvement with action research*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Slavin, R. E. (1980). Cooperative learning. *Review of Educational Research* (50), 315- 342.

Vernon, S. (February, 2006). Teaching grammar with fun learning games. Retrieved from <http://www.simplyesl.com/articles/97/1/Teaching-Grammar-with-Fun-Learning-Games/Page1.html>.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wesche, M. & Paribakht, T. S. (1996). Assessing second language vocabulary knowledge: Depth versus breadth. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (53), 13–40.

Wright, Andrew. (2011, May 23). Grammar Practice: Mechanical and Communicative. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://andrewarticlesandstories.wordpress.com/articles/grammar-practice-mechanical-and-communicative/>

4. Contenidos

Este documento cuenta con siete capítulos relacionados a continuación:

Capítulo 1 Contexto

En este capítulo se describen las características de la población donde se realizó la intervención, asimismo se describe el problema y la justificación del mismo. Finalmente se presentan tanto la pregunta como los objetivos de investigación.

Capítulo 2 Marco teórico

En primera instancia, este capítulo relaciona algunos estudios realizados previamente que proporcionan información relevante en la construcción teórica de la monografía. Posteriormente se expone la teoría fundamental en la cual se apoyó la investigación, abordando los constructos primordiales de la misma.

Capítulo 3 Diseño de la Investigación

En este capítulo se describe el tipo de investigación que se llevó a cabo junto con los diferentes instrumentos de recolección de datos. También se da cuenta de las categorías e indicadores de análisis.

Capítulo 4 Diseño Instruccional

En este capítulo se expone la propuesta de intervención pedagógica junto con las diferentes fases que se llevaron a cabo durante la implementación del proyecto.

Capítulo 5 Análisis de Datos

En este capítulo se hace el análisis de la información obtenida a través de los procesos llevados a cabo a lo largo de la implementación. Dicho análisis se realiza contrastando la

teoría previamente abordada con las evidencias obtenidas a partir de los diferentes instrumentos de recolección de datos, para cada indicador establecido.

Capítulo 6 Resumen de resultados

Se relacionan los logros y resultados del proceso efectuado en el análisis de datos teniendo en cuenta cada una de las categorías de análisis.

Capítulo 7 Conclusiones

En este capítulo se plantean las conclusiones que se generan a partir del análisis de los datos, en función de los objetivos específicos planteados en el proyecto. De igual manera, se hace un balance del aprendizaje efectuado en términos de la disciplina, la intervención pedagógica y la experiencia investigativa.

Capítulo 8 Sugerencias Generales

Se presenta un conjunto de sugerencias en términos pedagógicos, investigativos y disciplinares teniendo en cuenta el grupo observado, la institución educativa y la universidad.

5. Metodología

EL método investigativo usado en el desarrollo de este proyecto fue el cualitativo, y el tipo de estudio que se implementó fue el de acción investigativa. Esto, debido a que la investigación acción cualitativa busca identificar un problemática en un contexto dado para ofrecer posible soluciones, creando conocimiento y proponiendo cambios que en últimas propenden por una mejora continua de la práctica docente.

De esta manera, en primera medida se llevó a cabo un proceso de observación con el fin de identificar una problemática relacionada con los procesos de aprendizaje por parte de los estudiantes. Así, se diagnosticó cómo los estudiantes presentaban falencias relacionadas con su nivel de vocabulario y un uso inadecuado de los diferentes aspectos gramaticales de la lengua inglesa.

Con el fin de intervenir dicha problemática se diseñó una propuesta pedagógica compuesta por siete unidades, que les permitieran a los estudiantes acercarse a los diferentes aspectos gramaticales de la lengua de una manera significativa a través de la implementación de diversos juegos comunicativos basados en flashcards. Cada unidad experimentaba un proceso de tres fases en el que en primera medida los estudiantes se familiarizaban con el vocabulario de cada unidad, para posteriormente hacer uso del mismo abordando diferentes estructuras gramaticales a través de los juegos y actividades comunicativas planteadas, para finalmente presentar una evaluación en el que evidenciaban la asimilación tanto del vocabulario como de los diferentes aspectos gramaticales abordados en cada unidad.

Los datos recopilados se analizaron llevando a cabo un proceso de triangulación en el que se contrastaba la teoría planteada en el proyecto, junto con la información obtenida en los diarios de

campo y artefactos de los estudiantes, teniendo en cuenta el análisis efectuado por el investigador.

Finalmente, se plantearon algunas conclusiones a partir del análisis de los datos abordando los objetivos establecidos en el proyecto.

6. Conclusiones

En primera medida, se pudo establecer cómo el hecho de abordar aspectos gramaticales bajo una perspectiva comunicativa a través de la implementación de juegos y actividades significativas tuvo efectos positivos en la competencia gramatical de los estudiantes. Gracias a este tipo de actividades fue posible abordar dichos aspectos gramaticales de una manera participatoria y atractiva para los estudiantes, quienes se sentían involucrados en cada una de las actividades propuestas mejorando su nivel de conocimiento y puesta en práctica de dichos aspectos.

En términos de vocabulario, los estudiantes adquirieron nuevo vocabulario debido a la implementación de los diferentes juegos que tenían como principal elemento el uso de flashcards. Gracias a la naturaleza de las flashcards, que asocian la producción verbal junto con las imágenes, y los juegos comunicativos en torno a las mismas, el vocabulario de los estudiantes se vio significativamente ampliado.

Por último, cabe resaltar que la implementación de las diferentes actividades comunicativas abordando aspectos gramaticales específicos en forma directa, mejoró considerablemente la competencia comunicativa gramatical de los estudiantes. Por tal motivo, es aconsejable abordar la enseñanza gramatical desde una perspectiva comunicativa, en la cual los estudiantes se sientan involucrados de forma activa y significativa.

Elaborado por:	Mauricio Gómez Arévalo
Revisado por:	Nelson Mellizo

Fecha de elaboración del Resumen:	21	11	2017
--	----	----	------

CONTENTS

	Pag.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	14
Context research.....	14
Local Context and Institution Characteristics.....	14
Population.....	17
Diagnosis.....	18
Statement of the problem.....	22
Justification.....	25
Research question.....	27
Research objectives.....	27
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	28
Literature review.....	28
Theoretical framework.....	31
Communicative competence.....	31
Grammatical competence.....	32
Communicative grammatical competence.....	34
Lexical competence.....	35
Flashcards.....	37
Games.....	39
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN.....	40
Research approach.....	40
Study design.....	41

Data analysis.....	43
Population and sample.....	44
Data collection procedure.....	44
Data collection instruments.....	44
Field notes.....	45
Artifacts.....	45
CHAPTER 4: INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN.....	46
Pedagogical approach.....	46
Implementation phases.....	48
Academic program.....	51
Lesson planning.....	55
CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS.....	57
Vocabulary improvement.....	59
Expressing well-structured ideas.....	64
CHAPTER 6: RESULTS SUMMARY.....	71
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS.....	73
CHAPTER 8: GENERAL SUGGESTIONS.....	76
References.....	79

List of tables, figures and appendices

	Page
Table 1. Analysis categories.....	43
Table 2. Academic Program.....	51
Table 3. Unit planning model.....	56
Figure 1. Students associate images and words.....	60
Figure 2. Evidence of student evaluations.....	69
Appendix 1. Consent form.....	84
Appendix 2. Syllabus Language Center.....	85
Appendix 3. Survey.....	87
Appendix 4. Evaluation administered by the Language Center.....	92
Appendix 5. Field notes 1.....	95
Appendix 6. Field notes 2.....	95
Appendix 7. Field notes 3.....	96
Appendix 8. Field notes 19.....	97
Appendix 9. Field September 21.....	97
Appendix 10. Field notes August 31.....	99

ABSTRACT

This project corresponds to a qualitative action research under a descriptive nature; students belonging to a Basic II EFL classroom at Language Center of Pedagogical University, barely use and apply grammatical structures and rules in a suitable manner in the foreign language. The main objective of this study is to identify and document how the grammatical competence of the students is affected when communicative activities are implemented in an A2 EFL classroom, in order to improve students' grammatical proficiency and vocabulary in the foreign language. To develop this project, a pedagogical intervention is planned based on grammatical communicative activities, which aim to broaden the grammatical competence and vocabulary of the students who participate in the study.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT RESEARCH

In this first part of the project, the reader finds a brief contextualization of the institution in which this project takes place. The reader finds a description of the population who participate in this project as well. Then, the reader finds the diagnosis, the statement of the problem and the justification too. Finally, it is stated the Research question, the general objective and the specific objectives.

Local Context and Institution Characteristics

In this manner, as stated in the Language Center webpage, given the social mission of the National Pedagogical University and the country's low rates of foreign language knowledge, the Language Center offers a relevant and high-quality academics program through a favorable economic investment from the users. For this reason, the Language Center has gained a good position in its field, with a large number of students of all ages: children, adolescents, youth and adults. As a result, the Language Center has become a leader of the teaching field, developing methodological strategies that guarantee the success of the learning processes.

Thus, the Language Center offers English courses in three different categories: Teen Program and / or Adults, Children Program 10 to 12 years and Children Program 7 to 9 years. The children that participate in this project are in the Children Program 10 to 12 years, for this reason the characteristics of that specific program are described in the next part of this project. Taking into

account these three categories, the Language Center covers the entire range of the population who is eager to learn English as a second language.

Consequently, the children program has six levels distributed as follows: Basic I, Basic II, Intermediate I, Intermediate II, Advanced and Conversational. These levels are intended to bring the student to a first approach in the acquisition of knowledge of English language and culture. Each level is only offered in semester mode with a duration of 72 classroom hours and 8 hours of autonomous work for a total of 80 hours per level. The schedules for each level are from 1:00pm to 2:30pm and then from 3:00 pm to 5:00pm on Saturdays.

The Language Center makes use of a specific textbook for each level. The kids that participate in this project are in Basic II level, hence the textbook that they use is Up Beat Starter, of the Pearson Longman publisher. According to the description of the book itself, Upbeat aims to stimulate students' interest through exciting teen topics and problem-solving activities, addressing more serious social themes. By engaging teens both emotionally and intellectually, the book aims to offer students a positive and stimulating learning experience. It is important to take into account that this textbook helps the teacher as a guideline throughout the entire course since the curriculum of the course is based on the content of the book itself.

With regard to the syllabus, it is necessary to clarify that the course is divided in three terms. In each term two units of the textbook must be studied. Each unit emphasizes four aspects or objectives: Communicative objectives, Language objectives, Vocabulary and Skills. Regarding to the Skills aspect, Reading, Listening and Writing are the aimed skills. The Communicative objectives sets goals related to exchanging information with the class taking into account the topic of the unit, and the Language objectives are related mainly to the grammar aspect of the

language. Therefore, the teacher counts with specific objectives for each unit of the book, and consequently those units are the backbone of the syllabus. An example of this Syllabus can be found in Appendix number 1.

In addition to this, the Language Center administers an exam to the students to check their progress at the end of the first and second term. At the end of the course a final exam is applied in order to check if they have achieved all the goals proposed by the curriculum. Each exam is formed by five sections: Reading section, Grammar section, Listening section, Speaking section and Writing section.

At Language Center, the teachers are free to apply whatever methodology and activities they like or find useful in order to accomplish the planned objectives. The teachers carry out different methodological strategies such as games, roll plays, presentations, quizzes, evaluations, among others. Applying a specific methodology or strategy depends on the teacher and his teaching style, he just needs to approach the stated themes of each level. This aspect entails two main characteristics, on the one hand the students have the opportunity to get in contact with different teaching styles and methodologies depending on their teachers' instruction; and on the other hand it gives the researcher the opportunity to implement his proposal as long as it meets the proper requirements.

Besides this, the students have the opportunity to go to the English Lab 4 or 5 times during the course, it depends on the availability of the lab according to the schedule. At the English Lab the students have the opportunity to reinforce their Listening and Speaking skills through the use of videos and audios. These videos and audios are taken from the text book or from a different source. The Language Center facilitates the use of different tools such as tape recorders and

television sets. In order to make use of them, the teachers ask for these tools at least one week in advance at the Coordination Office.

Population

As mentioned before, the students that participated in this project are in Basic II level, so their range age is between 10 to 12 years. The students from this population are studying at different schools and they usually belong to social strata 2 and 3. All this information was collected through the questionnaires (see Appendix number 2) applied to the students.

In this manner, it has been noticed that some children already know some topics or vocabulary that is new for other students. Besides this, all the students belonging to this course have already studied a previous course at the Language Center. As the teacher has noticed, some students have studied topics in the previous course that are unfamiliar for other kids. This situation means that not all the students have the same level or at least that not all of them recognize the same vocabulary and topics. This happens because in the previous level time was not enough to cover all the topics, and besides this, as the students come from different schools, the topics covered by the teachers in those institutions may vary.

Related to their families, it can be stated that the majority of the students live with their parents and their siblings. This means that these children have the help of their families when doing their academic assignments. The questionnaires showed that most of the students are helped by members of their families or tutors when doing their English homework

Related to the use of their free time, the questionnaires showed that most of the students spend on average two hours doing their homework. The time they spent playing with their friends

is almost the same, which indicates that most of them like to share time with their friends doing different kind of activities. The influence of this aspect is noticed in the classroom since the students sometimes get very talkative and play with their partners in middle of the class or when the teacher changes from one activity to another. In other words, despite the fact that they spend time with their families doing their assignments, these students tend to be very active sharing time with their friends and practicing sports.

In addition, the group displays a predilection to work in groups, which definitely can be used as an advantage depending on the methodology implemented in the class. It is important to take into account that the most of the students like to get involved in activities in which they interact with their partners, as reflected thanks to questions number 8 of the questionnaire applied to the students. For this reason, they tend to perform good when it refers to carry out activities in which interaction, especially with their partners, is a key factor.

Diagnosis

In order to carry out the next diagnosis, it is taken into account the data collected through the questionnaire applied to the students (appendix number 3) and the information gathered in the different field notes. The result of the exams applied by the Language Center were taken into account as well.

In this manner, as mentioned in the description of the population, not all the students have the same level of knowledge regarding to topics and vocabulary, which was evident during the whole process of observation. This situation can be noticed in the activity related in the field notes number 1 (see appendix 10), in which the students had to carry out a task related to the

routines. Whereas some students were doing the activity properly, other students were calling the teacher constantly asking how they could write the routines in English; one of the students asked: ¿Teacher, cómo dices desayunar? It means that not all the students are familiarized with the same vocabulary which represents a major difficulty for the entire group as it affects the development and pace of the different sessions.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the description of the context, the content of each unit of the book emphasizes a particular grammatical structure, known as Language Objectives, as it is stated in the syllabus of the course. These grammar structures are reinforced through the activities designed in the textbook and they are evaluated in the exams that the Language Center administers, specifically in the Grammar Section. But, it has been noticed that this aspect is one of the most difficult for the students in this group as this is the component in which they get lower marks (See appendix 4).

Thus, the students usually commit mistakes applying the different rules or following the correct structures or patterns. This is noticeable through the different activities and evaluations carried out along the course, (see appendix number 4). For example, the most of the students do not add –s to the verb of the third person in order to talk about daily routines. Sometimes, the students tend not to use the auxiliaries to make negative sentences as don't or doesn't, or use them in a wrong way mixing their usage. Therefore, they write sentences like: *My mother don't like fish*, or *my mother like fish*, omitting the –s. Hence, the students do not put into practice the grammatical rules and structures that are necessary when accomplishing different activities.

Additionally, despite the fact that the textbook has explanations and exercises to reinforce this grammar aspect, as mentioned before, this is not enough because the students continue

having difficulties and making mistakes even after doing those activities. For that reason, the teacher always needs to make emphasis in those grammatical aspects correcting their mistakes, so that the students can carry out the activities in a proper way, learning and putting into practice the aimed rules and structures. Nevertheless, the students continue making those mistakes in the exams administered by the Language Center, which reflects that the students need more practice about that aspect.

Consequently, the students are not getting good scores in the Writing section of the exams either, since in their writings grammatical errors can be noticed as well, but in this case they are evident in complete sentences and paragraphs. For this reason, the lack of understanding the grammatical aspect in an effective way is affecting their writing skills in a general level.

Moreover, the students affirm that sometimes they find hard to communicate their ideas in an oral way or pronounce some words because they forget the correct pronunciation or because they do not follow proper grammatical patterns, making their performances inaccurately in this regard. In this manner, 52% of the students indicated that speaking and pronunciation sometimes gets difficult according to question number 11 of the questionnaire (See appendix 4). This aspect is noticeable during the lessons development since the professor needs to correct several times the pronunciation of specific words or needs to make emphasis in the correct structure of the sentences; when speaking the students tend to avoid the auxiliaries, do not follow the correct structures and do not take into account the proper agreement between the elements of the sentences. In the appendix number 9 the reader finds the field notes in which this situation is referenced.

On the other hand, in the sections of the exams related to reading and listening the students usually get good marks. As stated in the questionnaire, in the reading section students affirm that they can understand the main ideas of the texts or that they can deduce them thanks to the context and as a result they find easy to answer the questions about the readings. Related to the listening skill, the students generally understand the listening activities and the commands of the teacher since they affirm that they spend their free time watching movies or TV programs and listening to music in English, as question number 9 of the questionnaire made clear. (See appendix 3)

In the final question of the questionnaire, the students had to indicate if they preferred to work in groups or individually. 73% of the students answered that they like to study in groups because they can help each other and learn together. Thus, the group displays a predilection to work in groups, which definitely can be used as an advantage in the implementation and development of the current project.

Ultimately, the characteristics of the group imply that although the students demonstrate a good performance in the listening and reading activities, they make mistakes when they have to produce either written or spoken, due to the fact that students' vocabulary is not enough and make constant grammar inaccuracies. Given that the students do not possess the same level in terms of vocabulary, when introducing a topic it is necessary to carry out some activities aimed to reinforce the vocabulary that all the students need in order to assimilate the new topics in a proper way. In the same vein, the group displays a good predisposition towards the implementation of group activities in which they can interact with their partners. This kind of activities will be very suitable if they help the students to get familiarized in a meaningful way with vocabulary, and at

the same time they are aimed to improve the grammatical competence of the students in a really significant manner.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to the characteristics of the group under study mentioned in the previous chapter, the statement of the problem can be expressed by means of two precise difficulties, i.e., the fact of not applying accurate grammatical structures and the lack of vocabulary. That is the reason why this research projects aims to strengthen these weaknesses of the participants of this study.

Under this perspective, it is observed how lack of a proper knowledge and applying of grammar rules when learning and communication in English represents a major issue. In this regard, Richards (2002) explains that there is a grammar-gap problem in the development of linguistic competence among the students, and he affirms that “what has been observed in language classrooms during fluency work is communication marked by low levels of linguistic accuracy” (p. 38). Undoubtedly, evincing grammatical errors is not something desirable in the acquisition process of a second language, and it represents a concern that must be handled in an effective way.

Furthermore, the teaching of linguistic forms is not only supported by theory but also by different studies. For instance, Norris and Ortega (2002) have analyzed different studies in which it is demonstrated that teaching grammar is appropriate and that it may make a difference in the results obtained in the language learning process. Based on the study conducted by these authors, Ellis (2002) explains that “not only did Form Focused Instruction make a difference but also that

it made a very considerable difference” (p. 223) and concludes that there is “ample evidence to show that form focused instruction has a positive effect on second language acquisition” (p. 223).

However, grammar instruction can be presented from different perspectives in which learners play a more dynamic role and become active participants of their language learning process. Brown (2007, p. 421), who has summarized the research of various linguists, explains that grammar can be included in the language class if the appropriate techniques are used. The author summarizes five important characteristics as follows:

- Forms that are embedded in meaningful, communicative contexts,
- Forms that contribute positively to communicative goals,
- Forms that promote accuracy within fluent, communicative language,
- Forms that do not overwhelm students with linguistic terminology, and
- Forms that are as lively and intrinsically motivating as possible.

Eventually, as Equally, Ellis and Fotos (1999) argue, formal grammar instruction can have a positive impact on acquisition when grammatical structures are shown in context. The authors state: “formal instruction may work best in promoting acquisition when it is linked with opportunities for natural communication” (p. 20). Grammar can be seen as an aspect that can be included and presented in a variety of forms in which students are expected to use the language in context and with the intention of developing an accurate production.

On the other hand, teaching vocabulary effectively is another major concern in the development of the current project. Words are essential when communicating in a second language, and the lack of them leads to feelings of insecurity and discouragement, and eventually a poor performance in the second language from part of the learners. Undoubtedly, addressing this issue is a relevant matter that demands a proper solution.

Consequently, researchers such as Laufer and Nation (1999) have realized that the acquisition of vocabulary is essential for successful second language use and plays an important role in the formation of complete spoken and written texts. Learning vocabulary items plays a vital role in all language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Nation, 2011). Rivers and Nunan (1991) argue that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second language use because without an extensive vocabulary, learners will be unable to use the structures and functions they may have learned for comprehensible communication.

Furthermore, Richards (2002) argues that vocabulary is one of the most important components in learning a foreign language, and foreign language curricula must reflect this. Wilkins (1972) states that: “There is not much value in being able to produce grammatical sentences if one has not got the vocabulary that is needed to convey what one wishes to say. While without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed” (p.97).

Finally, Krashen (1989) states many reasons for devoting attention to vocabulary. “First, a large vocabulary is of course essential for mastery of a language. Second language acquirers know this; they carry dictionaries with them, not grammar books, and regularly report that the lack of vocabulary is a major problem” (p.50). According to Nyikos and Fan (2001), “mastering vocabulary is one of the most challenging tasks that any learner faces while acquiring another language” (p. 148). As a result, language teachers and applied linguists now generally recognize the importance of vocabulary learning and are exploring ways of promoting it more effectively. Thus, in the case of the current project, students need to be educated with the strategies which can help them to acquire vocabulary in a significant way in order to overcome the issues related to this in the classroom context.

JUSTIFICATION

As it has been stated, the students at the Language Center that participate in this project present two main difficulties: the fact of not following the specific grammatical structures and patterns and their lack of vocabulary, especially when starting a new topic. In this regard, Richards (2016) affirms that “knowing a language may be said to involve a sufficient knowledge of its grammar to enable comprehension and creation of novel sentences in the language, and a knowledge of sufficient vocabulary to permit communication in the situations for which the language is required” (p.69).

In this order of ideas, Canale and Swain (1980) state that the grammatical competence is one of the four different components that make up the construct of Communicative Competence., and the grammatical competence is the aspect of communicative competence that includes knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology.

In this regard, out of the 4 components of the Communicative Competence, in the development of this project it is desired to emphasize the development of the Grammatical Competence, since as it was implied in the part of the diagnosis, this aspect is one factor in which the students have presented greater difficulties.

Moreover, Diaz-Rico and Weed (2010) affirm that Grammatical Competence focuses on command of the language code, including such things as the rules of word and sentence formation, meanings, spelling and pronunciation. Thus, the main goal of the Grammatical Competence is to acquire knowledge and ability to use forms and expression that are grammatically correct and accurate. This, emphasizes the idea that the students at the Language

Center definitely need to get knowledge in this aspect, since they need to apply in a proper way the different rules and patterns when it comes to sentence formation and the right pronunciation of different words.

In addition to this, a suitable proficiency in the Grammatical Competence “becomes increasingly important to the English learner in more advanced stages of proficiency” (Diaz-Rico and Weed, 2010, p.58). It implies that as the students at Language Center advance to higher levels in their learning process, grammatical competence will become more important for them. For that reason, establishing proper bases at the early stages of learning, specially related to grammar aspects, is useful and advisable because it gives the learners the opportunity to acquire and deepen their knowledge enhancing their overall competences in the second language.

For this reason, grammatical forms need to be explicitly taught for students to reach higher levels of academic language proficiency. It is important that students at Language Center have the opportunity to get familiarized with this kind of vital knowledge since this gives them an important tool to understand the English Language in a better way dealing with their lack of grammar, and eventually their proficiency level will reach higher levels.

On the other hand, Nagy (1998) affirms that increasing vocabulary knowledge is a basic part of the process of education, both as a means and as an end. Lack of adequate vocabulary knowledge is already an obvious and serious obstacle for many students. Thus, teaching vocabulary to EFL students’ is a crucial factor in their learning process, and as it has been said, this a core necessity of the students at the Language Center. Dealing with this situation calls for a proper solution, which is one of the main aims in the development of this project.

Ultimately, McCarthy states that “no matter how well the students learn grammar, no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered, without words to express a wider range of meaning, communication in L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way” (McCarthy, 1990, p. 3). As a result, enriching the grammar competence as well as the vocabulary from part of the students at the Language Center is a vital necessity that requires to be addressed, as it is expected that the students reach higher levels of proficiency, and eventually communicate effectively in the second language.

Research question

How the implementation of games based on flashcards as pedagogical tool improves the communicative grammatical competence in second level EFL students' at the Language Center of the Pedagogical University?

Research objectives

1. To analyze the impact of the use of flashcards in the students' sentence formation.
2. To characterize the role of flashcards in the vocabulary acquisition in EFL's students.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the next part of this paper, the reader finds information related to some studies carried out associated to grammar learning as well as the use of flashcards and games when teaching English as a second language. These projects serve as a theoretical support in the development of this research. In total, six studies are taken into account, two of them were developed by students at the Pedagogical University, another two projects were conducted along the Colombian territory and the final two projects take place in different countries around the world. Each one contains the author of the study, relevant objective(s), the results and the conclusions of the study.

In this manner, the first project is titled *Vocabulary learning through pictures* by Paula Alejandra Beltrán Ochoa (2015). The main objective of this study is to ascertain the impact of the use of pictures in the vocabulary learning process of the students from 603 grade at the Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño I.E.D School. The researcher concludes that pictures, including flashcards, have a very important role on helping students internalize a larger amount of vocabulary. Her research proves that the continuous use of pictures really helps students to start a process of association, interpretation and internalization of vocabulary. Thus, the conclusions of this research are relevant in the development of this project since it is demonstrated how the use of pictures really help students in the acquisition of new vocabulary.

The second project is titled *Improving oral performance through interactions flashcards* by Jasson Urquijo (2012). The main goal of his research is to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching interactions using flashcards to improve the oral performance of third graders. The findings of his study show that flashcards improve oral performance and fostered the qualitative aspects of the spoken language of the students. This study demonstrates how the implementation of flashcards in a creative way can be a very effective tool to improve a specific aspect of EFL learner, and it supports one of the major intents in the development of the current project, which is to improve the grammatical competence of the students as well as their vocabulary.

In these order of ideas, William Urrutia and Esperanza Vega carry out a research titled *Encouraging Teenagers to Improve Speaking Skills through Games in a Colombian Public School* (2010). Along their project, the researchers want to investigate how games can encourage teenagers to improve speaking skills. With their investigation, the researchers point out the importance of using games in the English learning process, since games are motivating and exciting experiences for students to develop the speaking skills in a fun and comfortable way. Hence, it is stated that using games in order to teach different aspects of the English language is a useful tool, especially when the current project aims to take advantage of this kind of activities when teaching grammar and vocabulary.

Otherwise, the researcher Edgar Mendoza López, professor in the school of Education at Universidad Autónoma de Bucaramanga, conducts a study titled *Implicit and Explicit Teaching of Grammar: An Empirical Study* (2004). The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the methodologies of implicit and explicit language instruction account for the improvement of

university students on a performance test on two grammar topics. The researcher finds out that when teachers use explicit grammar teaching strategies in the classroom, the students' performance is significantly better. Thus, this research emphasizes the idea of teaching grammar to the students in explicit ways, as it is one of the main targets through the development of the current project.

Concerning international researches related to the current project, Ardab Arikam conducts a study titled *Effectiveness of Using Games in Teaching Grammar to Young Learners* (2011), which main goal is to explore the effectiveness of using games in teaching grammar to young learners from the viewpoints of Turkish EFL teachers working in primary schools. The researcher concludes that the participants in the study recognize the pedagogical value of using games in their classrooms and agree that while teaching the grammar rules explicitly is still important, using games as a form of instruction is also beneficial. The findings of this study are relevant to the current research since it demonstrates that using games is effective in grammar teaching especially for young learners.

Finally, Ho1 and Binh carry out an investigation under the title *The Effects of Communicative Grammar Teaching on Students' Achievement of Grammatical Knowledge and Oral Production* (2014). The main objective of this study is to investigate the effects of communicative grammar teaching on students' achievement of grammatical knowledge and oral production. This project takes place at Le Hong Phong Junior High School, in Vietnam, and it shows that communicative grammar teaching benefits the students both in grammatical competence and oral performance since this approach appeals the students' interest in grammar lessons; for that reason the findings

of this research are significant in the development of the current investigation as it demonstrates the usefulness of the communicative grammar teaching.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Since the main aim of this project is to identify the impact of using flashcards in the communicative grammatical competence and vocabulary of the students through games, it is necessary to address the theories and constructs that support it. They are: communicative competence, grammatical competence, lexical competence and the use of flashcards and games in the English classroom, which are discussed below.

Communicative competence

Thus, in order to approach the theoretical framework of this project, communicative competence is addressed in the first place. Hymes (1972) explicitly states that “communicative competence comprises not only the ability to construe and interpret linguistic expressions, but also the ability to use these expressions in appropriate and effective ways according to the conventions of verbal interaction prevailing in a linguistic community” (p.15). Hence, communicative competence comprises the ability to understand and use linguistic expressions in a suitable and effective way.

According to Canale and Swain (1980), four different components make up the construct of communicative competence, they are: Grammatical Competence, Discourse Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence and Strategic Competence. The authors define the previous competences as follows:

Grammatical Competence is the aspect of communicative competence that includes knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology. Discourse Competence is the ability we have to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterances. Sociolinguistic Competence is the knowledge of the sociocultural rules of language and discourse. It is the requirement to understand the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction. Strategic Competence is the competence underlying our ability to make repairs, to cope with imperfect knowledge, and to sustain communication through paraphrase, circumlocution, repetition, hesitation, avoidance, and guessing, as well as shifts in register and style (p.28).

Therefore, “these four areas function together in language production” (Lyster, 1996, p. 32). In other words, language production is the result of a suitable communicative competence, which is the main goal of all EFL students, including students at the Language Center. In this regard, out of the 4 components of the communicative competence, in the development of this project it is desired to emphasize the development of the grammatical competence, since as it was implied in the part of the diagnosis, this aspect is the factor in which the students have presented more difficulties.

Grammatical competence

In this order of ideas, Canale and Swain state that grammatical competence is the aspect of communicative competence that includes “features and rules of the language such as vocabulary, word formation, sentence formation, pronunciation, spelling and linguistic semantics” (Canale & Swain, 1980, p.32). Such competence focuses directly on the knowledge and skill required to understand and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances; as such, grammatical competence is an important concern for any second language program.

Moreover, Diaz-Rico and Weed (2010) affirm that grammatical competence focuses on command of the language code, including such things as the rules of word and sentence formation, meanings, spelling and pronunciation. Thus, the main goal of the Grammatical Competence is to acquire knowledge and ability to use forms and expression that are grammatically correct and accurate. This is a key factor when learning and teaching English, specially bearing in mind the needs of the population involved in the development of the current project.

In addition to this, traditional approaches to language teaching give priority to grammatical competence as the basis of language proficiency. “They were based on the belief that grammar could be learned through direct instruction and through a methodology that made much use of repetitive practice and drilling” (Richards, 2006, p.6). The approach to the teaching of grammar was a deductive one: students are presented with grammar rules and then given opportunities to practice using them.

Furthermore, Richards (2006) explains that in a typical lesson according to these traditional approaches, a three-phase sequence, known as the P-P-P cycle, was often employed: Presentation, Practice, and Production:

Presentation: The new grammar structure is presented, often by means of a conversation or short text. The teacher explains the new structure and checks students’ comprehension of it. Practice: Students practice using the new structure in a controlled context, through drills or substitution exercises. Production: Students practice using the new structure in different contexts, often using their own content or information, in order to develop fluency with the new pattern. The P-P-P lesson structure has been widely used in language teaching materials and continues in modified form to be used today (p.8).

In this regard, Richards (2016) affirms that “knowing a language involve a sufficient knowledge of its grammar to enable comprehension and creation of novel sentences in the language, and a knowledge of sufficient vocabulary to permit communication in the situations for which the language is required” (p. 69). Consequently, grammar needs to be taught in context. As Larsen-Freeman points out, “we need to pay attention to the three dimensions of grammar: form, meaning and use. Simply teaching grammar rules and/or having student memorize verb conjugations will not help students acquire grammatical competence” (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). That is why, grammatical competence needs to be understood from a communicative perspective, which is the next construct in this paper.

Communicative grammatical competence

“A communicative grammar of English has established itself as both an authoritative and innovative grammar” (Leech and Svartvick, 2013, p.1). In general terms, the communicative grammatical competence is the ability to use and understand a structure in a variety of situations spontaneously. According to Pham and Nguyen “communicative grammar teaching is used to refer to teaching grammar communicatively” (Pham and Nguyen, 2014, 74). In other words, communicative grammar practice means focusing on a grammatical point and using it purposefully, appropriately and accurately.

In addition to this, Wright (2016) states that in the light of this method, language structures must not be taught in isolation but integrated to the four skills of language. Thus, grammar patterns must not only be learned at the utterance level but also at the discourse level since the main objective focuses on the development of communicative grammatical competence. Under this perspective, “the student may therefore benefit from looking at grammar from another

angle, where grammatical structures are systematically related to meaning uses and situations”.
(Leech and Svartvick, 2013, p.3)

Altogether, a communicative grammatical competence emphasizes more meaningful and less controlled grammar practice. In this regard, there are some ways of making practice more meaningful, for instance, making students say true, real aspects about themselves since they like talking about themselves and are interested in others. Another way of making language practice more natural and attractive is linking structures to students’ everyday reality or appealing to their imagination. In general, activities like miming actions, chain story building, class surveys or interviews, picture descriptions and games activities can be carried out with a strong grammatical focus.

In conclusion, when talking about communicative grammatical competence, it refers to meaningful practice of the structures of the language through activities where language control is still provided but where students are required to make meaningful choices when carrying out practice.

Lexical competence

“Lexical competence is at the heart of communicative competence” (Brown, Malmkjaer, Williams, 2002, p.35). In general terms, lexical competence is the ability to recognize and use words in a language in the way that speakers of the language use them. Therefore, lexical competence, which is defined as the ability to use words in appropriate and effective ways in verbal interaction, is part of communicative competence.

In this regard, Brown, Malmkjaer and Williams (2002) state that “the basic dimension of lexical competence is size, learners with big vocabularies are more proficient in a wide range of language skills than learners with smaller vocabularies” (p. 39). For this reason, it is necessary to allow learners acquire a large amount of vocabulary through a proper technique, since, as Nation (2001) affirms, learners that not acquire effective strategies for learning new vocabularies, will be disappointed and will lose their self-confidence.

In this order of ideas, when talking about vocabulary learning it is necessary to take into account that there are two dimension related to it, which are breadth and depth dimensions (Wesche & Paribakht, 1996). Breadth refers to the amount of vocabulary that a learner can recognize and produce, and depth points out to how well a learner knows a word. Therefore, it is necessary to consider these two dimension when employing a specific strategy in order to teach new vocabulary to the students.

Moreover, McCarthy (1990) states that “no matter how well the students learns grammar , no matter how successfully the sounds of L2 are mastered , without words to express a wider range of meaning, communication in L2 just cannot happen in any meaningful way” (p. 3). As a result, enriching the vocabulary of the students at the Language Center is a vital necessity that requires to be addressed hence the students reach higher levels of proficiency.

In this order of ideas, lack of adequate vocabulary knowledge is already an obvious and serious obstacle for many students. Thus, teaching vocabulary to EFL students’ is a crucial factor in their learning process, and as it has been said, this a core necessity of the students at the Language Center, thereby dealing with this situation calls for a proper solution, which is one of the main aims in the development of this project.

Flashcards

One of the most widely used techniques in language learning is flashcards or known as word cards as well. In general terms, according to Baleghizadeh and Ashoori (2011) a flashcard is a double-sided cardboard consisting of a word, a sentence, or a simple picture on it designed for direct learning of vocabulary that allow learners to practice form-to-meaning and meaning-to-form recall in repeated retrieval of L2 words, by flipping the front and back sides of the cards, and may vary in form, ranging from printed to digital versions.

When talking about the use of flashcards to teach vocabulary, it is necessary to clarify the notion of intentional and incidental learning of words. Basically, intentional learning refers to a deliberate attempt to teach vocabulary, whereas incidental learning means teaching vocabulary without a deliberate attempt. According to Elgort and Nation (2010), intentional techniques, such as learning from vocabulary notebooks, word lists, and word cards, are useful approaches for achieving the acquisition of second language vocabulary effectively and efficiently.

In the light of the aforementioned, based on a series of experimental studies, Elgort (2011) asserted that intentional learning of vocabulary is more efficient than incidental learning, since incidental learning needs an extensive exposure to the vocabulary and language that the learner aims to master; and in the most of the cases, meeting such conditions is not something common in the contexts in which English is taught as a foreign language. Intentional learning of vocabulary improves the process of lexical development due to focused repetition or memorization strategies (Hustijn, 2003). The retention rates of intentional vocabulary learning are generally higher than those obtained with incidental learning suggesting that deliberate attempts to learning vocabulary are effective and worth the effort.

In addition to this, some other researchers and authors believe that flashcards are a very useful tool that can be applied when learning vocabulary. Nation (2011) suggests that, among various vocabulary learning techniques, teachers should guide their students to make use of word cards in learner-centered ways, as he argues, “well directed deliberate vocabulary learning using word cards is very effective and much more efficient than teaching vocabulary exercises” (p. 536). Meanwhile, Ehri & Roberts (1979) showed that the use of flashcards is very helpful in language learning and McCullough (1995) stresses that the use of flashcards is helpful for language learning.

In this vein, the use of flashcards is a very important and useful tool from which teachers can take advantage, as it greatly facilitates students' learning of vocabulary through fun activities that facilitate and enhance classroom interaction.

Games

Games play a crucial role in any foreign language teaching course since they facilitate language learning, especially for young learners, by providing them with meaningful contexts. Avedon (1971) states that “games spur motivation and students get very absorbed in the competitive aspects of the games; moreover, they try harder at games than in other courses” (p. 2). In other words, games stimulate students' interest and motivation in classroom activities and as a result they foster language learning.

In addition to this, by using games, teachers can create contexts which enable unconscious learning because learners' attention is on the message, not on the language. Therefore, “when they completely focus on a game as an activity, students acquire language in the same way that

they acquire their mother tongue, that is, without being aware of it” (Cross, 2000, p. 153).

Therefore, games are an agreeable way of getting a class to use its initiative in English, students become motivated and willing to learn as games encourage them to use their language in a creative and communicative manner.

Related to the nature of games, Rixon (1991) describes games as a form of play with rules, a goal and an element of fun. Moreover, he states that games are activities carried out by cooperating or competing decision makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objectives. Games are fun activities directed by rules, which seek a main objective through the cooperation and competition from part of the students.

In addition to this, McCallum (1980) explains that one of the many advantages of games is the fact that they focus students’ attention on specific structures, grammatical patterns, and vocabulary items. Authors like Nedomová, Bekiri and Hong have studied the effectiveness of using games in teaching grammar to young learners, especially when grammar teaching is too dependent on rules and memorization. These authors have concluded that one of the best ways to address grammar aspects is by using games. Bekiri (2003) states that when a lesson includes a game, the game gives a chance to the teacher to help learners acquire new forms and lexis in an effective way.

Therefore, games are one of the best ways to direct young learners’ motivation not only to grammar learning, but towards many skills and areas of the language as well. Through games, it is possible to carry out enjoyable and exciting activities that reduce anxiety, increase positive feelings and improve self-confidence, appealing for a communicative using of the English language from the students.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this part of the project, it is described the research approach, the study design, the instruments and procedures for data collection and analysis, and a brief description of the population involved along the development of this project.

Research Approach

Thus, the nature of this project responds to what is known as qualitative research. According to Merriam in her book *Qualitative research in practice: examples for discussion and analysis*,

The key to understand qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not the fixed, single, agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that it is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research. Instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time. (Merriam, 2002, p.3).

Therefore, throughout the development of this project, the researcher is interested in analyzing the possible interpretations and constructions that arise during the implementation of the different phases of the project, related to the communicative grammatical competence of the students.

Moreover, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to the

world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them.

On the other hand, the type of study of this project is known as Action Research. Cohen and Manion (1980) state that “action research is situational, or context-based, collaborative, participatory, and self-evaluative” (p.211). According to them, one of the ends when using this type of research is as means of remedying problems diagnosed in specific situations, or of improving in some way a given set of circumstances.

Hence, this project itself is emerged on this research field, since the researcher actively participates during the development of the pedagogical proposal, and his main purpose is to remedy or improve a specific situation noticed through the observation of a specific context, under a participatory and collaborative approach which is, in the case of the current project, the communicative grammatical competence of the students.

Finally, it is important to highlight the mutual benefit that the researcher and the students get thanks to this type of research. The researcher gains vital experience as a future teacher and the students improve their own learning process due to the implementation of different solutions to face the situations that arise, the discussions, reflections and outcomes that emerge along the project.

Study Design

The instruments used for data collection throughout the development of this project are mainly field notes and students’ artifacts. For that reason, a major means of collecting data is through observation and analysis. Observational data represent a “firsthand encounter with the

phenomenon of interest. An active participant observer might be someone who is a member of the group who is thus participating while observing” (Merriam, 2002, p.13). These observations are consigned in the field notes and the researcher focuses in those aspects related to the implementation of the pedagogical research. Additionally, the students’ artifacts are mainly written activities, for example workshops and quizzes that the researcher analyses in order to identify how the application of the different activities affect the consecution of the posed objectives.

Consequently, the information collected through the field notes and the students’ artifacts is carefully examined. During this process, the researcher focuses in inquiring how the main goals of the project are accomplished thanks to the development and application of the different activities and games carried out along the planned sessions, and how all the collected artifacts determine if the project accomplishes the posed objectives, since the written activities area main source of information.

In this regard, according to Sagor (2005), it is essential to bear in mind that analyzing data is straightforward when the data collected is managed in a convenient way to make information clear. In other words, when it is referred to qualitative research, all the components of the study have to be taken into consideration when analysis should be done, as the objective is to deeply understand the characteristics of the phenomenon being studied.

In order to carry out the data analysis, the researcher applied a triangulation process in which is necessary the combination of two or more theoretical perspectives, data sources or approaches (Hussein 2009). Moreover, according to O’Donoghue and Punch (2003), triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification

from two or more sources, therefore it increases the credibility and validity of the results. In the current research, the sources of data such as the field notes, students' artifacts and theoretical perspectives help the researcher to identify connections and regularities between the theoretical research and the outcomes seen in the data collection instruments, supplying a more detailed and balanced analyses of the results.

Data Analysis

For the data analysis, the researcher established some analysis categories related to the use of games based on flash cards as pedagogical tool to improve the communicative grammatical competence. According to them the information gathered was analyzed:

Table 1 - Analysis categories

UNIT OF ANALYSIS	CATEGORY	INDICATOR
Improvement in the communicative grammatical competence	Vocabulary improvement	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
		Children internalize vocabulary in order to interact with their partners in the different activities.
		Children use the new vocabulary to create meaningful sentences.
	Expressing well-structured ideas	Children create well-structured sentences when participating in the different activities.
		Children interact with their partners in an accurate way when carrying out the proposed games.
		Children produce and write

		accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
--	--	--

Population and sample

As mentioned in the first chapter, the students that participated in this project are in Basic II level at the Language Center of the Pedagogical University. The schedule of this group is on Saturdays from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The group holds a total of 15 students and their range age is between 10 to 12 years, of whom 8 students are chosen randomly. The artifacts, outcomes and general performance of these 8 students is going to be raw material with which the pertinent analyzes are applied.

Data collection procedure

As in other qualitative approaches, the data for a grounded theory can come from several sources. The data collection instruments include interviews and observation, in addition to other sources such as documents, video and audio recordings, newspapers, letters, books and anything that might enlighten the question under study. In this case, the data collection instruments mainly used were field notes and students' artifacts.

Data collection Instruments

As mentioned before, action research involves a process of collecting and analyzing data, in order to gather relevant information about the course of the implementation of the pedagogical

proposal. For that reason, some instruments for data collection have been chosen for the purpose of gathering the information needed to reach the aim of the project, they are field notes and artifacts.

Field notes

According to Elliot (1993) field notes is a narrative element that facilitates the researchers the identification of observations, feelings, reactions, interpretations, reflections and explanations. This information helps the researcher to reconstruct what happened in a specific moment, taking into account the conversations, attitudes and manifestations of the participants. The use of field notes is a very helpful tool which enables the possibility to analyze relevant information that need to be taken into consideration when carrying out the data analysis.

Artifacts

It is considered an artifact a particular object with intrinsic characteristics, designed and built for the purpose of performing a specific task. Burns (2010) explains that there are many useful documents in the classroom to collect data; among them the author refers syllabus guidelines, lesson plans, filling the gaps, textbooks, readers, students' written texts, exercises, illustrations, and mind maps. Hence, all of these written documents become highly important in the development of the current project since they provide relevant information about the overall progress of the students in relation to the posed objectives when analyzing them.

CHAPTER 4

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

In the interest of achieving the objectives proposed, in this part of the project some learning theories and approaches that support the pedagogical implementation are explained. This instructional design includes the implementation phases this project will go through, and the pedagogical design.

Pedagogical Approach

Thus, Vygotsky (1978), regarded as the father of social constructivism, believed that knowledge was constructed through dialogue and interaction with others. He argued that knowledge is co-constructed in a social environment and that in the process of social interaction, people use language as a tool to construct meaning. In other words, constructivism, as a paradigm or worldview, posits that learning is an active, constructive process, in which the learner is an information constructor who actively constructs or creates his/her own subjective representations of objective reality.

Therefore, constructivism is taken as the pedagogical approach in the development of the current project since it allows students the opportunity to interact in a meaningful manner with their partners. Consequently, communication and interaction play a fundamental role in any learning experience within a social constructivism perspective (Vygotsky, 1978), which eventually is an essential aspect in the development of this research, as providing a communicative environment through the proposed activities and games is a crucial factor in the posed objectives.

It is important to include that in social constructivism classrooms, collaborative learning is a process of peer interaction that is mediated and structured by the teacher. It means that, despite the fact the students are learning thanks to the interaction and communication among them, the teacher is in charge of providing the activities and the essential information that the students are supposed to internalize, since the educator plays the most important role in the classroom to which the students look up.

Another relevant aspect of this approach, is the concept known as Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This concept poses that the potential for cognitive development of one student depends on the zone of proximal development. Vygotsky (1978) suggests that, children's learning process is developed through cooperation, guidance or collaboration of peers. The learning process of a student can be enhanced through his/her social interactions, and the skills that a student needs to develop can be worked on by having a guidance or peer collaboration. As a result, applying this notion in the development of the current project enables activities and environments in which the students help each other grasp the planned contents, thanks to the communicative activities implemented.

In accordance with the activities that are implemented from the social constructivism perspective, it highlights the use of cooperative and collaborative teaching strategies, as mentioned before. In general, activities such as team games tournament and peer-peer tutoring, among others, are implemented. According to Slaving (1980), by implementing such strategies, students work together while sharing ideas and challenging each other's perspectives. Thus, these strategies are totally aligned with the type of activities this research aims to carry out along the implementation of this project.

According to Vygotsky (1978), regarding the teacher's role, the teacher mainly provides assistance with assimilation of new and old knowledge. Thus, the educator favors the knowledge and experiences students bring to class and builds new knowledge based on those prior experiences. Besides this, the educator creates situations where the students feel safe questioning and reflecting on their own processes, providing opportunities for more expert and less expert participants to learn from each other all the time. It means that promoting collaboration in constructing knowledge among the students is a crucial endeavor to the teacher under this perspective.

At the student's role respect, the expectation within a constructivist learning environment is that the students play a more active role and accept more responsibility for their own learning. Then, as stated by Vygotsky (1978), the role of the student is to actively participate in their own education, they have to accommodate and assimilate new information with their current understanding. One important aspect of controlling their own learning process is reflecting on their experiences, so students begin their study with pre-conceived notions.

Implementation Phases

When talking about the phases along the implementation of the current project, it is necessary to clarify that the project aims to embrace seven major topics, and each one of those topics involves a pattern consisted of 3 phases. In other words, when addressing each planned topic in the implementation of this project, each of the three stated phases are followed. Next, each one of these phases is described properly.

Phase 1: Getting in contact with vocabulary

In this stage, which is developed in the first class of each topic, the teacher presents the target vocabulary of the topic using flashcards. The teacher shows the flashcards and asks the students if they know the meaning of the pictures. Considering the answers of the students, the teacher clarifies the proper meaning and pronunciation of each flashcard, assigning movements or specific actions to each flashcard. After that, the class is divided into groups and a series of engaging games are carried out in which the vocabulary is practiced using the flashcards and the rehearsed actions. This first phase usually takes 45 minutes which means a whole class time. If there is enough time, at the end of the class the students take a quiz to demonstrate that they have associated the words with the images portrayed on the flashcards, which is the main goal of this stage, otherwise if the time is not enough the quiz is applied in the first part of the next session.

Phase 2: Rehearsing structures in an oral way

In this stage, which is approached in the second lesson of each topic, the students conduct activities so that they practice the aimed grammatical structures of the lesson in an oral way. Firstly, the teacher introduces the grammatical structures and asks the students if they understand or are familiarized with them. Then, following what the students answer, proper clarifications are made, and the teacher demonstrates how to use those structures in order to make questions, answers and affirmative and negative sentences. After that, the class is divided into groups and a series of games are carried out which main objective is to rehearse and to put into practice the target structures, using the flashcards worked on in the previous class as main tool of contextualization and source of meaningful practice.

Thereby, employing the flashcards the participants of the different groups create questions, answers, affirmative and negative sentences and short dialogues, attempting to construct well-structured sentences in these communicative tasks, under the guidance and help from the teacher and the other classmates as well, with the aim of developing accuracy. The development of the activities belonging to this second phase lasts 45 minutes, which means another whole class time.

Phase 3: Communicative activities and evaluation

This phase is developed in two lessons. In the first part of this phase, which is approached in the third class planned for each topic, the students develop communicative activities in which they apply the vocabulary and structures worked on in the previous phase. The students work in pairs or groups interacting among themselves, developing the proposed communicative activities such as role-plays, discussions, surveys, collaborative writing and activities in which they talk about their own real life. They are allowed to ask the teacher if it is necessary or if they get confused, but in this stage the students are totally free to manipulate the target language. This activity lasts 45 minutes, which means another whole class time.

Finally, in the second part of this phase, it means the fourth and last lesson planned for each topic, an exam is administered in which the students must apply the vocabulary and the studied structures. The exam consists in three parts: in the first one the students develop an activity related to the vocabulary of the topic; in the second part the students write complete sentences making questions, answers and affirmative and negative sentences, and finally they carry out an activity in which they write about themselves, their classmates and people or

characters they are able to talk about. The students have 45 minutes to complete the exam, which means another whole class.

In this manner, it is important to clarify that each topic is aimed to be developed within four sessions, and each topic covers the three proposed phases. Thus, the first phase is approached in the first class, the second phase is approached in the second class, the first part of the third stage is developed in the third class and the second part of the third phase is approached in the fourth class. Hence, the implementation of a single topic undergoes 4 sessions of 45 minutes each, which are usually carried out at the beginning of the class, taking into account that classes at the Language Center start at 1:00pm and end at 5:00pm on Saturdays.

Academic Program

Taking into account the previous information, the schedule of the activities for this pedagogical proposal is presented in the next chart:

Table 2–Academic program

TOPIC 1: FRIENDS			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
01-02-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and miming activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to the description of people in terms of physical appearance and personality.	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
08-02-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice the question What does he/she like? and What's he/she like? and answer them interacting with their partners and the flashcards, with the aid of the teacher.	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children internalize vocabulary in order to interact with their partners in the different activities.
15-02-14 (Phase 3 - first part)	In couples or groups, students develop communicative activities in	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to apply the correct grammatical	Children create well-structured sentences when

	an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	structures when developing the proposed exercises.	participating in the different activities.
22-02-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
TOPIC 2: MY LIFE			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
01-03-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and mimicry activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to daily routines and adverbs of frequency	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
15-03-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice the question How often do you ...? And answer it interacting with their partners and the flashcards, with the aid of the teacher.	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children use the new vocabulary to create meaningful sentences.
22-03-14 (Phase 3 - first part)	In couples or groups, students develop communicative activities in an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to apply the correct grammatical structures when developing the proposed exercises.	Children interact with their partners in an accurate way when carrying out the proposed games.
29-03-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
TOPIC 3: FREE TIME			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
05-04-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and mimicry activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to free time activities.	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
12-04-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice the question What's he/she good at? And what does he/she like/love doing? And answer them interacting with their partners and the flashcards, with the aid of the teacher.	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children internalize vocabulary in order to interact with their partners in the different activities.
26-04-14 (Phase 3 - first part)	In couples or groups, students develop	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to	Children create well-structured

part)	communicative activities in an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	apply the correct grammatical structures when developing the proposed exercises.	sentences when participating in the different activities.
03-05-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
TOPIC 4: AROUND THE WORLD			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
10-05-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and mimicry activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to countries and places	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
17-05-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice the structures there is/ there are, interacting with their partners and the flashcards, with the aid of the teacher	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children use the new vocabulary to create meaningful sentences.
24-05-14 (Phase 3 - first part)	In couples or groups, students develop communicative activities in an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to apply the correct grammatical structures when developing the proposed exercises.	Children interact with their partners in an accurate way when carrying out the proposed games.
31-05-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
TOPIC 5: SHOPPING			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
02-08-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and mimicry activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to items that can be bought in a store and their characteristics.	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
09-08-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice the question How much is this/that? How much are these/those? And answer them interacting with their partners and the flashcards, with the aid of the teacher	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children internalize vocabulary in order to interact with their partners in the different activities.
16-08-14 (Phase 3 - first	In couples or groups, students develop	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to	Children create well-structured

part)	communicative activities in an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	apply the correct grammatical structures when developing the proposed exercises.	sentences when participating in the different activities.
23-08-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
TOPIC 6: SCHOOL			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
30-08-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and mimicry activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to the subjects at school and their description.	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
06-09-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice using the past of verb To Be interacting with their partners and the flashcards when talking about the subjects at school, with the aid of the teacher	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children use the new vocabulary to create meaningful sentences.
13-09-14 (Phase 3 - first part)	In couples or groups, students develop communicative activities in an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to apply the correct grammatical structures when developing the proposed exercises.	Children interact with their partners in an accurate way when carrying out the proposed games.
20-09-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.
TOPIC 7: PAST EVENTS			
Date	Activity	Objective	Indicator
27-09-14 (Phase 1)	Students familiarize with new vocabulary through flashcards and practice it using movement and mimicry activities.	To identify and learn vocabulary related to the past tense of irregular verbs	Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.
04-10-14 (Phase 2)	Students practice making affirmative and negative sentences and questions, interacting with their partners and using the studied verbs through the flashcards, with the aid of the teacher.	To practice and internalize the aimed structures interacting with their partners.	Children internalize vocabulary in order to interact with their partners in the different activities.

18-10-14 (Phase 3 - first part)	In couples or groups, students develop communicative activities in an accurate way using the proposed grammatical structures.	To articulate and write accurate sentences in order to apply the correct grammatical structures when developing the proposed exercises.	Children create well-structured sentences when participating in the different activities.
25-10-14 (Phase 3 - second part)	Exam	To apply the acquired knowledge resolving the proposed exam.	Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.

Lesson planning

When developing the different lessons along the implementation of the current project, they were organized in Unit plans. Accordingly, unit plans follow much the same format as a lesson plan, but cover an entire unit of work, which may span several days or weeks. At its most basic level, unit planning ensures that the different lesson plans related to the same topic are linked among them, since a unit plan overarches all daily lesson plans with connections among key topics, concepts, skills, and desired outcomes. Thus, there were designed seven unit plans in order to cover the seven topics planned in this proposal.

Consequently, each unit plan consists of 4 lesson plans, hence each phase of each topic is covered. The first three lessons plans within the unit plan are designed using direct method. The general manner of teaching using this method involves a three-stage procedure: Presentation, Practice and Production, which particular aspects and characteristics were explained in the theoretical framework bearing in mind that these three stages are developed under a communicative approach. The fourth lesson of the unit plan involves just the production stage since in this class the final exam of the topic is administered to the students.

Table 3 - Unit Planning Model

1	Unit plan number 1
Institution	Language Center – Pedagogical University
Student's name	Mauricio Gómez Arévalo
Group	Basic II level
Topic	Friends
Communicative Objective	Describe the physical appearance and personality of the people.
Phase 1	
Presentation	As first step, the teacher presents the target vocabulary of the topic using flashcards. The teacher shows the flashcards and asks the students if they know the meaning of the pictures. Referring to students' answers, the teacher clarifies the proper meaning and pronunciation of each flashcard, assigning movements or specific actions to each flashcard.
Practice	The class is divided into groups and a miming game is carried out in which the vocabulary is practiced using the flashcards and the rehearsed actions. Once the students become familiarized with the vocabulary, each member of a group have to describe one member of another group in a way that both students, the one describing and the one being described, have to go to the front of the class. The student who is describing his or her partner can point to the flashcards that properly described his friend since all the flashcards are going to be scattered on the board, but the students cannot flip them.
Production	At the end of the class the students take a quiz to demonstrate that they have associated the words with the images portrayed on the flashcards.
Phase 2	
Presentation	The teacher introduces the grammatical structures and asks the students if they understand or are familiarized with them. The target structures are related to the questions What does he/she like? and What's he/she like? Taking into account what the students answer, proper clarifications are made and the teacher demonstrates how to use those structures in order to make questions, answers and affirmative and negative sentences.
Practice	The class is divided into groups and a miming game is carried out which main objective is to rehearse and to put into practice the target structures, interacting with their partners and using the flashcards worked on in the previous class as main tool of contextualization and source of meaningful practice. The students must create complete sentences with the objective of fulfilling the proposed activities, in which the students have to describe their partners making questions and using affirmative and negative sentences in plural and in singular.
Production	Employing the flashcards and the rehearsed structures, the participants of the different groups must create short dialogues, attempting to construct well-structured sentences with the aid of the teacher.
Phase 3 (First Part)	
Presentation	Using different images of teachers and characters that the students know, the teacher demonstrates how to describe them putting into practice and making emphasis on the worked grammar structures. However, the teacher adds more information in accordance to each character, making use of other structures, vocabulary and knowledge the students are expected to know.
Practice	The students must bring magazines and pictures of their favorite cartoons.

	Then, they gather in groups and start to describe the images that they brought, adding as much information as they want. In the end of that class, a member of each group is chosen to describe a picture selected by the teacher. While doing it, the teacher and the other students are allowed to ask questions and correct the participant if it is strictly necessary.
Production	In couples, the students must describe themselves and his/her partner in a written way following the previous outline, since they are free to add as much information about themselves as they want.
Phase 3 (Second Part)	
Production	A final exam is administered to the students in which they must apply the vocabulary and the studied structures. These activities make use of the images portrayed on the flashcards worked in class. In the second part of the exam, there is a cartoon which they must properly describe in terms of its physical appearance and personality.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

The following chapter presents the results and the interpretations of the data gathered along the implementation of the current project. These were analyzed based on the categories and indicators proposed in the preceding chapter. The data collection instruments such as field notes and student's artifacts provided the data to do a proper analysis process.

In this manner, it is worth mentioning some positive aspects that facilitated the process of investigation. Firstly, due to the small number of students it was possible to carry out the proposed activities and games in a controlled and organized manner. This aspect played a vital role since the students sometimes got very excited and competitive during the implementation of the proposed activities.

Another significant advantage was the good predisposition that most of the students showed towards the proposed activities. The students found them very useful and attractive since

it represented an engaging and enjoyable way to acquire knowledge. At the same time, the majority of the students' parents demonstrated to be involved in their child's processes, helping and monitoring them.

On the other hand, along the implementation of the project, it was necessary to follow a strict schedule that established the different activities. Since the Language Center has its own syllabus which must be covered by the teacher throughout the course, the researcher had to be very organized so as to cover the contents of the program and applying the activities of the research project at the same time. For that reason, the activities concerned to the project usually took place in the first hour of each session, and the rest of the time was used to cover the syllabus.

Besides this, in some occasions it was necessary to rearrange the schedule to apply the different activities because the facilities of the university were used to carry out electoral processes or it was not possible to have class due to the toxic environment inside the classrooms as a result of the strikes of the previous day. Despite these situations, the researcher managed to apply the proposed activities every time it was needed to achieve the aimed objectives.

In the next part of this document, the reader finds the data analysis. As presented in chapter 3, for each analysis category there are three indicators that will be the basis to analyze to what extent the objectives of this research project were fulfilled. The categories posed were the following: Vocabulary improvement and Expressing well-structured sentences. Hence, the analysis of the indicators corresponding to the mentioned categories is presented in the next part of this document.

Vocabulary improvement

This category refers to how the students associated, internalized and used the vocabulary worked on in the different sessions. Flash cards were used as main tool on this matter, as stated along the project. Next, the indicators related to this category are analyzed.

Children associate words and pictures to gain new vocabulary.

In relation to this indicator, it can be said that flashcards really had an impact on the way the students started to improve their vocabulary. At the beginning of the intervention it was a little bit difficult for them to associate some pictures to their corresponding meanings because sometimes the students did not understand the image itself, or because they did not have any idea about how to express the meaning of the image in English.

However, after showing them the proper meaning of each image portrayed in the flashcards, and the right pronunciation of the words, they rapidly started to associate the words and the pictures thanks to the drilling activities and the mime activities that each topic underwent in the first phase, as explained in chapter 4.

In the following picture it is possible to observe how the students really got familiarized with the vocabulary worked in each topic, and how well they associated the images with their respective meanings. It is necessary to clarify that in the first session of each topic the students were presented with the target vocabulary of the topic itself and worked on it, and then in the next session a quiz was administered to the students as a first step in order to check if they really had associated the words and the images. The next picture shows the results of one of those quizzes in which the main objective of the topic was to describe the daily routines of the people.

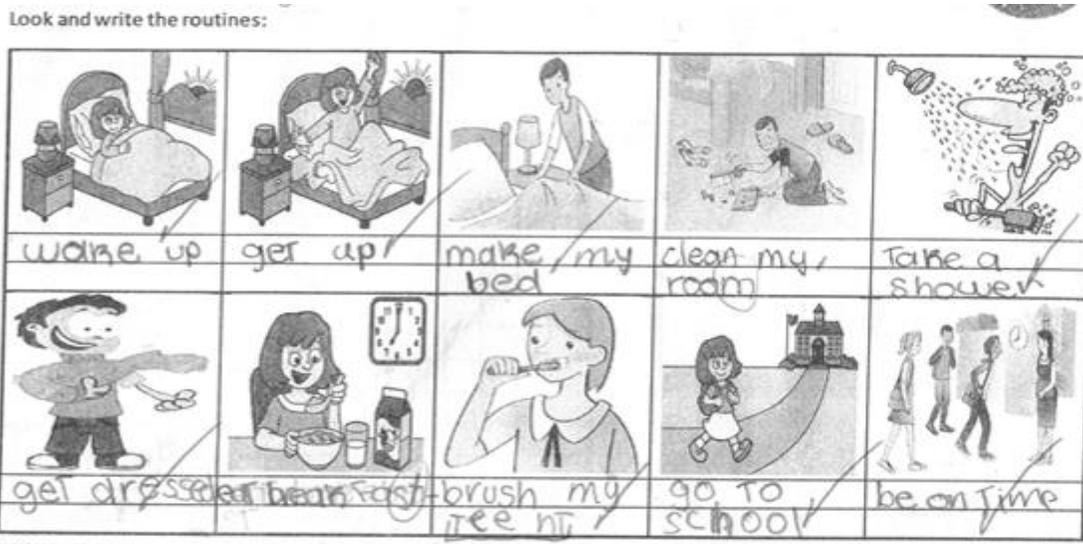


Figure 1. Students associate images and words.

Hence, the image above illustrates how the students really associated the images of the flashcards with their specific meanings. In this case, the students received a piece of paper displaying ten images related to the routines worked on in the previous class. The results of the quiz demonstrate that the students were really associating the images portrayed in the flashcards with their meanings as they successfully wrote the routine for each image.

Related to this, based on a series of experimental studies, Elgort (2011) asserted that intentional learning of vocabulary, which is the deliberate attempt to learn words as applied in the development of this research project, is more efficient than incidental learning since intentional learning of vocabulary speeds up learners' process of lexical development due to focused repetition or memorization strategies, which can be completed in a short period of time. As he argued, "well directed deliberate vocabulary learning using word cards is very effective and much more efficient than teaching and vocabulary exercises" (p. 536).

This is basically what happened in the very first step of each session, since it can be stated that students really associated the images and their meanings once the teacher had explained them applying the proposed drilling and mime activities.

Children internalize vocabulary in order to interact with their partners in the different activities.

With respect to this indicator, once the students have gotten familiarized with the aimed vocabulary for each topic, as stated in the analysis of the previous indicator, a series of activities took place, so the students could use and internalize that vocabulary. Thanks to those activities, which main purpose was to create an interactional environment among the students, the students internalized the aimed vocabulary since they developed those activities in a correct way, without demonstrating major hesitation and using the vocabulary in an effective and efficient way.

In this manner, in the classes in which the main objective was to describe the physical appearance and the personality of the people, the students had the opportunity to describe their friends using the flashcards worked in the previous class. Thus, the class was divided into five groups and each member of a group had to describe one member of another group in a way that both students, the one describing and the one being described, had to go to the front of the class. It is important to clarify that the student who was describing his or her partner could point to the flashcards that properly described his friend since all the flashcards were scattered on the board, but the student was not able to flip them. Consequently, most of the students did not hesitate when describing their classmates and they seemed to enjoy the activity very much as all of them were eager to participate, which proves that the students had really internalized the vocabulary. In the extract presented next it is possible to demonstrate the above,

Once the class has been divided into five groups and I have explained the activity, I chose a member of group number one and a member of group number two to come to the front of the class. The student from group number one starts describing his partner pointing to the flashcards meanwhile his partner looks at the flashcards and nods. Speaker number one goes like this: he... black hair, short hair, straight hair, brown eyes, thin, and... young...

Then, I asked him: what about personality? And the student says... ah si... friendly, clever, and... talkative... no more.

When he finishes the description I said: “well done, group number one gets a point”.

Immediately all the students start to shout: “teacher I want to participate”, “teacher me, me” (Field notes 1).

In this regard, Komachali and Khodareza (2012) investigated the effects of using paper-based flashcards on Iranian EFL pre-university students’ vocabulary knowledge. The results of their investigation indicated that the use of flashcards significantly helped the students’ vocabulary growth, compared to traditional vocabulary instruction without such aids. This supports the idea that the use of flashcards has potential to help learners enhance their vocabulary learning performance and elicit more favorable perceptions of intentional vocabulary learning.

Thus, thanks to the use of flashcards, in conjunction with interactional activities, there was a significant impact in the vocabulary growth of the students who participated in this project, which means that at the end they really internalized the target vocabulary of each topic.

Children use the new vocabulary to create meaningful sentences.

Regarding this indicator, after internalizing the vocabulary of each session, students could create meaningful sentences while expressing their ideas. The students could communicate their

thoughts in a way that was clear and significant for them and for their classmates. In other words, the students were not talking just using isolated words or vocabulary, but they were applying and using that vocabulary in a proper and substantial manner.

This aspect was reflected when the students were able to create complete affirmative or negative sentences when interacting with their partners. Continuing with the class analyzed in the previous indicator, in which the topic was describing the personality and physical appearance of people, the students now could create complete sentences and fulfill the proposed activities, in which the students had to describe their partners using affirmative and negative sentences in plural and in singular. In the next extract it is noticed how the students were carrying out this activity:

...in that manner, I chose one student of each group and they go to the front to the class. Then, I tell student number one to describe their partners taking into account the given directions. Then, the student goes like this pointing at his partners: “He has short hair, he doesn’t have long hair. She has curly hair, she isn’t talkative. They’re sporty, they don’t have glasses” (Field notes 2).

Thus, in the previous extract it can be analyzed how the students are constructing accurate sentences following the target grammatical patterns, as now they are effectively using the auxiliary don’t and doesn’t in order to create negative sentences. In the same vein, they are using in a correct way the verb to have and to be when talking about singular or plural subjects, using have or has, and is or are accordingly. It is important to mention that this activity was carried out employing the vocabulary worked in the previous class, and as it was demonstrated that the students successfully internalized it, it is deducible that now they were mainly focusing on creating meaningful sentences following the addressed patterns.

Related to this, Nation (2011) suggests that, among various vocabulary learning techniques, teachers should guide their students to make use of word cards in learner-centered ways, as he claims that well directed deliberate vocabulary learning using word cards is very effective and much more efficient than just teaching vocabulary exercises. Through the significant activities that were carried out during the sessions along the implementation of the current project, facilitated by the versatility and well directed deliberate use of the flashcards, the students had the opportunity to interact among them in contextualized situations, creating meaningful sentences since they have already associated and internalized the target vocabulary of each topic.

As a result, taking into account the analysis of each indicator of this category, it is stated that due to the effective and meaningful use of flashcards along the implementation of the project, children really associated and internalized the vocabulary worked in each planned session, which definitively allowed them to use that vocabulary to create meaningful sentences when talking about their partners and their real contexts, following the required patterns in a successfully and remarkable manner.

Expressing well-structured ideas

Through the indicators belonging to this category it is analyzed to what extent the students were able to create and express accurate sentences in both orally and in written, once they have become familiar with the aimed vocabulary of each topic. Next, such analysis is presented.

Children create well-structured sentences when participating in the different activities.

Regarding this indicator, once the children have associated, internalized and put into practice the aimed vocabulary for each topic, they were able to create sentences following the proper grammar patterns. This was evident since the proposed activities gave the kids the opportunity to use the taught structures in a variety of situations spontaneously. It is important to mention that during this stage, the teacher took the role of a guide, a consultant, and a facilitator who assisted students with their communicative tasks. The teacher's feedback and error correction were given immediately in the hope to help students get accuracy. Hence, thanks to those meaningful activities, the students certainly used the target structures to fulfill the proposed tasks reaching good levels of accuracy.

Accordingly, this aspect was evidenced in the third phase of the class that has been analyzed along this part of the project, in which the main goal was to describe the physical appearance and personality of people. During that phase, the students were asked to bring magazines and pictures of their favorite cartoons. Then, they gathered in groups and started to describe the images that they had brought once the teacher had demonstrated how to do it, making emphasis in the grammar structures that they were supposed to put into practice. In the end of that class, a member of each group was chosen to intend to describe a picture selected by the teacher. While doing it, the teacher and the other students were allowed to ask questions and correct the participant if it was necessary, but most of the students did a really good job since they made few mistakes, bearing in mind that they had the opportunity to practice within the groups and that they were talking about characters that they found appealing and meaningful. (See Field Notes 3)

In this regard, Ellis and Fotos (1999) argue that formal grammar instruction can have a positive impact on acquisition when grammatical structures are shown in context since it contributes to the development of accuracy, but it also has a general advantageous effect on acquisition of L2. The authors state: “formal instruction may work best in promoting acquisition when it is linked with opportunities for natural communication” (p. 20). This is a very relevant aspect in the development of this project due to the emphasis on the improvement of communicative grammatical competence, which is understood as the ability to use and understand a structure in a variety of situations spontaneously. Therefore, in accordance with what these authors mention and the results observed when analyzing this indicator the students really were able to create well-structured sentences when developing the proposed communicative activities.

Children interact with their partners in an accurate way when carrying out the proposed games.

Related to this indicator, the students were asked to produce the structures through the use of different communicative games. In this stage, working in pairs or groups was often intensified and the interaction between individuals and the whole class was effectively exploited. This fluency-oriented phase offered students wider opportunities to keep on participating in the proposed games. Dealing with these tasks, students were totally free to manipulate the target language communicating with their peers; thus, there was no sense in interrupting their working for any error correction despite the fact that really few mistakes were made. The teacher was

hence a facilitator, an organizer, or even a co-communicator who stimulated participation among students, emphasizing a real communication among the students in an accurate way.

In this regard, in one of the activities the students were asked to participate in a role play about shopping. In that activity, the class was divided in groups again, and using the flashcards worked on in the previous class, two students of each group were chosen to carry out the activity in each turn. One of the participants played the role of seller and the other the role of customer, and following the rehearsed grammatical structures, they were free to create a short dialogue using the flashcards that they selected.

It is important to mention that in this activity, the students achieved the aim about creating the dialogue using the expressions that they consider appropriate in order to greet, saying good bye and expressing surprise or gratitude. And as mentioned before, the students were not pressured to choose specific flashcards, but they had the opportunity to choose the flashcards that they desired or needed. Thus, it was evident that in this activity the students really made good use of the grammatical aspects taught during the previous sessions in an accurate way, while the proposed games took place (See Field notes 19).

In addition to this, Gunn and McCallum (2005) express that games are a useful means to help students learn, review, and internalize various grammar structures. Similarly, Vernon (2006) claims that as young learners play a game, they focus on the activity and end up absorbing the language subconsciously. Therefore, grammar learning becomes enjoyable and permanent since games provide learners with a meaningful context for practicing grammar communicatively. Games really encourage learners to direct their energy towards language learning by providing them with meaningful contexts. Hence, this was what happened during the implementation of

these kind of games in the development of the current project, since thanks to these activities it was demonstrated that students really interacted with their classmates in a very precise and accurate way.

Children produce and write accurate sentences when developing the aimed activities.

In relation to this indicator, throughout the implementation of the current project, the students demonstrated that once they had associated and internalized the target vocabulary of each topic using the flashcards in the different proposed activities, and once they had practiced the aimed grammar structures through the different communicative activities and the interaction with their classmates, they were able to produce and write accurate sentences. In the final part of each topic, a final evaluation was administered to the students in which they had to put into practice their knowledge, carrying out writing activities in which the students demonstrated that they really had assimilated the vocabulary and the grammatical structures studied along the different sessions.

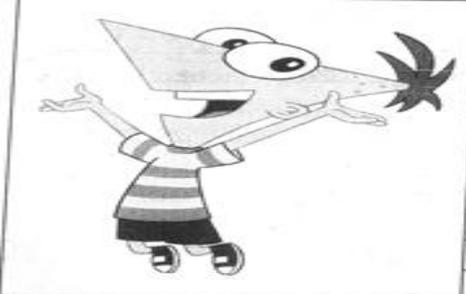
In this sense, the final evaluations mentioned before will be displayed in this section. Thus, in terms of the topic about physical appearance and personality, the students underwent an exam in which they had to write questions, affirmative and negative sentences in singular and plural. In the first part of the exam, the students had to write complete and accurate sentences based on the same images portrayed in the flashcards used during the previous classes, following the given instructions. In the second part of the exam, the students had to describe a cartoon, writing sentences related to its physical appearance and its personality.

Next, some pictures of that exam are displayed, in which it is possible to notice that in fact the students were producing and writing accurate sentences in terms of grammar and vocabulary.

• Look at the images and make questions and answers about physical appearance. (Q: Question; AF: Answer affirmative; AN: Answer negative)

#	Subject	(+)	(-)	SENTENCES
1				Q: what does he look like ? AF: he has spiky hair ✓ AN: he doesn't have curly hair ✓
2				Q: what does she look like ? AF: she has long hair ✓ AN: she doesn't have light hair ✓
3				Q: what do they look like ? AF: they have dark hair ✓ AN: they don't have glasses ✓

4. Describe Phineas. Make affirmative (+) or negative (-) sentences.



What does he look like?

(+) he has spiky hair ✓

(+) he has handsome ✗

(-) he doesn't have long hair ✓

(-) he doesn't build ✗

What's he like?

(+) Phineas is clever ✓

(+) Phineas is sporty ✓

(-) Phineas isn't shy ✓

(-) Phineas isn't bossy ✓

Figure 2. Evidence of student evaluations.

Thus, the previous image shows that the students are creating correct sentences when asking about physical appearance. They are following a correct structure in order to create WH questions, putting in first place the word What, followed by the proper auxiliary do or does, then the subject and the complement. It can be noticed that there is agreement between the auxiliary and the subject in all the questions. At the same time, when answering it can be noticed that there is agreement between the subject and the verbs for affirmative and negative sentences in both

plural and singular, as the students accurately write: she has, she doesn't have, they have, and they don't have.

In the second part of the image, it can be noticed how the students are freely answering questions about Phineas, a well-known cartoon by children, related to its physical appearance and personality. In this part this student committed two grammatical mistakes because he wrote has instead of is when intending to say that Phineas is handsome. And the student wrote doesn't instead of isn't when intending to say that Phineas isn't bald. However, the student did an overall good job as the rest of the sentences are perfect.

Thus, through the previous images, it is demonstrated how the students are producing accurate sentences, using the proper structures in order to write questions, affirmative and negative sentences in both plural and singular, taking care of a suitable agreement among the subject and the verb in the sentences.

Besides this, Pham and Binh (2005) state that being instructed grammar from a communicative perspective, students achieve better outcomes not only in form but in function. Through their research, these investigators demonstrated that the students who were taught grammar from a communicative perspective got higher scores both in grammar-paper test and oral test. Thus, that research reinforces the results obtained in the different evaluations applied to the students as the concluding part of each topic of the current research project, in which the students really demonstrated that they had internalized the aimed vocabulary and the target grammatical structures.

In conclusion, the analyses carried out for each indicator belonging to this category demonstrated that due to the implementation of the different communicative games and activities the students went through internalizing and putting into practice the target grammatical structures. The students reached high levels of accuracy when developing the different activities, which was specially demonstrated in the evaluations in which they had to write complete affirmative and negative sentences and questions, either writing in a free way or solving specific questions or tasks.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS SUMMARY

This chapter presents the general results arising from the implementation of the current project. The two main categories posed on the project are: Vocabulary improvement and Expressing well-structured sentences.

With respect to the first category, flashcards really had an impact on the way the students started to improve their vocabulary. Through the use of flashcards and the images they portrayed, it was easy for the students to gain new vocabulary as the images gave them a clear idea of the meaning of the words without a major explanation. Besides this, thanks to the implementation of the miming activities this process was really boosted, since when carrying out the different miming games, which were developed in groups, the students truly got engaged and excited. Therefore, the students were immersed in a meaningful activity which allow them to put the aimed vocabulary into practice, and as a result they really associated and internalized it.

Besides this, it was evident that the students really took advantage of the new vocabulary in meaningful activities. Thus, once the students have associated and internalized the aimed

vocabulary for each topic, they used the new vocabulary to complete another series of activities that follow the same pattern as the previous one. Therefore, in those activities the students were divided into groups again, but they had to interact among the different members of the groups using the flashcards to fulfill activities asking and answering to their partners. As a result, the students were given the opportunity to put into practice the vocabulary once more, but this time they were not just using isolated words but using it in a meaningful way.

In connection with the second category, once the children have associated, internalized and put into practice the aimed vocabulary for each topic, they were able to create sentences following the proper grammar patterns. Having the teacher explained in a very clear manner the target structures, answering all the questions from part of the students, they really used the taught structures that helped them to perform the games, based on the use of flashcards once more. Due to the interactive activities proposed by the teacher, the students certainly used the target structures whose aim was to fulfill the different tasks reaching good levels of accuracy, linked to the rectifications made by the teacher.

Besides this, the students were expected to apply the target grammatical structures beyond the activities based on flashcards. The students applied accurately the grammar patterns when doing another kind of communicative activities in which they mainly talk about their lives or their contexts. Thus, the students made use of other grammatical structures or vocabulary since they were free to do it every time they had to accomplish the activities in a creative way.

Additionally, it is interesting to point out how the implementation of games are a useful means to help students learn and internalize grammar structures. Due to this games in which they

had to work in groups to get some points, the students got engaged and excited about the activities, and they internalized the structures in a meaningful and enjoyable way.

Finally, with the implementation of this project, the students demonstrated that once they had associated and internalized the target vocabulary of each topic using the flashcards in the different proposed activities, and once they had practiced the aimed grammar structures through the different communicative activities and the interaction with their classmates, they were able to produce and write accurate sentences. In the final part of each topic, a final evaluation was administered to the students in which they had to put into practice their knowledge, carrying out writing activities in which the students demonstrated that they really had assimilated the aimed vocabulary and the target grammatical structures covered along the different sessions.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the general conclusions emerging from the implementation of the current project, considering the formulated objectives. Accordingly, with regards to the first objective related to sentence formation, the implementation was effective in improving students' grammatical knowledge. These satisfying results may be explained by a number of different factors:

In first place, the grammar training was always conducted in a communicative way, which eventually yielded agreeable effects on the students. Learning the target grammatical structures was indeed favored by the use of flashcards and games, in which the students felt totally engaged and excited. The students' motivation and involvement were maintained due to the interaction

among them. As a result, with the application of meaningful mechanical drills, through engaging activities based on the use of flashcards, the target grammar rules were absorbed subconsciously.

Besides this, the grammar lessons were not taught in isolation, real and engaging activities were considered to consolidate the grammar structures, which reinforced the mastery of the grammar points. The tasks for introducing, practicing, and consolidating the form, meaning and use of the target structures were designed under a communicative perspective and successfully carried out in various forms of oral and written practices.

Furthermore, students felt totally comfortable to be in company with their peers and were given freedom to share their own ideas with friends. Students found it quite free to communicate with their classmates within the domains of their interest without any interruption for error correcting from the teacher; hence they could apply the grammar structures and rules previously practiced, in a communicative way.

In conclusion, the participants obtained full understanding and ability to use the target structures properly since the different phases appealed the students' interest; using the language in context and with the intention of developing an accurate production, as it was demonstrated through the good results in the final exam of each topic.

Regarding to the second objective relate to the students' vocabulary, the implementation was effective in improving students' lexical knowledge through the use of flashcards. This can be elucidated in the sense of the next explanations:

In the first place, working with flashcards was very useful since it facilitated the association and internalization of words. When observing the images portrayed in the flashcards, the students could easily deduce the meaning of the associate word. Sometimes it was necessary a

brief explanation due to lack of general knowledge or some misunderstandings, but once they were explained, the association became obvious for the students.

Besides this, thanks to the miming activities carried out, the students got really engaged with the proposed game and acquired the aimed vocabulary in an amusing and meaningful manner. The main goal of the students was to get points since they were working in groups, but unconsciously they were assimilating the aimed vocabulary, while necessary corrections about pronunciation took place. The good marks obtained by the students in the different quizzes applied to this respect ultimately demonstrate this deed.

On the other hand, the development of this project gave the researcher the opportunity to deeply explore the theories and concepts that ultimately were the source of information and knowledge that enabled the establishment of the different and proper goals, steps and analysis carried out since the very beginning till the conclusion of the research project. Along the degree, the university offers a lot of pedagogical tools and academic knowledge to the students in terms of the teaching profession. Nonetheless, it is not until the real application of this kind of investigations that the students really have the opportunity and necessity to deepen and apply all of that essential and valuable knowledge.

Additionally, this enriching experience gave the researcher the opportunity to really get in touch with the educational contexts that are presented in our country. The teacher provided possible solutions to face different academic issues that might arise within a classroom context, as it was evidenced along the project. At the same time, the teacher was given the opportunity to acquire tools whose aim was to approach and manage the endless situations that can be presented in a classroom.

Furthermore, despite the students at the Language center always displayed a receptive disposition towards all the implemented activities and the few number of them, circumstances that tested the professionalism and expertise of the researcher were presented all the time; situations related to social aspects, group management, parent meetings, personal relationships, among others. Ultimately, these circumstances allowed the teacher to acquire tools in order to cope with all this kind of situations that can be presented at any time along his professional life as a teacher.

Moreover, the project meant a profound enrichment in the sense of creating and building up a proper investigation. The researcher had the opportunity to have a firsthand encounter with what really means to carry out a serious investigation process. Thanks to this, it was possible to identify and give a proper solution to an existing issue in a specific institution, in this case the Language Center. Eventually, all this methodological and relevant information gives the trainee teacher the possibility to apply the gained knowledge in this regards in future major investigations, which aim to offer solutions to a great variety of issues that surely arise in other classroom contexts throughout the Colombian territory and ultimately all around the world.

CHAPTER 8

SUGGESTIONS

Along the implementation of the current project, it was evident how the grammatical competence of the students improved thanks to the communicative perspective under it was addressed. For that reason, it is advisable to approach the teaching of grammar from a communicative perspective since it allows the students the opportunity to acquire useful and vital

knowledge which will serve them as support when tackling other skills or competences.

Undoubtedly, there are other ways to approach and teach grammar, but no matter what approach is used, it is advisable to do it in a meaningful way in which all the students get involved as much as possible.

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that when the class is divided to work in groups, this becomes very useful and beneficial for all the students, especially when the participation of all the members of the different groups is expected. When students work in groups, they help each other to fulfill the proposed activities, and all the students benefit from this kind of approach, especially those with lower level of English. Ultimately, carrying out classes that meet this trait is highly recommended, particularly if there are students who display difficulties in their English language learning processes.

Moreover, when teaching classes that employ games, especially competitive ones, the students tend to get very excited and even aggressive. For that reason, it is suggested to control that kind of behavior taking advantage of the methodology of the games; for instance, in the developed project the groups lost points if they misbehaved or demonstrated disrespectful behaviors.

On the other hand, applying a pedagogical proposal within the Language Center was a very significant experience which allowed the trainee teacher to put into practice his knowledge. However, as the trainee teacher assumed total responsibility of the assigned course he needed to fulfill the syllabus that the Language Center follows. For that reason, it is necessary to take into consideration that the researcher needed to allocate enough time to carry out the proposed activities. Thus, it is recommended that the Language Center makes some changes in the different

syllabuses when a specific group is under an investigative process, so it contemplates the sufficient time the researchers may employ to implement their investigations.

Besides this, as the trainee teacher must fulfill the syllabus corresponding to the assigned course, it would be very useful if the researcher gets into contact with it in the first stages of the proposal, in this sense the researcher can contemplate the real contents that must be covered during the course adapting his own proposal in a convenient way, in which he addresses the topics of the syllabus and the activities of his research project correlatively.

Finally, as the trainee teacher is representing the Language Center and ultimately the university itself, it would be very beneficial if the researchers get constant advice and instruction not just from part of the thesis advisor, but from the board of the Language Center itself, especially bearing in mind that this is the first kind of real job for most of the researchers.

REFERENCES

- Avedon, E.M. (1971). The structural elements of games. In Avedon, E.M and Sutton Smith, B. (Eds) *The study of games* (pp 419-426). New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Baleghizadeh, S. & Ashoori, A. (2011). The Impact of Two Instructional Techniques on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge: Flashcards versus Word Lists. *MEXTESOL Journal*. pp. 35(2), 70-82.
- Bekiri, R. (August, 2003). Playing with questions-A game for young learners. *The Internet TESL Journal*. Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Lessons/Bekiri-QuestionGame/>
- Beltran, P. (2015). Vocabulary Learning Through Pictures. (Under-graduate thesis) Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Bogotá
- Brown, H., Malmkjaer, P. & Williams, T. (2002). *Teaching by Principles: Interactive Language Teaching Methodology*. New York: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: a guide for Practitioners*. New York: Rouylledge.
- Canale, M. & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*. pp. 1-47.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (1980). *Research methods in education*. Routledge.
- Cross, D. (2000). *A practical handbook of language teaching*. Harlow: Longman.

- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The sage handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Díaz-Rico, L. T. & Weed, K. Z. (2010). *The crosscultural, language, and academic development handbook: A complete K-12 reference guide* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Ehri, L. C., & Roberts, K. T. (1979). Do beginners learn printed words better in context or in isolation? *Child Development*, 50(3), 675-685.
- Elgort, I. (2011). Deliberate learning and vocabulary acquisition in a second language. *Language Learning*, (61), 367-413.
- Elgort, I., & Nation, P. (2010). Vocabulary learning in a second language: Familiar answers to new questions. In P. Seedhouse, S. Walsh, & C. Jenks (Eds.), *Conceptualizing Learning in Applied Linguistics* (pp. 89-104). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Elliot, J. (1993). *Action Research for Educational Change*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Ellis, R., & Fotos, S. (1999). *Learning a second language through interaction*. Amsterdam, NL: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Gunn, C., & McCallum, A. (2005). Climbing grammar mountain: An interactive learning experience. *English Teaching Forum*, (43), 38-41.
- Hussein, A. (2009). The use of triangulation in social sciences research: Can qualitative and quantitative methods be combined? *Journal of Comparative Social Work*, 4(1), 1-26.

- Hulstijn, J. H. (2003). Incidental and intentional learning. In C. J. Doughty, & M. H. Long (Eds.), *The Handbook of Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 349-381). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Hymes D.H. (1972). On communicative competence. In Gumperz J.J. & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics*. Holt: Rinehart & Winston.
- Komachali, M. E., & Khodareza, M. (2012). The effect of using vocabulary flash card on Iranian pre-university students' vocabulary knowledge. *International Education Studies*, 5(3). 134-147. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n3p134>
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2001). Teaching grammar. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 251-266). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Leech, G. & Svartvik J. (2013). *A communicative grammar of English*. Great Britain: Routledge.
- Lyster, R. (1996). Question forms, conditionals, and second-person pronouns used by adolescent native speakers across two levels of formality in written and spoken French. *The Modern Language Journal* (80), 165-182.
- McCallum, G. P. (1980). *101 word games: For students of English as a second or foreign language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCarthy, M., 1990. *Vocabulary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McCullough, C. (1955). Flash cards-The opiate of the reading program? *Elementary English* (32), 379-381.
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Introduction to qualitative research. Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

- Nagy, W. E., Herman P. A., & Anderson, R. C. (1988). Learning words from context. *Reading Research Quarterly* (23), 122-134.
- Nation, P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2011). Research into practice: Vocabulary. *Language Teaching*, 44(4), 529–539.
- O'Donoghue, T. & Punch K. (2003). *Qualitative Educational Research in Action: Doing and Reflecting*. London: Routledge.
- Pham, V.P.H. & Binh, N. T. (2014). The effects of communicative grammar teaching on students' achievement of grammatical knowledge and oral production. *English Language Teaching*, 7(6), 15-20.
- Nguyen-Giao, Q. & Nguyen-Hoa, T. N. (2014). Applying Communicative Methods to Teaching Grammar: An Experiment. *Teacher's Edition*, (pp. 16-25).
- Richards, J. C. (2016). *Teaching listening and speaking*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching Today*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Rixon, S., Flavell, R. H. & Vincent, M. (1991). *How to use games in language teaching*. Hong Kong: Modern English.
- Sagor, R. (2005). *Guiding school improvement with action research*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Slavin, R. E. (1980). Cooperative learning. *Review of Educational Research* (50), 315- 342.

Vernon, S. (February, 2006). Teaching grammar with fun learning games. Retrieved from <http://www.simplyesl.com/articles/97/1/Teaching-Grammar-with-Fun-Learning-Games/Page1.html>.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wesche, M. & Paribakht, T. S. (1996). Assessing second language vocabulary knowledge: Depth versus breadth. *Canadian Modern Language Review* (53), 13–40.

Wright, Andrew. (2011, May 23). Grammar Practice: Mechanical and Communicative. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://andrewarticlesandstories.wordpress.com/articles/grammar-practice-mechanical-and-communicative/>

APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Consent Form

It is important to keep in mind that the personal information of the students involved in this project is protected, due to the factor of confidentiality that is inherent to this kind of studies, especially when working with children. For that reason, the parents of these children were asked for permission in order to consent the participation of their kids in this project. Next, the reader will find the Consent Form that the parents signed expressing their authorization.

El estudiante Mauricio Gómez de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional está llevando a cabo una investigación de carácter cualitativo. El principal objetivo de esta investigación es identificar cómo la implementación de actividades de carácter comunicativo afecta la competencia gramatical y el vocabulario de los estudiantes.

Si usted está de acuerdo con que su hijo participe en este estudio, es importante que tenga en cuenta que se llevarán a cabo entrevistas para evidenciar de qué manera el proyecto se viene desarrollando. De igual manera, se realizarán diarios de campo, grabaciones de audio y grabaciones de video con el fin de recoger información de forma detallada y así analizar adecuadamente los procesos llevados a cabo en el salón de clase.

La participación en este proyecto es voluntaria y los estudiantes pueden retirarse del mismo en cualquier momento si así lo desean, lo cual no tendrá consecuencias negativas en sus procesos académicos. Antes de entregar el reporte final de este proyecto, les será enviado un resumen de la información que se ha consignado con respecto a las entrevistas y las grabaciones de audio y video con el fin de saber si tienen comentarios con respecto a las descripciones o interpretaciones que ustedes creen sean imprecisas o erróneas.

En el informe de este proyecto nos aseguraremos de proteger las identidades de los participantes. En ningún momento se hará referencia a nombres personales y el investigador será la única persona que tendrá acceso a la información recogida en el desarrollo del proyecto. Cualquier información que sea publicada será únicamente con propósitos ilustrativos. Si usted desea tener una copia del reporte final de este proyecto puede facilitársele.

Los aspectos éticos de este estudio han sido aprobados por la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Cualquier queja por parte suya será tratada con confidencialidad y será informado oportunamente de las repercusiones de la misma.

Acepto la participación de mi hijo en el desarrollo de este proyecto.

Firma del padre o acudiente

Nombre del investigador

Appendix 2. Syllabus Language Center

The next appendix shows the syllabus that the Language Center follows for the course in which the research project took place. It demonstrates how the Language Center aims to embrace the planned topics and the general organization of the course.



UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA NACIONAL
Educación de calidad

CENTRO DE LENGUAS UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA NACIONAL
ENGLISH INTERMEDIATE 1 KIDS 9 -12 YEARS OLD
(UPBEAT ELEMENTARY UNIT 1 TO 6)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: By the end of this level students will be able to give detailed information about themselves and their families. Students will be able to differentiate past and present events describing real life situations. They will also be able to write simple paragraphs describing past events.

UNIT AND TOPIC	COMMUNICATIVE OBJECTIVES	LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES	VOCABULARY	SKILLS
UNIT 1 FAMILY LIFE 1. He goes to my school 2. I usually go to bed at ten. 3. We're having a barbecue. 4. Across cultures <u>Suggested time: 10 hours</u>	* Exchange personal Information * Talk about daily routines * Function: Make and respond to requests	Present simple Adverbs and expressions of frequency Present continuous	* Family * Countries and nationalities * Daily routines * Phrases with have * The time * Leisure activities	Read: Your world MyPlace.co.net Listen: Fill in a registration form Write: a paragraph about your partner's routine
UNIT 2 MY WORLD 1. People are watching. 2. Where are yours? 3. Is there any ketchup? 4. Curriculum link <u>Suggested time: 10 hours</u>	* Play a game to guess a job * Function: Shopping * Talk about food for a picnic	Present simple and present continuous Whose...? Genitive 's and s' Possessive adjectives and pronouns Countable and uncountable nouns with some, any and no	* Jobs * Money * Everyday objects * Food and drink	Read: Dream job for a day Write: a diary entry about a job Listen: to a conversation and write a shopping list
FIRST TERM SUGGESTED WEBQUEST: LIVES				
Unit 3 SPORTS 1. I hate losing. 2. You mustn't hurt him. 3. I'm not going to do that again! 4. Real-life issue <u>Suggested time: 11 hours</u>	* Talk about sports and free time * Talk about rules at home * Function: Ask for, make and respond to suggestions	Verbs of emotion + gerund form (-ing) Imperatives Must/mustn't for rules Going to for future plans, intentions and predictions	Sports and activities with play, go, do Sports places Parts of the body	Read: Quiz: How Sporty are you? Karate Write: a website entry looking for a pen friend Listen: to instructions for gymnastic exercises

<p>Unit 4 PLACES</p> <p>1. It's larger than our house. 2. There isn't much room. 3. How high is it? 4. Across cultures <u>Suggested time: 11 hours</u></p>	<p>* Function: Ask permission and respond</p>	<p>Comparative and superlative of adjectives Countable and uncountable nouns with much, many, a lot of, a few, a little Question word How + adjectives of dimension</p>	<p>* House and furniture * Common uncountable nouns * Large numbers</p>	<p>Read: House swap in Sydney, Australia Listen: to a house description Write: an online encyclopedia entry about places</p>
SECOND TERM SUGGESTED WEBQUEST: SHOPPING				
<p>UNIT 5 TRUTH AND LIES</p> <p>1. Were you in my room? 2. It chased the cat! 3. I lost my bus ticket. 4. Curriculum link <u>Suggested time: 11 hours</u></p>	<p>* Talk about where you were at different times * Pronunciation: -ed endings * Talk about the past * Function: Make and respond to apologies about what you did</p>	<p>Past simple of verb to be Past adverbial phrases Past simple of regular verbs Past simple of irregular verbs Past adverbial phrases with ago</p>	<p>*Dates: Ordinal numbers, months and years * Common regular verbs * Verb and noun collocations</p>	<p>Listen: to information about celebrity birthdays Read: Urban myths – true or false? Write: a story from pictures</p>
<p>UNIT 6 STORIES</p> <p>1. Was she driving? 2. He was driving when ... 3. A monster which comes alive. 4. Real-life issue <u>Suggested time: 11 hours</u></p>	<p>* Talk about things that happened * Talk about films * Function: Buy tickets at the cinema</p>	<p>Past continuous Past continuous and past simple Defining relative clauses with who, which and where it while and when</p>	<p>* The weather * Prepositions of place and motion * Types of film</p>	<p>Listen: to a story Read: Crazy crimes Write: a story about the world's worst burglar</p>
FINAL EXAM SUGGESTED WEBQUEST: HOUSING				

Appendix 3. Survey

A survey was implemented at the beginning of the implementation in order to get general information about the students by observing their age, academic performance, economic status and some of their perceptions toward their own English learning process.

Cuestionario de Caracterización



Con el siguiente cuestionario deseamos conocer algunos aspectos básicos sobre tu familia y ciertas características relacionadas con tu aprendizaje del idioma inglés.

Nombre: _____

Edad : _____

Género : O Masculino
O Femenino

1. ¿En qué curso estás? _____

2. ¿En qué barrio vives? _____

3. ¿Con quién vives? _____

4. ¿Cuál es la ocupación de tus padres o acudientes?

- Mamá: _____
- Papá: _____
- Otro acudiente: _____

5. ¿Quién te ayuda a hacer tus tareas?

- O Mamá o papá
- O Hermanos o familiares
- O Tutores
- O No me ayudan
- O Otro. ¿Cuál? _____

6. ¿Qué actividades realizas en tu tiempo libre y cuánto tiempo dedicas a ella?

O Estudiar o hacer tareas. ¿Cuántas horas? _____

- Leer. ¿Cuántas horas? _____
 - Ver televisión. ¿Cuántas horas? _____
 - Jugar con tus amigos. ¿Cuántas horas? _____
 - Jugar videojuegos. ¿Cuántas horas? _____
 - Navegar en Internet. ¿Cuántas horas? _____
 - Otras. ¿Cuál? _____
¿Cuántas horas? _____
7. ¿Pertenece a algún grupo deportivo, cultural o académico?
- Si
 - No
 - ¿Cuál? _____
8. ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de la clase de inglés?
- _____
- _____
- _____
9. ¿Qué otras actividades te gustaría hacer en la clase de inglés?
- Ver videos
 - Cantar canciones
 - Juegos y dinámicas
 - Escribir
 - Leer
 - Dibujar
 - Otra. ¿Cuál? _____
10. ¿Qué haces para aprender inglés en tu tiempo libre?
- Ver videos en inglés
 - Ver películas o televisión en inglés
 - Escuchar canciones en inglés
 - Leer diferentes historias en inglés
 - Escribir en inglés
 - Otro. ¿Cuál? _____
11. ¿Qué te parece fácil de aprender inglés?
- Pronunciar
 - Escribir
 - Leer
 - Aprender vocabulario
 - Entender videos y canciones en inglés

Aprender canciones en inglés
¿Por qué?

12. ¿Qué te parece más difícil de aprender inglés?

- Pronunciar
- Escribir
- Leer
- Aprender vocabulario
- Entender videos y canciones en inglés
- Aprender canciones en inglés

¿Por qué?

13. Prefieres trabajar:

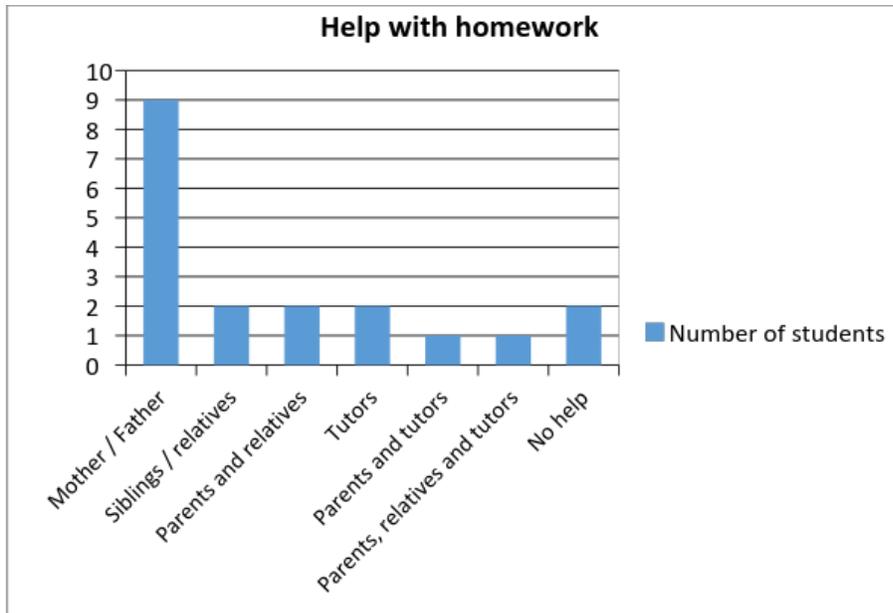
- En grupo
- Individual

¿Por qué?

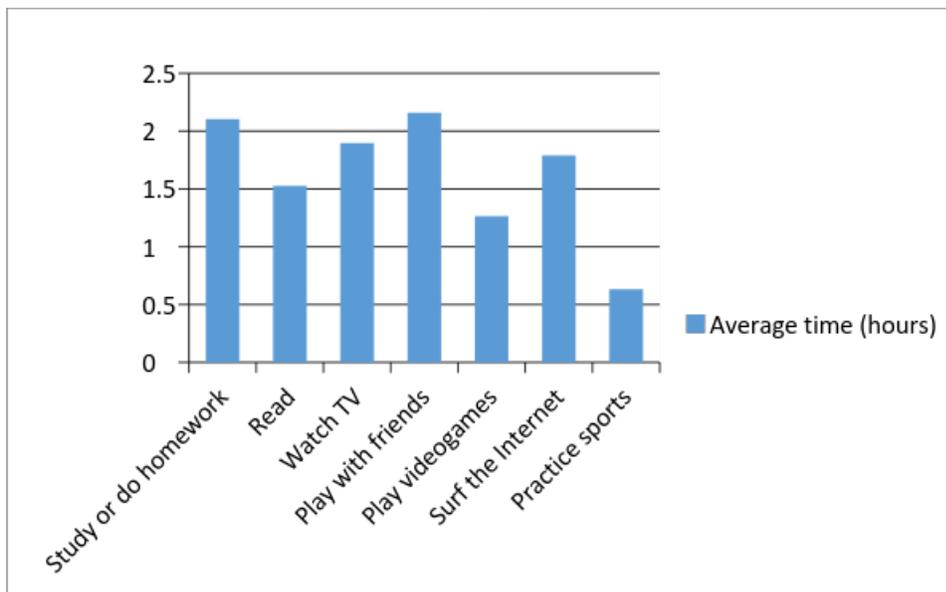
¡Gracias!

Graphs related to the answers to the questionnaire.

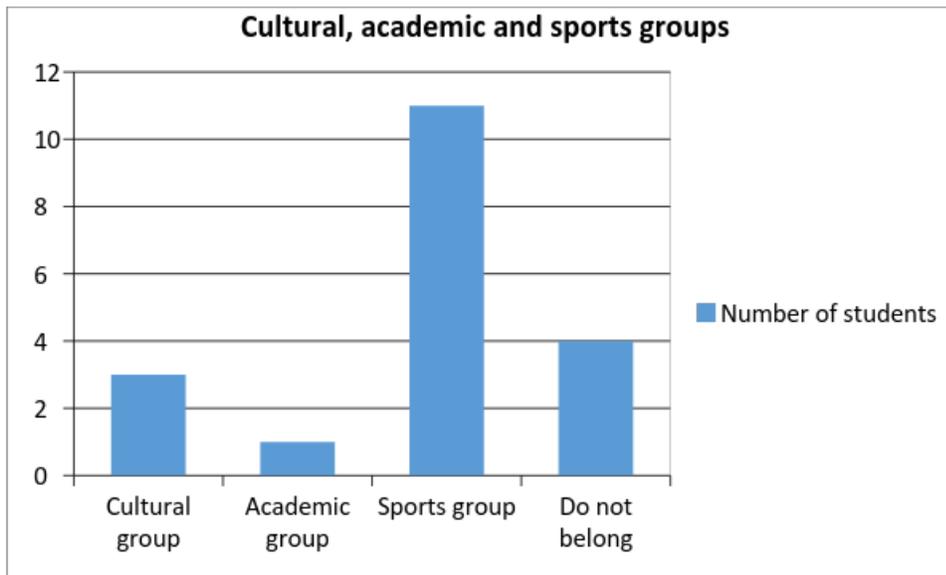
- Who helps you with your homework?



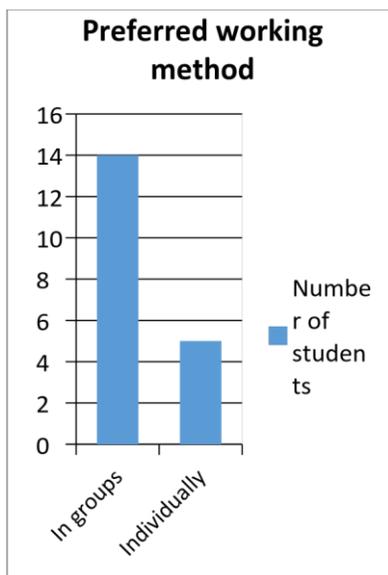
- What activities do you do in your spare time and how long you spend on them?



- Do you belong to a cultural, academic or sports group?



- Do you prefer working in groups or individually?



Appendix 4. Evaluation administered by the Language Center

The next appendix portrays the general structure and organization of the evaluations administered by the Language Center to the students that participated in the project. They were analyzed in order to identify the general issues or difficulties that the students displayed as a first step in the proposal.

	UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL <i>Escuela de Educadores</i>	FINAL EXAM TOTAL SCORE: 50 POINTS FORM B
---	---	--

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS BOOKLET. USE THE ANSWER SHEET

READING SECTION

Read the text below and then answer the questions.

The world's dumbest criminals!

1. Last month, someone took my coat from a restaurant downtown. In my coat was a wallet, with \$50 and two tickets to the next baseball game. I told the police. Well, yesterday was Saturday-the day of the game. I went to the game with two policemen and yes, that's right-the man who took my coat was there, with his girlfriend. He was even wearing my coat! Now, how dumb is that?

2. My husband is a policeman. He told me this story: Three robbers ran into a local bank, shouting, "Hands up! Give us the money!" Unfortunately, one of the men fell over. He fell onto the other two men-who also fell over. They got up and shouted, "We want \$10,000!" The people in the bank weren't frightened. They thought it was a joke and started laughing. The men thought that people were laughing because they asked for too much money. They decided to ask for less. "We want \$1,000!" they shouted. The people in the bank laughed even more. The robbers reduced the amount to \$100. Finally, the men asked for just one dollar each. The people in the bank couldn't stop laughing. One of the men became angry. He jumped onto a table. However, he fell and broke his leg. The other two men ran outside " falling over my husband and his buddies. They caught the men, who are now in prison and his buddies. They caught the men, who are now in prison.

3. This was in my local paper: One evening last week, a young man went into a convenience store. He said to the young woman working there, "Give me all the money." He said he had a gun, but he didn't show it to her. She put the money in a bag and gave it to him. Then he said he wanted a bottle of vodka that was on the wall behind her. The young woman thought this was a bit dumb, so she said, "No, I don't think you are twenty-one years old." The man became angry and said he was over twenty-one. The young woman still refused to give him the vodka. Finally, the man took his ID card from his coat. He showed the young woman. "Oh, OK," she said, and gave him the bottle. After he left, she called the police. She told them the name and address on the ID card. The police caught the man two hours later. Pretty dumb, wasn't he?

A. Read these questions and write your answers. (0.5 EACH)

a. What was inside the coat taken from the restaurant? _____

b. Who went to the baseball game with the robber? _____

B. For each statement, write T (true) or F (false). (0.5 EACH)

a. The people in the bank started to laugh because one of the robbers fell down. _____

b. The young woman phoned the police and gave them the robber's ID card _____

c. When the bank robbers first went into the bank, they shouted "hands up and give us the money" _____

d. When the robber said he had a gun the woman refuses to give him the money _____

e. The convenience store robber was over twenty-one. _____

f. The three bank robbers are now in prison. _____

- g. In all the stories, the criminals used guns. _____
 h. The criminal in the restaurant took the man's coat. _____

GRAMMAR SECTION

1. Complete the phone call with the present simple or continuous. (2.5 POINTS, 0.5 EACH)

A: Hi, Jon. Where are you?
 B: New York!
 A: What ¹ _____ (you / do) there?
 B: I ² _____ (visit) my friend Lucy.
 A: ³ _____ (she / live) in New York?
 B: Yes, she works for a magazine. It's her birthday, so we ⁴ _____ (sit) in a restaurant and we ⁵ _____ (look) at Central Park through the window.

2. Use the words below to compare the people in the pictures. (3.0 POINTS, 0.5 EACH)

old tall intelligent heavy fast pretty



- 1 Monica is _____ Lisa.
 2 Fred is _____ Alex.
 3 Isabel is _____ Eveline.
 4 Marina is _____ Tina.
 5 Chris is _____ Roland.
 6 Dominic is _____ Tim.

3. Use the prompts to write questions and short answers in past continuous. (2.0 POINTS, 0.5 EACH)

- 1 they / wear jeans? - ✗ _____
 2 we / wait for a bus? - ✓ _____
 3 he / play golf? - ✗ _____
 4 you / send some emails? - ✓ _____

4. Complete each sentence (1–5) with a relative clause from the list below. (2.5 POINTS, 1.5 EACH)

- which stays open until 11.30 p.m.
- who live in New York
- which he can play videos with
- who loves tigers
- where there are lots of cafés

- 1 The book is about a girl _____
- 2 David's got a mobile phone _____
- 3 She lives in a town _____
- 4 There's a supermarket next to my house _____
- 5 This story is about some teenagers _____

LISTENING SECTION

1. Listen to Daisy and Emily and circle the correct answers. (5.0 POINTS, 1.0 EACH)

- 1 Daisy likes **romantic comedies / crime films**.
- 2 Emily looks for films **in a newspaper / on the Internet**.
- 3 Daisy wants to see the new **Shrek / Bond** film.
- 4 Daisy buys two **child / adult** tickets.
- 5 Daisy and Emily go to see the **4.15 / 6.15** performance.

2. Listen again and answer true (T) or false (F). (5.0 POINTS, 1.0 EACH)

- 1 The film *Boy meets Girl* is about a boy who lives on Mars.
- 2 *The Evil Prawn* is a horror film.
- 3 Daisy likes prawns.
- 4 Emily is fifteen.
- 5 The film tickets cost £10.90.

Appendix 5. Field notes 1

One of the data collection tools that were implemented along the implementation of the research was the field notes. The main goal for implementing this tool was to get relevant information from students in order to analyze it and nourish the research project.

Institution: Centro de Lenguas	Cycle: Basic 2 Children 9 – 12	Trainee teacher: Mauricio Gómez A.
Shift: Afternoon		
Date: 01-02-14	Hour: 1:00 – 2:00	Topic: Friends
Class development		
<p>As a first step, the teacher presents the target vocabulary of the lesson using flashcards. The teacher shows the flashcards and asks the students if they know the meaning of the pictures. Taking into account the answers of the students, the teacher clarifies the proper meaning and pronunciation of each flashcard, assigning a movement or a specific action to each flashcard. After that, the class is divided into groups of 4 students and they rehearse the meaning and movement assigned to each flashcard during 5 to 10 minutes. Then, a game is carried out in which, taking turns, one participant of each group goes to the front of the class and guesses the word that his / her partners are representing through the rehearsed movements, taking into account the flashcard that the teacher is displaying to the whole group. When the student says the word within the 5 seconds that the teacher is counting aloud, his/her group wins a point. At the end of this first activity, the group that has more points wins the game. To control their behavior and level of excitement, a group losses one point if they are making too much noise or misbehaving.</p> <p>After the first activity, working in the same groups, I tell them that each member of a group have to describe one member of another group in a way that both students, the one describing and the one being described, have to go to the front of the class. This way, once the class has been divided into five groups and I have explained the activity, I chose a member of group number one and a member of group number two to come to the front of the class. The student from group number one starts describing his partner pointing to the flashcards meanwhile his partner looks at the flashcards and nods. Speaker number one goes like this: <i>he... black hair, short hair, straight hair, brown eyes, thin, and... young...</i> Then, I asked him: <i>what about personality?</i> And the students says... <i>ah si... friendly, clever, and... talkative... no more.</i> When he finishes the description I said: <i>“well done, group number one gets a point”</i>. Immediately all the students start to shout: <i>“teacher I want to participate”, “teacher me, me”</i></p> <p>It is important to clarify that the student who was describing his or her partner could point to the flashcards that properly described his friend since all the flashcards were scattered on the board, but the students were not able to flip them. The most of the students did not hesitate when describing their classmates and they seemed to enjoy the activity very much as all of them were eager to participate.</p> <p>These activities are carried out during 40 minutes and in the end of the session a quiz is applied to the students in order to demonstrate that they have internalized the vocabulary.</p>		

Appendix 6. Field notes 2

Institution: Centro de Lenguas	Cycle: Basic 2 Children 9 – 12	Trainee teacher: Mauricio Gómez A.
Shift: Afternoon		
Date: 08-02-14	Hour: 1:00 – 2:00	Topic: Friends
Class development		

In the first part of the class, the teacher explains the target grammar structures giving enough examples. The teacher describes some students using the flashcards worked on in the previous class. The teacher makes descriptions in affirmative and negative, and in singular and plural sentences making emphasis in the correct usage of the sentences and the structures, since the descriptions employ the verb To be and the verb To have.

Then, the group is divided in 5 groups again, and I explain that this time one member of each group has to go to the front of the class, so in each participation there are 5 students standing in the front. Then, the member of group number one has to describe their partners using affirmative and negative sentences in plural and in singular using the flashcards. Then, when that student finishes his descriptions, the student from group number two has the opportunity to make his own descriptions following the same pattern. Likewise, when student from group number two completes the activity, the student from group number three has to continue with the exercise and so on.

In that manner, once the students have understood the activity, I chose one student of each group and they go to the front of the class. Then, I tell student number one to describe their partners taking into account the given directions. Then, the student goes like this pointing at his partners and the flashcards: *“He has short hair, he doesn’t have long hair. She has curly hair, she isn’t talkative. They’re sporty, they don’t have glasses”*

The activity continues like that and all the students have the opportunity to participate making descriptions or being described. The teacher makes corrections about pronunciation and accuracy when the students are creating the sentences reinforcing the target structures. Some students correct their partners as well when they notice major mistakes. Each time a member of a group makes a description, the teacher assigns one point to that group, it doesn’t matter if they make some mistakes because the teacher says that the important thing is to make an effort and that all the students are learning, even when they make mistakes.

Appendix 7. Field notes 3

Institution: Centro de Lenguas	Cycle: Basic 2 Children 9 – 12	Trainee teacher: Mauricio Gómez A.
Shift: Afternoon		
Date: 15-02-14	Hour: 1:00 – 2:00	Topic: Friends
Class development		
<p>In the preceding class, the students were asked to bring magazines and pictures of their favorite cartoons. Then, as a first step, the teacher describes some pictures that he had already prepared. When doing it, the teacher uses the structures practiced in the previous class, but this time the teacher adds as much information as possible regarding each image; thus the teacher gives information about age, likes and dislikes, favorite colors, profession, nationality, language and so on.</p> <p>Once the activity has been explained, the class is divided in groups again. Then, using the images that the students brought, they make proper descriptions adding as much information as they wanted, as the teacher demonstrated. The member of the different groups are free to add information and ask questions when a partner is describing his/her images. Although the teacher is not making major corrections, the students correct among themselves inside the groups in a friendly and amusing way.</p> <p>In the end of that class, a member of each group was chosen in order to describe a picture selected by the teacher. While doing it, the teacher and the other students were allowed to ask questions and correct the participant if it was necessary, but most of the students did a really good job since they made few mistakes, bearing in mind that they had the opportunity to practice within the groups and that they were talking about characters that they found appealing and meaningful.</p>		

Appendix 8. Field notes 19

Institution: Centro de Lenguas Shift: Afternoon	Cycle: Basic 2 Children 9 – 12	Trainee teacher: Mauricio Gómez A.
Date: 16-08-14	Hour: 1:00 – 2:00	Topic: Shopping
Class development		
<p>As a first step, the teacher explains the activity of the class. Thus, the teacher selects one student, and based on the vocabulary, flashcards and grammar structures worked on in the previous class, the teacher starts a short dialogue with the selected student. In this dialogue the teacher assumes the role of a seller and the student the role of a customer. The teacher guides the whole conversation indicating the expressions that they can use in each part of the dialogue to greet, saying good bye and expressing surprise or gratitude.</p> <p>Once the students have understood the activity, they are organized in couples and they are told to create a conversation following the presented model, but they can add and use as many expressions as they want or need. The students were not pressured to choose specific flashcards, but they had the opportunity to choose the flashcards that they wanted. The students had to write down the dialogue and they could rehearse it. In the final part of the session, some couples were selected so they were able to act the dialogue for the whole class using the flashcards. Despite the fact that the most of them wanted to present their dialogues, there wasn't enough time for all of them to pass.</p>		

Appendix 9. Field notes September 21st.

Institution: Centro de Lenguas Shift: Afternoon	Cycle: Basic 2 Children 9 - 12	Observer: Mauricio Gómez Arévalo
Date: September 21th	Hour: 3:00 – 5:00	Topic:
Class development	Interpretations about important details in the class.	
<p>The class starts at 3:00 pm</p> <p>The teacher begins the class by correcting the exam that took place the previous session (Setp. 7th). It seems that most of the kids carefully corrected their exams <u>since they are eager to respond</u> and all of their answers are right. The first part of the exam was about the verb to be. The second one about imperatives. The third one about daily activities. The fourth part was about prepositions, the fifth part was about the usage of “can” and “can’t”. The final part was divided into two parts: in the first one the students had to write a short paragraph about their routines on weekends and the last one was a listening related to the activities of a person in which the kids had to complete a chart. <u>During the correction of the exam the teacher verifies the right pronunciation of the words, for example “accountant”, “don’t play” and “clear”, since the children are mispronouncing them.</u> When correcting the part about prepositions, the teacher asks the students to make up examples using the position of their partners. The teacher then asks: “Como dirías Juan está entre</p>	<p>In this class, it could be noticed that students do not like to develop the activities proposed on their workbook. It seems that those activities are aimed to an older public and for that reason the kids do not get engaged with those activities.</p> <p>On the other hand, when the teacher carried out the activity that implicated the participation of two or more students, the kids really enjoyed it. They had the opportunity to interact among them and they were helping and correcting each other especially about pronunciation aspects. This reinforces the idea of implementing communicative games with these kids.</p> <p>As always, the students made a lot of mistakes when speaking, for example they mispronounced the words: Think, live, life, a lot of, among others. However, they are always willing to participate. For that reason, it is important to take advantage of their</p>	

Camilo y Andrés” and so on. The kids understand that exercise and translate properly. The teacher corrects the pronunciation of the word “woman”. The kids enjoy this activity because they are able to get real communication since the kids were involved in the exercise are eager to help the student who is talking.

Later, the teacher gives them a photocopy which contains a series of exercises in which they must apply the rules in order to add the “s” when talking about actions executed by a 3rd person. These rules have been explained in the previous hour. The kids are allowed to work in pairs and all of them do it so except 3 kids that prefer to work alone. Some children ask questions to the teacher related to the activity. After a while the kids have to write in the blackboard the sentences and the most of them are eager to participate as usual. After each participation, the teacher makes sure that everybody understands what they are doing explaining it in both languages: Spanish and English. She checks the pronunciation as well. For some of them is difficult to pronounce the word “Thanks”, but others are aware of the right pronunciation. Another kid is confused about the pronunciation of the words “live” and “life” and the teachers clarifies that aspect. Another kid asks what is the meaning of “a lot of” and a partner quickly answers him “montones”

The next activity of the class is a Listening. The teacher gives them the directions in Spanish and English and she writes in the blackboard the sentences with missing information. Then she plays the audio for the first time and the most of them don’t understand. The second time, students understand better since she stops the record in order to complete the sentences written in the blackboard. It seems that just three or four students understand the key words of the listening that permit complete the missing information of the sentences. Most of the kids seem to not understand and they don’t participate. So the teacher plays the different parts of the listening several times and explains in Spanish too to make sure that everybody understands. The kids that did not understand do not participate at all.

Later, the teacher asks the students to take out their workbooks in order to review the vocabulary about foods and countable and uncountable, although students do not like the idea of working in the book. This way, the teacher asks if the food that appears in the picture is countable or uncountable, the kids respond aloud and at the same time but most of them are committing mistakes about pronunciation, however it is difficult to recognize what are the specific mistakes since they are talking at the same time.

Then, another Listening is carried out. The listening involves the food that they have been studying since it is about a recipe. However, the children are not able to understand anything of the listening, the teacher plays it once more but

willingness to participate, developing activities that improve their speaking skills.

<p>they still confused. So, the teacher decides to read the lines of the listening as it appears in the book. Then, based on the listening the teacher starts to ask questions like this: “¿cómodiriaque hay una banana? ¿cómo diría que hay dos bananas? Some of the students answer very fast but others take their time. Finally, the teacher explains in a general way the usage of the words some and any. The teacher clarifies that this topic is going to be studied the next session with an activity, and all the kids shout: “Vamos afuera” and the teacher responds: “maybe”. In this manner the class is ended.</p>	
--	--

Appendix 10. Field notes August 31st.

Institution: Centro de Lenguas Shift: Afternoon	Cycle: Basic 2 Children 9 – 12	Observer: Mauricio Gómez Arévalo
Date: August 31st	Hour: 3:00 – 5:00	Topic:
Class development		Interpretations about important details in the class.
<p>The class starts at 3:00 pm.</p> <p>The teacher asks the students for the homework using English. The students understand basic commands like: “Let me see your homework”, “what did you get”, what happened”.</p> <p>The kids have a paper in which there are some images about actions. The teacher asks how those actions can be said in English. <u>Some kids raise their hands eager to respond. Some of them say the answer even if the teacher has not asked them.</u> Every time a child says what the action is about, the teacher asks for the meaning of that action in Spanish.</p> <p>Later, the teacher explains about routines using the actions previously explained. The teacher gives them an example, and based on that, the kids have to write in their notebooks routines that they do on weekends. <u>Some kids raise their hands in order to ask how they can say specific routines in English, for example “Teacher, cómo dices desayunar”.</u> After a while, the most of the students have finished and <u>some of them start to talk to each other. The kids that have not finished continue asking the teacher how they can say actions in English.</u> The teacher then says: “Usemos diccionarios, no soy un diccionario ambulante”. Then, the teacher asks what routines they wrote, <u>the most of the kids raise their hands because all of them want to participate.</u> After listening to some of them, this part of the class finishes. <u>But not all of the students participated.</u></p> <p>Later, the teacher asks for the homework in the</p>		<p>It seems that the kids like to participate and speak every time they have the opportunity, for that reason it would be useful to take advantages of these characteristics in the developing of the classes.</p> <p>It can be noticed that in spite of kids like to participate and speak in English, the ones who are participating and speaking are usually the same. For that reason, it would be interesting to develop activities that allow involving all the students. Besides this, pronunciation skill is the one that need more attention, since usually the kids make mistakes about pronunciation and the teacher have to make several corrections about this issue.</p> <p>On the other hand, it can be noticed the lack of real interaction among the students, they are just answering to the teacher’s questions, but they are not having a real communication in English, although they like to talk and play with their partners.</p>

workbook. All the kids have the same workbook. The homework is about prepositions. The teacher asks things like this: "Look at the map! tell me, where is the bookshop?" Most of the kids raise their hands in order to respond and some of them shout the answers. The teacher says "Escuchemos a los compañeros". Then, it happens that children who are participating are always the same. The teacher seeks to involve all children asking those who have little involvement. After a child gives an answer, the teacher says the meaning of it in Spanish, so she makes sure that all of them understand the activity.

As final activity, the children were supposed to draw a picture about a super hero. This way, all of them take out their pictures and keep everything else. Some of the kids go to the front of the class to show their picture and read a short paragraph in which they say the things that their super hero can and cannot do. The students just read, they do not describe their heroes with their own words. In general terms, it can be noticed that although the children have prepared this activity carefully, they make mistakes related to pronunciation. For that reason, the teacher clarifies the correct intonation and pronunciation of the words, for example "Can" and "cannot". Some students pay attention to the partner who is presenting his/her picture and some of them translate into Spanish what he/she is saying. But other students are talking and playing with their partners.

The class ends at 5:00 pm.