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Neiva, 17 de Enero de 2017

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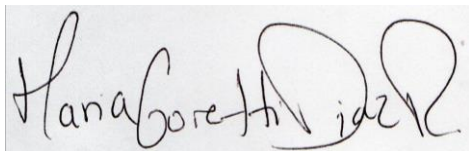
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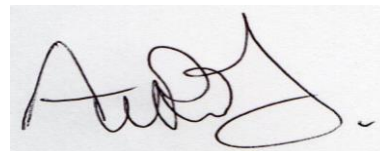
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**TÍTULO COMPLETO DEL TRABAJO:** Developing Learners' Oral English Language Performance through Games in an EFL Setting

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1. Communication strategies
2. Games
3. Oral English language performance
4. Students' attitudes

**Inglés**

- Estrategias de comunicación
- Juegos
- Desempeño oral del inglés
- Actitudes de los estudiantes

**RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO:** (Máximo 250 palabras)

Nuestro proyecto explora la contribución al desempeño oral de estudiantes de grado quinto a través de juegos y define el tipo de actitudes de los estudiantes y las estrategias de comunicación utilizadas cuando participan en estos. Se presentan tres objetivos: (1) examinar el efecto de los juegos en el desempeño oral de los estudiantes de grado quinto en un ambiente de inglés como lengua extranjera, (2) determinar el tipo de actitudes

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adoptadas por los estudiantes con respecto al uso de Juegos para desarrollar su habilidad oral, e (3) identificar las estrategias de comunicación utilizadas por los estudiantes al expresarse oralmente en el idioma de destino. Veintinueve estudiantes de un colegio público en Neiva participaron en este estudio. Se utilizaron como herramientas de recolección de datos una entrevista, una reflexión escrita, grabaciones en vídeo, transcripciones, notas de campo y cuestionarios. Los resultados sugieren que mediante el uso de juegos los estudiantes pudieron desarrollar su desempeño oral en inglés, ya que reforzaron y ganaron más vocabulario, expresiones cortas, estructuras de oraciones y aumentaron su confianza en términos de fluidez. Además, se determinó un conjunto de actitudes hacia los juegos y el uso del inglés como factores positivos para desarrollar su habilidad oral. Asimismo, una tabla de frecuencia demostró que los estudiantes dependían principalmente de estrategias de comunicación como el recurso de ayuda, el uso de medios no lingüísticos, la alternancia de código y el uso de muletillas y medios de vacilación para expresarse en el idioma de llegada.

**ABSTRACT:** (Máximo 250 palabras)

Our project explores the contribution to fifth graders' Oral English Language Performance by implementing games as well as defines the sort of students' attitudes and the communication strategies used when they are engaged in games. This research study has a three-fold objective: (1) to examine the effect of games in oral language performance of fifth graders in an EFL setting, (2) to determine the sort of attitudes that fifth graders adopt



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in regards to the use of games to develop their speaking skill, and (3) to identify the communication strategies used by students when expressing orally in the target language. The participants were twenty-nine fifth grade students from a public school in Neiva. An interview, a reflective journal, video recordings, transcriptions, field notes and questionnaires were used as data collection tools. The findings suggest that by using games learners could develop their oral language performance, as they reinforced and gained more vocabulary, short utterances, and sentence structures, they also increased their confidence in terms of fluency. Additionally, a set of attitudes towards games and the use of English were determined as positive factors for developing their speaking skills. Besides, a frequency form demonstrated that students relied mostly on communication strategies such as appeal for help, use of nonlinguistic means, code switching and use of fillers and hesitation devices to express in the target language.

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## Developing Learners' Oral English Language Performance through Games in an EFL Setting

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Master thesis presented as a partial requirement to obtain the degree of Magister in English

Didactics

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Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés

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**Approval Note**

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Date of approval: December 9, 2016.

### **Dedication**

This study is dedicated to all those hard working and respected English teachers who put their self-efforts to pursue improvements in their English teaching practices.



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### **Abstract**

The use of games in the classroom setting offers students an authentic reason for speaking spontaneously (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014). This action research study explores the contribution to fifth graders' Oral English Language Performance by implementing games as well as defines the sort of students' attitudes and the communication strategies used when they are engaged in games. This research study has a three-fold objective: (1) to examine the effect of games in oral language performance of fifth graders in an EFL setting, (2) to determine the sort of attitudes that fifth graders adopt in regards to the use of games to develop their speaking skill, and (3) to identify the communication strategies used by students when expressing orally in the target language. The participants were twenty-nine fifth grade students from a public school in Neiva. Teacher's interview, a reflective journal, video recording, transcriptions, field notes and students' questionnaires were used as data collection tools. The findings suggest that by using games learners could develop their oral language performance, as they reinforced and gained more vocabulary, short utterances, sentence structures and increased their confidence in terms of fluency. Additionally, a set of attitudes towards games and the use of English were determined as positive factors for developing their speaking skills. Besides, a frequency form demonstrated that students relied mostly on communication strategies such as appeal for help, use of nonlinguistic means, code switching and use of fillers and hesitation devices to express in the target language.

**Key words:** *Communication strategies, Games, Oral English language performance, Students' attitudes.*



## Introduction

The development of the English language oral skills has been widely recognized as a decisive factor that determines the success and domain of a foreign language. As asserted by Harmer (2007), when speaking, learners construct words and convey meaning to communicate their needs and desires in the target language which leads them to an effective communication and the real master of a language. That is to say that learners should be able to construct words and phrases with individual sounds, as well as to use pitch change, intonation, and stress to convey different meanings (Harmer) (as cited in Segura, 2013, p.29). According to Harmer,(as cited in Derakhshan, Khalili & Beheshti ,2016) if learners dominate these language features, and the ability to process them in their heads and then put it into cohesive order to express and negotiate meaning, they will attain successfully the communication goal.

Different scholars have advocated different rationales for the emergence and the worthiness of teaching speaking. As noticed, previous research studies on the topic addressed by authors such as Gutierrez, 2005; Cardenas & Robayo, 2012 and Urrutia & Vega, 2006 have examined different issues regarding oral English language performance. The studies: “Developing Oral Skills through Communicative and Interactive tasks” carried out by Gutierrez, (2005) and “Improving Speaking through Role Plays and Dramatization” addressed by Cardenas & Robayo, (2012), found out that most of Colombian schools did not trigger communication and interaction in the classroom as there is lack of opportunities for the development of oral interaction. Furthermore, some authors claimed that some learners usually present lack of vocabulary, shyness and fear of being humiliated (Urrutia & Vega, 2006).

In spite of those adverse circumstances teachers may face to develop the speaking skill, the authors mentioned above highlighted that there are available and appealing tasks that might

engage children in using the foreign language for communicative purposes. Therefore, through the use of games they showed evidence of the improvement of students' speaking skills.

Gutierrez (2005) concluded that the speaking tasks that were applied allowed students to express their ideas, feelings and opinions freely. Besides, the author pointed out that "Feedback and group work let students assess themselves, refine their oral production and get confidence in speaking." (p.89). Moreover, Cardenas & Robayo (2012) asserted that games helped students to develop self-confidence, thanks to the creation of a good atmosphere inside the classroom. In addition, they mentioned that students overcame their fear of making mistakes and perceived speaking as a natural process when they were playing.

Subsequently, a local research study carried out by Rodriguez (2000) in a public institution in Neiva claimed that games are one of the best alternatives to motivate students to participate orally. The author concluded that these activities contributed to overcome difficulties such as shyness, anxiety, affective and social factors that students have when they are asked to engage actively in oral activities. Additionally, it was found that students started to use more English as they felt confident to speak and communicate with others.

Then, moving to the basis and origin of our research study, at the beginning of the school year 2016, and through the application of an interview to the English teacher we found that, according to her perception, students' oral skill was low as they were not motivated to speak in English. Therefore, they did not use the vocabulary and grammatical structures studied within the classes, they made pronunciation mistakes, and they were not able to express their ideas fluently as they were not provided with meaningful and engaging oral activities that motivate them to express orally in the target language. That is to say that the students have seldom been involved in speaking activities as the teacher admitted speaking practice is not a persistent aspect in the

English classes. She also pointed out that students felt afraid, shy or inhibited to speak in English as they did not have a good range of the aspects mentioned above.

Hence, taking advantage of the encouragement of students to participate in games, we decided to implement these activities in the development of the classes as a meaningful and an interesting alternative strategy that involves movement, visuals and expressions. Also, having in mind the key role teachers play in ensuring an effective language learning process through engaging activities that motivate students to use orally the target language in an easier and enjoyable way.

Therefore, by carrying out this research study at San Miguel Arcangel School we intend to contribute to the improvement of fifth graders' Oral English Language Performance by implementing games as a helpful resource for reinforcing the vocabulary and expressions, improving fluency and accuracy of the spoken language. Besides, to explore deeper students' attitudes and the use of communication strategies when they are engaged in games that aim to develop their oral skills.

In the first chapter of the present document, there is a detailed description of the research problem that was identified in the teaching context. This description is based on a teacher's interview and a reflective journal that took place at the beginning of this research project to unveil the causes of the problem. On top of this, some studies related to using games to develop oral skill in the field of language teaching are presented to portray how these previous works helped us to shape the initial research proposal. Also, a description of the context where this study took place is made, as well as the possible contributions the authors intend to make in the local academic and social environment.

In the second chapter, there is a compilation of theoretical constructs related to Speaking and its purpose, nature, limitations, assessment, communication strategies and games. In the third chapter, the nature of this study is illustrated to establish the type of research study supported by different authors. Besides, a description of the population is made as well as of the instruments and how they were used to collect the data. In addition to this, a detailed description of the instructional design is made. In the fourth chapter, the data analysis is presented, as well as the research categories and the findings related and supported by essential constructs in the theoretical framework. Finally, within the fifth chapter some conclusions and pedagogical implications are portrayed in the light of answering our research questions and objectives.

## Chapter I. Research Problem

### Statement of the Problem

Teaching English to children is essential concerning the importance it has as a world-wide phenomenon. Learning a second language provides learners opportunities to achieve personal goals and reach professional growth. As a result of the General Education Law in 1994, the teaching of English to children is stated in Colombia at early years of schooling in the elementary education. This initiative was crucial for strengthening the plurilingualism in our context. There is an evident need to live up to the demands of the globalized world. Ordóñez, (2011) argued that one basic action for a successful learning process is to introduce the target language at an early age, normally at preschool level.

Bearing in mind that speaking is an integral factor in English as a foreign learning, learners are expected to express their ideas clearly and become good speakers. In a monolingual context like ours where the target language is mainly limited to a classroom setting, the speaking practice must be considered in the teaching process. The classroom becomes a place where learning a language is a social experience. Hence, those experiences should aim at providing learners opportunities to use the target language. However, speaking could be a very demanding skill for teachers to teach.

Concerning this, we carried out an interview applied to the teacher (see Appendix A) and a reflective journal written by the teacher mentioned (see Appendix B), we found out that the speaking practice is poor due to teacher's methodologies and school policies as the teacher does not include in her practice a variety of activities concerning the development of the speaking skill. She states "*I give more importance to reading and listening skill rather than speaking and writing*". It was also found that learners from fifth grade at San Miguel Arcangel are motivated to

learn English but they are involved in a context in which English is not used for communicative purposes. As the teacher expressed “*children have a lot of potential and willingness to learn a second language*” but “*the educational context in which students are immersed does not provide opportunities for them to be in permanent contact with and make active use of the language*”.

Besides, students are inhibited to express orally in the target language as they do not have a good range of vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and knowledge about the grammar structures and patterns as it is stated by the teacher “*When my students use the target language face several difficulties in regards of vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and grammar structure*”. For that reason, the results obtained evidence that speaking practice is not a persistent aspect in her classes.

Moreover, what has been found is that students tend to rely mostly on their mother tongue in the English classes avoiding the use of the target language, because of fearfulness, anxiety, shyness, lack of motivation, or just because it is easier for them. In addition, some of the students have seldom been involved in speaking activities. This is evidenced in the following opinions provided by the teacher in the reflective journal:

*During the development of a speaking activity they tend to show a lot of anxiety and hesitation when expressing orally. The most outstanding students are usually the ones who participate actively in the classes.*

*I could notice that students tend to use the first language when I am not close to them. That is, because it is easier for them to communicate in their mother tongue as they feel less under pressure.*

*I have evidenced that my students are afraid of making mistakes as some students are used to make fun of the ones who cannot speak accurately.*

*Some learners lack of motivation to speak in English because they do not find a real need to express themselves in the language.*

Therefore, fifth graders have difficulties with their English language performance as they have low speaking skills. The purpose of this action research is to explore an alternative teaching practice through the implementation of games. Hence, the target group is expected to enhance their speaking skill by being immersed in meaningful speaking practice.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the research topic and background, the following research questions are addressed:

1. What happens when fifth grade students are engaged in games to develop their oral language performance in an EFL setting?
2. What are the attitudes of fifth graders towards the use of games for developing their speaking skill in the EFL classroom?
3. What are the communication strategies used by fifth graders when speaking in the target language?

### **Research Objectives**

To examine the effect of games in oral language performance of fifth graders in an EFL setting.

To determine the sort of attitudes that fifth graders adopt in regards to the use of games to develop their speaking skill.

To identify the communication strategies used by students when expressing orally in the target language.

## **Related Studies**

Oral English language performance requires that learners use the target language in a specific situation with a particular communicative purpose. In this way, this involves learners' active participation in which they have to negotiate, construct and process meaning in order to achieve successful outcomes in terms of language learning. Hence, teaching practices must be oriented to create significant and effective learning experiences in which games play an important role for learners to improve their oral English language performance. Broadly speaking, many research studies related to play activities and communication strategies that influence the development of English oral skills have been carried out in the past few years. The research studies stated below were selected and analyzed to have a well-grounded theory for this study. The contributions helped us to shape our research study as there was relevance with the research question and objectives.

To start with, Urrutia & Vega (2006) considered speaking as the most complicated ability to work with. The researchers conducted an action research study focusing on students' difficulties when attempting to speak English. The population of this study was 20 girls and 20 boys from tenth grade of a public school in Bogotá. Data was collected through video recordings, the teacher's journal and questionnaires answered by the students. The authors noticed that oral participation involved relevant factors, such as: vocabulary, timidity and fear of being embarrassed.

So, the results showed that students felt better, free and confident when they participated in oral tasks, particularly during games. Therefore, when developing oral skill in primary learners, Urrutia & Vega (2006) suggested that games allow "cooperation, involvement, self-confidence, knowledge of vocabulary, better English understanding, improvement of



pronunciation and speaking” (p. 9). From this point of view, the project described above matches with our study as it was an action research project because it consisted of the implementation of activities focused on oral games for promoting the development of students’ speaking skills. So, we can say that it resembles our research idea in the sense that it was an innovation.

Similarly, within the Colombian context Ariza (2001) presents a literature review of the use of games to encourage students’ oral participation in English at a school in Zipaquirá. The author conducted an action research project with a sample population of eight second grade students who had the lowest oral participation in class. The techniques used for collecting the data were observation of different English activities, teacher’s diary and audiotape recording over a six-month period. In her study, Ariza (2001) came to the conclusion that games contributed to develop students’ oral English in a funny and enjoyable way through communicative activities that involve movement and meaning rather than language form. Besides, she noticed that games helped lower tension and anxiety that inhibit students’ participating orally in the language. The high relevance of this study relies on the fact that this project intended to help shy and inhibited students with low oral English skills to improve their oral production.

Two years later, Castrillón (2003) carried out a study in which she explored the impact of play activities in the classroom as a means to promote the development of children’s oral communicative competence in a second language. 35 students from fifth grade at a public primary school participated in the investigation. The data obtained through the research process revealed that games have a great impact in the development of oral communicative competences as they are ways to make learning attractive and more enjoyable. In general terms, through the use of games in the classroom children find the foreign language as a useful tool to express their needs and play.

More recently, Rodriguez and Roux (2012) conducted a research study that investigated how communication strategies are used in a specific learning context and how the taxonomy of communication strategies can contribute to understand teacher-student interaction. The participants of this study were students and teachers from two beginner-level English classes. Results revealed that class size, seating arrangements and learning activity types were also some of the factors that influenced the communication strategies used. Specifically, findings indicated that the communication strategy most frequently used in both groups was language switch.

In consequence, the previous studies matched our particular research interests and helped us to shape our study because they provided clear evidence of the importance of games and communication strategies in the development of students' oral skills as they both help students to be engaged and willing to participate orally in the target language, facilitating the development of their oral production. Besides, those projects were used to support the problem statement of our investigation as they are in line with the characteristics of the context of the present work because of the eagerness of the participants to participate in games despite the low oral English performance in most of them. Therefore, having in mind the former settings and related studies, it is relevant to define the setting in which this research studied was carried out as well as the rationale that drives the development of this research process.

### **Setting**

This research study is conducted, with fifth grade students, at Colegio San Miguel Arcángel. This public institution was inaugurated in the year 1975. It is located in Candido Leguizamo neighborhood in Neiva and offers elementary and secondary education. This institution has 1 headquarter where the elementary and secondary levels are located. Elementary levels are offered from noon to afternoon and secondary levels in the morning.

The institution has a total of 800 learners and their ages range from four to seventeen. Most of them come from army and police officers' families. The institution has a well-equipped infrastructure which comprises of fourteen well ventilated classrooms, ICT and science laboratories, a multimedia center, a library, a sound proof auditorium, three sports fields, a tennis court and green zones which provide learners a pleasant and meaningful place to experience learning. Learners love the school and they always make an effort to keep it clean and beautiful.

In regards to English, it is taught in our institution as a foreign language and students attend to English classes five hours per week. English Teachers in the school have to be graduated in the specific field they are teaching. The target population chosen for this study corresponds to 29 fifth grade students.

We decided to develop this action research project because we were concerned about the students' difficulties when speaking English. An interview applied to the English teacher and a journal written by her showed that this group has difficulties with oral English language performance because they have low speaking skills.

### **Rationale**

Teaching English to children is the most enriching and rewarding experience a teacher can live and feel based on our professional experience. Childhood is the best stage for children to learn a second language because they can give more out of their potential. Broadly speaking, young children are the most active, competent and skillful learners at learning languages. They possess characteristics which are proper to their age. The characteristics of a child's development are fundamental for teachers to take them into account in the teaching process. Based on Scott, & Ytreberg's (1990) classification, children are separated in two groups: the young ones around the age of five to seven years old and the older ones around the age of eight to ten years old. Children

of five to seven are capable of obeying the rules of the language, are competent in using language skills even without being aware of them and they are able to understand situations faster than they understand the language use. Additionally they can understand mostly through hands, eyes and ears and their span of attention and concentration is very short. Besides they are logical as well as love playing and enjoy working alone (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990).

On the other hand, children of eight to ten are more competent in understanding the language use and are able to form basic concepts. In addition, they like asking questions and they are capable of making decisions about their own learning. They can rely on the written and spoken word to convey meaning and they are more open to work and share with the others (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990). Bearing in mind the previous children's characteristics, we can say that childhood is a stage in life in which children have a lot of potential and willingness to learn a second language. They are constantly learning from the environment with ease and picking up much information from their surroundings.

Regarding this idea, teachers should promote group work activities in which learners and teachers participate. Dornyei and Murphey (as cited in Harmer, 2007) emphasized on the fact that implementing a group teaching style in any teaching environment can be beneficial concerning the possibilities to involve learners in a sense of reliance and commitment. Nevertheless, keeping children engaged and motivated during the learning process is not an easy job; it demands innovative activities that let children live significant experiences by activating all the senses.

According to Porras, (2010), "games help to create a confident and stress-free learning environment where children feel secure and relaxed during the learning time" (p. 105). Based on the author's statement, a game well-structured and with clear pedagogical purposes can be a potential source of knowledge. Moreover, Mei & Yu-Jing, (as cited in Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora,

2014) asserts that within the advantages of using games are the opportunities for experimentation, discovery and interaction in the target language. When using games, students are positively eager to practice in the foreign language in class. One of the benefits for using games in the class activities is the fact that they provide students an authentic reason for speaking.

Therefore, it is important to undertake the present study because in the first place, it contributes to improve the English language oral skills by providing the students with a more enjoyable learning atmosphere that motivates them to express themselves spontaneously. In second place, it analyses what communication strategies are mostly used by students when using the target language in the English classes.

## **Chapter II. Theoretical Framework**

Learning to speak is very essential in language learning. It is a communication tool that allows us to transfer our ideas and thought into language. Nevertheless, students often find many difficulties in oral activities inside classroom. This chapter is specifically comprises the main concepts framed within our research project. These constructs are organized as follows: firstly, we provide a definition of speaking skill regarding different authors' perspectives as well as the purpose of teaching it. Subsequently, we portray the limitations and the role of correction and balance when teaching speaking. Likewise, it depicts what a communication strategy is and addresses the concept of five outstanding communication strategies within our study. Lastly, it comprises key foundations about the concept, advantages, and pedagogical suggestions, role of the teacher and classification of games.

### **Speaking**

Undoubtedly, speaking is considered a crucial aspect when learning a language. As asserted by Huebner (as cited in Segura, 2012), language is fundamentally speech, and speech requires mainly oral communication. Besides, speaking has been considered the most challenging of the four language skills in the context of a foreign language (Bailey and Savage) (as cited in Segura, 2012). According to Mackey (1978), speaking is the most complex of the four language skills as it requires both, thinking how to say at the same time of expressing orally what has been thought. Moreover, Richard & Renandya (2005) claimed that the ability to speak a second language or foreign language appears to be a complex task regarding its nature and what that process involves.

As noticed, in all communication or conversation two people are sharing information or they have a communication or conversation need (Brown, 1987). So, it is important to highlight

that speaking has different purposes, as other skills immersed in it. For example, we may use speaking for establishing social connections, persuading someone, communicating desires and ideas as well as expressing the feelings in any kind of emotional condition with the others.

From the ideas above we can conclude that speaking plays a decisive role for human interaction. In many cases, the problems that are faced by two individuals or groups are solved through communication and speaking. Following this idea, speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information” (Brown, Burns & Joyce) (as cited in Mall & Hesami, 2013). Therefore, there is an increasing need to explore the nature and structure of the spoken language as it reflects the context and activity in which speakers are immersed in as well as their roles and relationships.

**The nature of speaking.** Speaking as a means of oral communication is considered the most important skill (Segura, 2013). It is an active process between speaker and listener and involves productive and receptive skills of understanding (Byrne, 1984). Based on this conception, it is relevant to say that speaking relies on the need of practicing with others as it is just not about pronouncing isolated words but it involves more practice and interaction with others. Bygate, (as cited in Mitib, 2009) suggested that, in particular, learners need to develop skills in regards of interaction as well as in the negotiation of meaning Therefore, interaction is a process of co-constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. (Byrne, 1986). Also, Chaney (1998) pointed out that speaking is “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts” (p.13).

**Purpose of teaching speaking.** Spoken language production is often considered one of the most difficult aspects of language learning (Brown & Yule) (as cited in Hoang & Ngoc, 2015)

.Therefore, one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still they cannot speak it (Segura, 2013). Concerning this, Brown & Yule (2005) assert that the intention of teaching and learning speaking is to be able to “express themselves” in the target language as well as to deal with the different communicative purposes the oral communication has. That denotes for learners to develop the capacity to express their desires, needs and thoughts similarly as they do in their mother tongue.

On the other hand, Rivers (1981), points out that in order to teach speaking it is necessary to comprehend the process involved in speech. As it is known, by means of speech one person can communicate intentions, emotions, feelings or to react to other people or situations of their daily life. From the above, it is essential to recognize that the main goal of speaking is communication. It means that the students are taught English in order that they are able to speak English in real communication. According to Hughes (1993), the teaching and learning of speaking is the development of the ability to interact successfully in that language and this involves comprehension as well as production. Therefore, fluent speakers have to learnt not only about the language but also what the appropriate things to say in certain situations in a spontaneous way.

**Constraints.** As previously asserted speaking is perhaps the most demanding skill to acquire and to teach. Therefore, one the most difficult aspects of spoken English is that it is always carried out by interaction and in many cases we had not been prepared for spontaneous communication and could not cope with all of its simultaneous demands (Segura, 2013). Speakers use language regarding a specific purpose or intention, so it is necessary for them to be a listener and a speaker for effective communication (Harmer, 2007).



Undoubtedly, speaking for children in their mother tongue is an easy task as they can express naturally their thoughts, feelings, beliefs or communicate their desires and needs. But when it comes to express themselves in another language different from their native one, different constraints appear. Hence, we as teachers cannot predict what language children will use when they are asked to express themselves in a foreign language. It is important to recognize the multiple choices they can find to communicate what they want and it will not be predictable for teachers. So, it is very common to find children using their native language when learning another language as by doing that they will find easier the words they want to use to communicate their needs and desires. Thus, close attention should be paid to talks in the classroom as a way of giving children the opportunity to communicate without any restrictions (Fisher, 2005) (as cited in Scott and Ytreberg, 1995). Also, teachers can assume the role of facilitators in the sense of providing children with opportunities of using the language actively in the classroom rather than assuming a direct teaching role (Fisher, 2005) (as cited in Scott and Ytreberg, 1995).

Therefore, the most important aspect when teaching speaking to children is to set a balance between controlled activities and enjoyment of a natural talk or conversations where they can learn and also have fun (Scott and Ytreberg, 1995). That is to say, the teachers' role is to ensure children's use of the language by setting a good class environment for them to feel motivated to use the language as well as to provide them with many opportunities to practice the language in the classroom. Hence, teachers should act as facilitators of the learning process, since the student is the main protagonist and the lesson is learner-centered.

**Correction.** When talking about learning a language in the first stages of the second language learning process it is important to recognize that teachers find essential to correct

learners' mistakes at once (Scott and Ytreberg, 1995). Immediate correction mistakes can prevent students to have errors especially in the first stages of learning where their English level is low. This need relies on the idea that the work in the classroom is more devoted to the use of textbook or guided activities that require the teacher to model language for them to use through repetition or imitation.

On the contrary, when children are working around oral activities that allow them to use the language with more freedom, what is expected from them is to express themselves and their personality, so teachers are not expected to control their speech as it can inhibit them or experience embarrassment (Freeman, 1990) ( as cited in Scott and Ytreberg, 1995). It is important to highlight the relevance that the language that children produce in the classroom has, as it reflects the one employed within their social context. That is to say, it is appropriate to their age and need of communication.

**How to assess speaking skills.** Speaking skills are an essential part of the curriculum in language teaching has become a key aspect of assessment as well. Therefore, in assessing speaking there are established different methods and frameworks that offer teachers an overall view of what learners are expected to do with the language. In regards of this, Brown, Iwashita, and McNamara (2005) identified three conceptual features as important in assessing performances in the tasks. These resulting broad conceptual categories were Linguistic Resources, Phonology, and Fluency which guide teachers to evaluate the level of oral proficiency in a context of language teaching and learning.

However, for the purpose of our research study we focus the assessment of the students' oral performance in three aspects (range, accuracy and fluency) provided by the Common European Framework of Reference for languages for assessing speaking skill. Thus, those aspects

will be at the forefront of the process as conceptual categories to analyze students' oral performance when developing the games throughout the intervention plan. They are portrayed as follows:

**Range:** Analyses the basic repertoire of words and simple phrases that students have when providing personal details in concrete situations.

**Accuracy:** accounts for the domain of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire.

**Fluency:** refers to the management of very short, isolated and mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.\*

### **Students' Attitude**

Attitude is considered an inner part of human life and personal identity. Everyday people feel and express evaluative responses to the stimulus of the external world by means of attitudes and emotions. Students' attitude denotes "a person persistent way of behaving in particular way" (Baker) (as cited in Mahir, 2016). Particularly, attitude is an important element in language learning (Gardner) (as cited in Dörnyei, 1998) as it brings the notion of students' acceptance or rejection towards a particular learning situation. In addition, as asserted by Brown (as cited in Dörnyei, 1998) students' language learning process in the L2 classroom is deeply influenced by some variables including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that represent both the personal and social factors that encourage or not students to learn and use the target language. Intrinsic motivation deals with "behavior performed for its own sake, in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction such as the joy of doing a particular activity or satisfying one's curiosity" (Dörnyei,

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\* Categories adapted from Common Reference Levels: qualitative aspects of spoken language use.

1998, p.121). The extrinsic motivation “involves performing a behavior as a means to an end, that is, to receive some extrinsic reward or to avoid punishment” (Dörnyei, 1998, p.121).

### **Communication Strategies**

When learning English as a foreign language, the main goal for people is to be able to communicate. Communication is the way people send and receive messages and negotiate meaning (Rubin & Thompson) (as cited in Ya-ni, 2007). For communicative success, foreign language learners rely mostly on their capacity to communicate within restrictions such as lack of basic grammar and vocabulary in the target language (Savignon) (as cited in Dörnyei, 1995). As a result, communication strategies become a crucial aspect for foreign language learners because they are “a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his (or her) meaning when faced with some difficulty” (Corder) (as cited in Dörnyei, 1995, p. 103)

For the development of this project, we concentrate on five particular communication strategies: word-coinage, use of nonlinguistic means, code switching, and appeal for help which are termed compensatory strategies and the use of fillers/hesitation devices which is part of stalling or time-gaining strategies. The compensatory strategies are normally used by speakers as alternatives plans to cope with linguistic deficiencies in order to carry out their communicative purpose (Dörnyei, 1995). Likewise, the stalling or time-gaining strategy allows the speakers to gain time and think before they can keep the communication channel (Dörnyei, 1995). Those communication strategies will be comprehensively analyzed in order to know which are mostly used by students when they use the target language. They are defined as follows:

#### **Achievement or compensatory strategies.**

**Word-coinage.** Creating a nonexisting L2 word based on a supposed rule (e.g., vegetarianist for vegetarian).

***Use of nonlinguistic means.*** Mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation.

***Code switching.*** Using a L1 word with L1 pronunciation or a L3 word with L3 pronunciation in L2.

***Appeal for help.*** Turning to the conversation partner for help either directly (e.g., What do you call . . . ?) or indirectly (e.g., rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression).

**Stalling or time-gaining strategies.**

***Use of fillers/hesitation devices.*** Using filling words or gambits to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g., well, now let me see, as a matter of fact).\*

### **What is a Game?**

Keeping in mind that fifth graders have difficulties with oral English language performance because they have low speaking skills, we chose games as a strategy to motivate them to speak and involve them in a comfortable learning environment Mora & Lopera (2001) stated that “games and fun activities have always been one of everybody’s favorite things to do in a class, both for teachers and students” (p.16).

Before talking about the advantages of using games for language practice, we introduce some definitions of a game. According to Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (2006), a game is an activity which could be as challenging as entertaining and engaging and it can promote a place in which learners play and interact with others. The main ingredient of games should be challenge to make everyone feels inspired to do their best. Likewise, the authors also assert that a game can be related to competition. Competition can stimuli learning and can help to increase students’ participation.

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\* Communication strategies taken from On the Teachability of Communication Strategies (Dornyei, 1995)

In the same way, Byrne (1984) stated that “the maximum benefit can be obtained from language games if they form an integral part of a program, at both the practice and production stages of learning” (p. 99). Based on the author’s idea, games create meaningful contexts for learners to practice the language already learnt and provide opportunities for acquiring new language during the process (Byrne, 1984).

**Advantages of using games for language practice.** As Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora (2014) state “the educational value of games for language practice stands in the focus they make on the content, instead of in the form or structure of the language used when playing them” (p.14). When a topic has been taught and learners have gone through the comprehension process, games constitute a significant experience to practice and use the target language. Furthermore, games can be a way for students to develop the communicative competence. “When students play a game, they are interested in conveying the message so they can win the game. Students are not paying attention to grammar but to communication” (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014, p. 14-15)

Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora (2014) assert that “games provide a close resemblance to the practice of real language. The teacher can create a very real communication situation in English by means of a game in which students practice the language in a disguised way”(p.3). Following the authors’ idea, games constitute a way of using the language in a real-world context of communication. Besides, games not only involve physical movement but the development of thinking and critical skills (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014).

Another key aspect to take into account is motivation. As Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora (2014) argue, “the foreign language teacher should keep in mind that the principal reason to choose a game for classroom activities is to maintain a level of motivation to assist in the difficult task of learning a new language” (p.15).

**Pedagogical suggestions when using games in EFL classes.** For making use of games in the language classes, it is necessary for teachers to follow a set of hints which can facilitate the teacher's task when trying to encourage learners to learn the target language by means of a game (Dobson) (as cited in Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014). Firstly, it is important for the teacher and the students to have a wide view of how the game will be developed and to know all the rules the game is based on. Additionally, if material is required in the game, the teacher needs to prepare and provide it to learners in order for the game to be played (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014).

According to the authors, in the same way, the game chosen by the teacher has to guarantee the participation of all the students in the class. Thus, learners are disciplined and motivated during the game and the development of topic can be achieved. Another aspect to consider when using games is the learners' language level. The game has to take into account the skills required in the development of the game so that students can be able to participate successfully (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014). Additionally, games have to correspond to students' likes, interests and expectations. If they feel motivated, they will be willing to participate (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014).

Regarding the role of the teacher in the development of a game, he/she has to provide the instructions and the examples for students to have a clear understanding of how to play. The teacher also is in charge of maintaining an atmosphere of cooperation, participation and friendship (Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora, 2014).

**The role of the teacher.** When using games in the language classes, the teacher is the person who portrays how the game is going to be played and the language that is going to be used. Hidalgo, Caicedo & Mora (2014) claim that what the teacher should do at the classroom is:

1. The teacher gives a demonstration of how the game should be played.

2. The teacher provides useful language for students to use during the game.
3. The teacher gives clear instructions for students to understand the process of the game.
4. The teacher takes into account if the students are familiar with a game.
5. The teacher recognizes the need to choose games that help to reinforce content that has been used during the classes.
6. The teacher has to organize the group if it is a group game.

**Classification of Games.** We chose the following classification provided by Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (as cited in Harmer, 2007, p.17) to develop our project:

- **Picture Games:** Most of these games involve the learners in the relative free use of all language at their command. They involve comparing and contrasting pictures, considering differences or similarities and possible relations between pictures.
- **Psychology Games:** These games let us work with the human mind. They involve telepathy, visual perception, characters, imagination and memory. They also encourage the students' concentration and language use.
- **Magic Tricks:** Language can sometimes be exemplified in a concise and memorable way through a magic trick. These tricks always attract attention and invite comments.
- **Sound Games:** Sound effects can create in the listeners an impression of people, places and actions. There is a demand for the listeners to contribute through imagination. This inevitably leads to individual interpretations and interactions as well as the need to exchange points of view and to express ideas and opinions.
- **Card and Board Games:** These games can be adaptations of several well-known card games and board games like snakes and ladders.



- **Word Games:** These games are used for spelling, meanings, using words for making sentences, words in contexts and word for categorizing according to grammatical use. Students, in many cases, have to communicate in full sentences, give new ideas and argue at the same length.
- **True-false Games:** In these games someone makes a statement which is either true or false. The game is to decide which it is.
- **Memory Games:** These games measure the players' ability to remember different events which, in turn, leads to discussion, in which opinions and information are exchanged.
- **Caring and Sharing Games:** These games pretend to encourage students to trust and get interested in others. They have the participants share personal feelings and experiences with other class members.
- **Guessing and Speculating Games:** In these games someone knows something and the others must find out what it is. There are many games and variations based on this simple idea.

For our project we chose four kinds of games: pictures games, card and board games, word games and memory games because we think these games are useful and meaningful in order to increase students' participation and develop students' oral English language performance taking into account the games' characteristics and the students' characteristics when they are engaged in the games.

### Chapter III. Methodological Design

#### Research Design

**Research approach and type of study.** For the purposes of this research study, a qualitative approach to data collection and the analysis of data was used. This approach suits the researchers' interests as it allows for the accurate description of the problem and addresses specific research questions. Qualitative research provides the research process different sources of data collection such as (interviews, observations, journals, etc) which contribute to obtain rich, detailed and participant-oriented pictures of the phenomena under study. However, to have an overall analysis of the communication strategies used by students when participating orally in the activities, a quantitative technique known as frequency table will be used, in which we specify the percentage of use of each one of them, combining with a descriptive analysis and interpretation of each strategy.

On the other hand, our research study is grounded on the cycle of an action research study. According to Burns (2009), action research is the interplay between the activities "action" and "research". The action is situated inside the continuous social processes of particular social settings (classrooms, schools, or associations), and normally constitutes advancements and interventions into those procedures to elicit improvement and change. The research is the systematic observation and analysis process of the developments and changes that result in order to identify the rationale for the action and to make any improvements if it is required taking into account the findings.

From this point of view, the project we described here was an action research project because it consisted of the implementation of activities focused on games for promoting the improvement of students' speaking skill. Also, it is important to highlight the fact that in the

school this kind of project had never been carried out, that is the reason why we can affirm it was an innovation. Hence, we implemented the stages of action research based on Kemmis and McTaggart (1986) (as cited in Burns, 1999), who state that “action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential ‘moments’” (p. 32): planning, acting and observing, and reflecting. Due to the nature of this study, action research provides ways to do improvements and modifications on the process of developing the pedagogical interventions.

**Participants.** This project was carried out in a public school in Neiva. The participants chosen for this research study were 29 fifth graders, whose ages range from nine to eleven. They were in fifth grade at the moment of starting this project. Learners attend to English classes five times during weekdays and their exposure to the target language is apparently permanent. Nearly all learners come from army and police officers families. It is an institution created to guarantee education to army's and police officers' children.

At the beginning of the process, the study was presented and the purpose was also explained to the whole group of fifth students. Besides, it was clearly stated that the participation in this study was not mandatory but voluntary. Therefore, students voluntarily participated in each one of the pedagogical interventions and contributed with their comments to the questionnaires applied after the interventions. Neither grades nor other type of reward was proposed to convince students to take part in the project.

As all participants were less than 18 years old, their parents were asked to sign a consent form (See appendix C). In this consent form, the participants were informed about the nature of the study, its objectives and the corresponding implications. In order to protect students'

identities, the project will not make reference to the students' names or any characteristic that identifies them.

**Instruments and data collection procedures.** In regards to the data collection instruments selected to monitor and analyze the development of this project, the chosen techniques were an interview, a reflective journal, transcriptions, video recordings, teacher and researcher's field notes and questionnaires to students. These instruments were used in the diagnosis stage and during the pedagogical interventions to collect the data. We chose them as sources for providing validity and reliability to our action research project. In order to gather relevant and valuable information from the interventions carried out along the process, a video camera is used to record audio and video of the applications.

***Teacher's interview.*** As asserted by Cardenas (2006), interviews are useful to draw out different kinds of data in a qualitative research. They can be used to inquire into peoples' knowledge, opinions, ideas and experiences. For collecting the data in the diagnosis stage, we conducted a structured interview in which a written list of questions was used as a guide to get a general understanding of what the teacher perceived from her teaching practices, learners and educational context. (See appendix A)

***Teacher's reflective journal.*** In regard to this, a teacher's journal shows impressions, descriptions and processes in students' work while the research activities are being carried out. We used a teacher's reflective journal in the diagnosis stage and during the development of the interventions as well in which we explored her perceptions about the effectiveness of her teaching practice and the issues she found in her classroom. The teacher's reflective journal showed impressions, descriptions and processes in students' work (see appendix B).

**Transcriptions.** Mackey & Gass, (2005) asserts that “transcriptions of oral data can yield rich and extensive second language, but in order to make sense of them they must be coded in a principled manner (p. 225). For this project in particular, oral data was collected to identify aspects in students’ oral language performance. Therefore, it was needed to be transcribed for coding and analyzing it.

**Video Recording.** Cunningham (1985), (as cited in Urrutia & Vega 2010), states that "video is a natural choice for data collection". We considered video recording an invaluable tool in an action research project because that consists of a free selection in which we could examine not only the student's linguistic patterns, attitudes but the role of body language, facial expressions and other communication strategies that are happening at the same time while the action research activities are taking place. We used video recordings during the implementation of the lessons because we wanted to analyze the features of students’ English language performance in games and the communication strategies mostly used by them as well as to record students’ impressions, feelings, and attitudes towards the games applied during the lessons in which the data were collected.

**Field Notes.** Johnson (2012) states that field notes are “the written observations of what you see taking place in a classroom”. (p., 3). Subsequently, this author defines three types of field notes: thick descriptions during, quick notes during, and notes and reflections after. In this study, we used notes and reflections after as the teacher and the researcher wrote the field notes after each one of the interventions in order to get an overview about learners’ behavior, learners’ performance and their knowledge of English. These field notes were based on the observations of the video recordings.

***Questionnaire.*** A questionnaire is a well-established tool for acquiring information on participant social characteristics, present and past behavior, standards of behavior or attitudes and their beliefs and reasons for action with respect to the topic under investigation (Bulmer, 2004). For that reason, we think a questionnaire is a useful instrument for collecting data because thanks to them, we could learn in a written way how students felt after the game application, and in which games they felt more confident and free to speak with (see appendix D).

### **Instructional Design**

The main concern for the authors of this project was to design a pedagogical intervention for facing the problem that addresses the difficulties fifth graders have with their English language performance as they have low speaking skill. Therefore, our pedagogical strategy was chosen to provide learners significant opportunities through the use of games in order to improve or at least alleviate the problem. This tool can provide many benefits regarding production stages of learning. Used in this way, games offer meaningful settings for using and practicing language already learnt and for acquiring new language (Byrne, 1984). Consequently, the focus of the pedagogical interventions was to offer students a means to use the target language and practice what they have learnt during the teacher's lessons.

The actions taken in this research study were grounded on the main features of Action Research. As Burns (2009) states "the main point of action research is to find out more about what is going on in your own local context in order to change or improve current practice in that situation" (p.115). By applying the four stages proposed by Kemmis & MacTaggart (1986) (as cited in Burns, 2009), the authors of this study intend to use a complete set of games as a pedagogical strategy to collect data and to be able to explore its effects over the participants' oral English language performance. The stages carried out along the study are described as follows:

1. **Planning:** At the initial stage of the research cycle is where researchers carefully plan systematic mechanisms of inquiry and collect information from a variety of sources about the issue to be investigated, regarding the principles of ethic, validity and reliability of the information obtained through the instruments. In this way, two instruments were used to collect data in the diagnosis stage: an interview and a reflective journal. We analyzed the results to plan the most suitable activities for our research study in order to achieve our intended objectives. After identifying the problem we chose games as a teaching strategy and as a source to motivate learners to develop the speaking skills. The researchers chose the topics from the textbook Clapping time 5 that had been adopted for fifth grade. The chosen topics had already been covered prior to the pedagogical interventions.
2. **Action:** The action stage involves implementing the plan while monitoring and observing results. A range of data collection methods can be used, including field notes and questionnaires to students that will provide the basis for the next stage. Throughout our research process, we developed five interventions intended to address the issue with the target group. The interventions consisted of implementing games, with the aim of contributing to develop the students' oral skill through an easier and more enjoyable way. The following table shows the materials, dates of development, and main purposes, addressed in the five pedagogical interventions.

Games #	Purpose	Materials	Date	Description
1. Spin the wheel	To talk about countries, nationalities and languages by means of	Projector Laptop Yellow, green and blue cards	April the 13th	See appendix E

	pictures.			
2.My schedule	To talk about a school schedule.	Projector Laptop Dice	May the 12th	See appendix F
3.Story race	To retell Tom's daily routine.	Projector Laptop Envelopes Worksheet Number cards	June the 1st	See appendix G
4.Pita fiber bag game	To make comparisons about different pictures.	Picture cards Pita fiber bags Adjectives poster	July the 7th	See appendix H
5.Reviewing the past	To talk about what people were doing and where in a certain time in past.	Projector Laptop Board game Dice Counters Question papers	August the 31st	See appendix I

**Table 1.** Materials, dates of development, and main purposes addressed in the five pedagogical interventions.

3. Observation: This stage is a permanent activity during the whole research process that lets researchers to explore the progress of our students' speaking skills and learn about their impressions and attitudes along the five interventions implemented within the action plan. Through video recordings, teacher and observer's field notes and students' questionnaire we followed the process game by game and identified specific aspects regarding the contribution



of games to their oral skill development as well as their attitudes and communication strategies used by learners when speaking in the target language.

4. Reflection: The final stage is reflection, in which the researchers collaboratively, 'analyze, synthesize, interpret, explain and draw conclusions' (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988: 86) regarding what has been achieved and identify aspects to be improved. Depending on the results, another cycle of planning, acting, observing and reflecting can start over again as long as necessary. After reflecting on what we did, we recognized some advances. However, there are still some areas to work on and improve. In few words, we think this is an ongoing process of constant improvements and discoveries.

## **Chapter IV. Data Analysis and Findings**

As stated in the research design, this qualitative study is framed in action research. Therefore, this project has three research objectives. In the first place, it aimed at examining the effect of games in oral language performance of fifth graders in an EFL setting. Likewise, this investigation sought to determine the sort of attitude that fifth graders adopt in regards to the use of games to develop their speaking skill. Lastly, it intended to identify the communication strategies used by students when expressing orally in the target language. Having in mind the previous panorama, pedagogical interventions, questionnaires to students, teacher and observer field notes were analyzed and coded.

### **Process of Data Analysis**

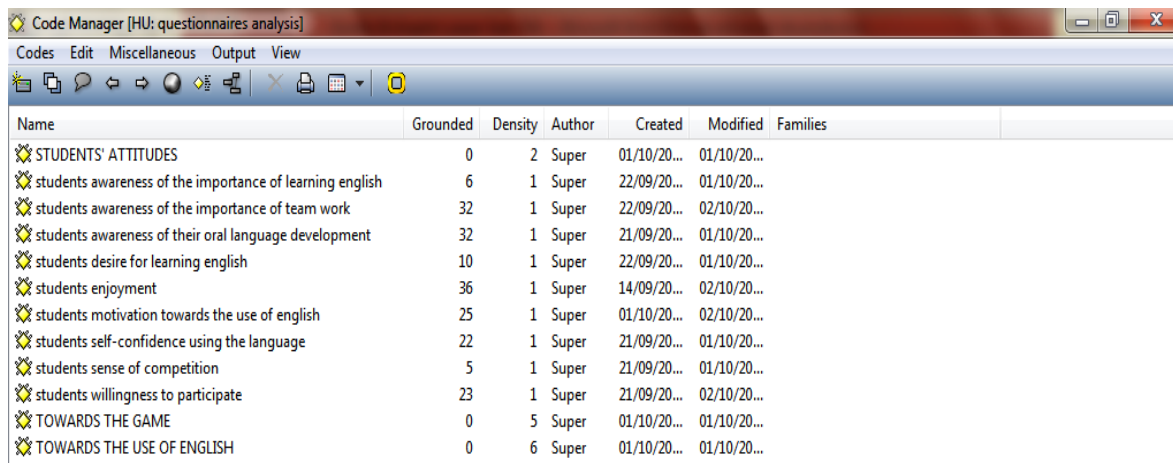
As stated in the methodology three instruments were applied in order to get information for solving the research questions. For addressing the first research question, data was taken from video recordings, transcripts, and teacher and observer's field notes to be analyzed under a qualitative content analysis. A qualitative content analysis is a process to reduce data collected by multiple sources such as transcripts and field notes in a way that can be easily analyzed (Bloggett, 2010). Therefore, in content analysis, the data can be coded in a pre-established manner by defining a set of codes that may be either numbers or words to specify the characteristics within the text (Tere, 2006) (as cited in Bloggett, 2010).

Subsequently, ATLAS.ti was used as instrument in the process of analyzing data taken from students' questionnaires and the teacher and observer's field notes. This data was coded and grouped in categories intended to provide an answer to the second research question. Primary documents (see picture No. 1) were uploaded to the software and codes emerged (see picture No. 2) from the data analysis. In this sense Mackey & Gass (2005) claim that "coding involves

making decisions about how to classify or categorize particular pieces or parts of data” (p. 221). Additionally, Orwin (1994) (as cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005) point out that “coding represents an attempt to reduce a complex, messy, context-laden and quantification resistant reality to a matrix of numbers” (p. 140). In fact, data coding implies looking for and constructing patterns in data (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Id	Name	Media	Quot...	Author	Created	Modified	Usable	Origin	Location	Families
P 2	QUESTIONNAIRE_02_G#1_13-04...	Image	6	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 3	QUESTIONNAIRE_03_G#1_13-04...	Image	3	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 4	QUESTIONNAIRE_04_G#1_13-04...	Image	2	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 5	QUESTIONNAIRE_05_G#1_13-04...	Image	3	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 6	QUESTIONNAIRE_06_G#1_13-04...	Image	3	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 7	QUESTIONNAIRE_07_G#1_13-04...	Image	4	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 8	QUESTIONNAIRE_08_G#1_13-04...	Image	3	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P 9	QUESTIONNAIRE_09_G#1_13-04...	Image	4	Super	22/09/20...	30/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P10	QUESTIONNAIRE_10_G#1_13-04...	Image	3	Super	22/09/20...	22/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P11	QUESTIONNAIRE_01_G#2_12-05...	Image	4	Super	30/09/20...	30/09/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P12	QUESTIONNAIRE_02_G#2_12-05...	Image	4	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P13	QUESTIONNAIRE_03_G#2_12-05...	Image	4	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P14	QUESTIONNAIRE_04_G#2_12-05...	Image	5	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P15	QUESTIONNAIRE_05_G#2_12-05...	Image	2	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P16	QUESTIONNAIRE_06_G#2_12-05...	Image	2	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P17	QUESTIONNAIRE_07_G#2_12-05...	Image	2	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P18	QUESTIONNAIRE_08_G#2_12-05...	Image	3	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P19	QUESTIONNAIRE_09_G#2_12-05...	Image	3	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P20	QUESTIONNAIRE_10_G#2_12-05...	Image	4	Super	30/09/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P21	QUESTIONNAIRE_01_G#3_01-06...	Image	5	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P22	QUESTIONNAIRE_02_G#3_01-06...	Image	4	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P23	QUESTIONNAIRE_03_G#3_01-06...	Image	4	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P24	QUESTIONNAIRE_04_G#3_01-06...	Image	3	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P25	QUESTIONNAIRE_05_G#3_01-06...	Image	3	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P26	QUESTIONNAIRE_06_G#3_01-06...	Image	4	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P27	QUESTIONNAIRE_07_G#3_01-06...	Image	3	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	
P28	QUESTIONNAIRE_08_G#3_01-06...	Image	3	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	***	<HUPATH>\Thesi...	***	

**Picture 1.** Primary documents uploaded to ATLAS.ti.



Name	Grounded	Density	Author	Created	Modified	Families
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES	0	2	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	
students awareness of the importance of learning english	6	1	Super	22/09/20...	01/10/20...	
students awareness of the importance of team work	32	1	Super	22/09/20...	02/10/20...	
students awareness of their oral language development	32	1	Super	21/09/20...	01/10/20...	
students desire for learning english	10	1	Super	22/09/20...	01/10/20...	
students enjoyment	36	1	Super	14/09/20...	02/10/20...	
students motivation towards the use of english	25	1	Super	01/10/20...	02/10/20...	
students self-confidence using the language	22	1	Super	21/09/20...	01/10/20...	
students sense of competition	5	1	Super	21/09/20...	01/10/20...	
students willingness to participate	23	1	Super	21/09/20...	02/10/20...	
TOWARDS THE GAME	0	5	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	
TOWARDS THE USE OF ENGLISH	0	6	Super	01/10/20...	01/10/20...	

**Picture 2.** List of open codes.

In regards to the third research question, a frequency form was designed to classify the communication strategies that occurred during the implementation of the five pedagogical interventions. The five selected communication strategies (word-coinage, use of nonlinguistic means, code switching, appeal for help and use of fillers/hesitation devices taken from *On the Teachability of Communication Strategies*, Dornyei, Z., 1995) were counted to calculate percentages.

## Findings

The data analysis will be presented firstly based on the categories previously selected (range, accuracy and fluency) that support the first research question of this investigation. Secondly, a description of the emerging categories (students' attitudes towards the game and students' attitudes towards the use of English) for answering the second research question. Finally, a frequency form illustrates the communication strategies used by students in their oral language performance. Subsequently, an interpretation of the frequency form will be portrayed taking into account the transcripts.

**Students' oral language performance.** The data showed that this core category Oral Language Performance was found to be the most significant taking into account that our research study focuses on the English Language Oral performance of learners. The data showed that Range, Accuracy and fluency were the categories to consider regarding students' speaking skills.

During the first intervention, we could observe that most of students showed a limited control of the key vocabulary required for the activity. They tended to generalize the use of a word for different purposes. The following excerpt demonstrates how the student misused the word "China" (name of a country) to make reference to the language.

**Teacher:** Discuss the answer.

**Student 1:** Ya teacher ...yo la puedo decir.

**Student 1:** She speaks China.

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

In general terms, it was evidenced that students managed properly the three main verbs to express nationality, language and origin, despite of having mistaken the use of the content words, as the segment below shows.

**Student 1:** She speaks...speaks Germany

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Concerning accuracy, we noticed that some students had difficulties when constructing the answer of the question given as they did not conjugate properly the third person singular, as the following excerpt exemplifies.

**Student 1:** She speak hmmm English

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that students also tended to forget the use of prepositions such as “in” and “from” when constructing a sentence, reason that makes it some extent lacking of cohesion. In this excerpt student 2 omitted the preposition “in”, however student 4 came up with an accurate answer in order to correct the other student’s mistake. We could also find out that some students relied just on content words as student 1 said “USA” to mean that the girl in the picture was from that country.

**Student 1:** USA

**Student 2:** No...She lives United States

**Student 3:** No...USA

**Student 4:** She lives in United States.

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

On the other hand, in some cases students confused personal pronouns when expressing the sentence. The following excerpt illustrates the misuse of the personal pronoun “she” to refer to a boy. The teacher tried to make her realize that mistake by reviewing the gender of the person in the picture and the students in the group supported the participant by providing the correct pronoun.

**Teacher:** what language does he speak?

**Student 1:** she speaks...

**Teacher:** is a boy

**Students:** he

**Student 1:** he speaks French

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

In regards to fluency, the use of pauses and hesitations when giving an answer helped students to make them more accurate and to gain time to think about the sentence's structure. In this excerpt, the ellipsis (...) represents the pauses made by the students to repair communication.

**Student 1:** She speaks China.... (Silence and thinking)

**Student 1:** Chinese...She speaks Chinese

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Moreover, the students used fillers to search for words to articulate the sentence as the following excerpt below shows.

**Student 1:** She speak hmmm English

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

During the development of the second pedagogical intervention, we could notice that the students showed the domain of the basic vocabulary required for the development of the activity. The following excerpt exemplifies the use of the key vocabulary related to school subjects, days of the week and ordinal numbers in a well-structured sentence.

**Teacher:** First- Friday. Ok, 30 seconds.

**Students:** Finished...

**Student 1:** The first class on Friday is Spanish.

**Teacher:** Very good.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

However, when students did not remember a word, they showed a tendency to recycle words from their mother tongue in order to complete the sentence with the missing word. The teacher provides feedback to the student by correcting the word. In the following excerpt, the student said "religion" instead of "religious education" to refer to the subject.

**Student 1:** The sixth class... the sixth class

**Teacher:** on Monday is.?

**Student 1:** The sixth class on Monday ...ahmm the sixth class is Religion.

**Teacher:** No, that's not religion. The sixth class on Monday is Religious Education.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Additionally we could notice that when some students were confused, there was usually a student correcting and supporting the participant, as the segment below illustrates.

**Teacher:** What is the second class on Tuesday?

**Student 1:** music

**Teacher:** music? ...no Tuesday

**Student 2:** Teacher Goretti!

**Student 2:** The second class on Tuesday is biology.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Secondly, concerning the aspect of accuracy it is important to recognize that in general terms students managed simple grammatical structures when participating in the activity. They used the days of the week and ordinal numbers with the corresponding article "the", as the following extract shows:

**Student 1:** The fourth class on Tuesday is Math

**Teacher:** Let me see, mmm good, you have 2 stars

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

However in other cases, it was evidenced that some students tended to generalize the use of the article even when naming the day of the week or the school subject.



**Student 1:** The Wednesday... third third is English

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

**Student 2:** The fourth class on the Thursday is the sports.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Besides, the extract above shows that few students do not have a command of the simple sentence pattern required for the activity as they exchanged the order of the sentence or the verb to be. For that reason, as noticed in the following excerpt students asked directly or indirectly for peer support to make an accurate sentence. In this sense, it is important to highlight also that peer and teacher support was a key factor to help them to overcome those difficulties.

**Teacher:** First- Friday

**Student 2:** The first class is...

**Students:** On

**Student 2:** The first class is on on Friday is computer science

**Teacher:** Good. But remember you don't say is on Friday ...on Friday, so one star.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Thirdly, in terms of fluency it is still evidenced that students used too much pausing when expressing in the target language when they did not remember a word. In this way, in the following segment they indirectly asked for help to their peers.

**Student 1:** The third class...third class

**Students:** on

**Student 1:** The third...ehhh third class on...on

**Students:** on Wednesday is English

**Student 1:** The third class on...Wednesday is English.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Also, there are some cases in which students switched the language to show hesitation and anxiety as they don't know how to construct the sentence or to gain time to find the word to complement the sentence. The following extract exemplifies the above mentioned.

**Teacher:** Third- Tuesday-30 seconds

**Student 1:** The third class on English is... ayy..no..no..

**Student 1:** The third class on Tuesday is English

**Teacher:** No, It's Spanish. So, sorry

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Subsequently, in another particular case a student appealed for help to the group by speaking in Spanish.

**Teacher:** Fourth and Tuesday

**Student 1:** The fourth class on Tuesday is...digame rapidoo

**Student 1:** The fourth class on Tuesday is Sports

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

In the development of the third pedagogical intervention, some aspects regarding range aroused. Students used many content words in an attempt to transmit the message. In the following excerpt, the student used the pronoun "he" to refer to the person that was mentioned in the story . Also, this student used the word "breakfast" to express what he does. The message in this case was transmitted despite the fact that the student did not know the verb.

**Student 4:** He breakfast eh...six...six ...six

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

In another excerpt, the student mentioned the word “soccer” and the word “play” in order to communicate their partners that Tom is a soccer player.

**Student 1:** Tom...tom is soccer play that

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

On the contrary, students used some simple phrases when trying to convey and transmit meaning. As evidenced in the following segment, the members of this group used some accurate simple sentences in present tense.

**Student 1:** Tom...tom is soccer a soccer player. He wakes up and get up at ...

**Student 2:** After that, he goes to the bathroom and takes a shower at six o'clock

**Student 3:** He gets dressed at quarter past six

**Student 4:** Then he has breakfast at half past six

**Student 5:** After, he brushes his teeth at quarter past seven

**Student 6:** Finally, he ..... no teacher

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

However, as the excerpt above showed student 6 lacked of repertoire while participating orally in the game. The student gives up as well but switching the language. Similarly in this other fragment, the student tried to construct the sentence but the lack of vocabulary was an obstacle.

**Student 6:** Finally, he (eehhhh)...

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

Referring to accuracy, we found that some students did not demonstrate a minimum control of simple grammatical structures. Following this idea, they managed to relate the words

with the picture given, even though the sentence structure was not accurate. In this excerpt, there is evidence of that.

**Student 4:** Next, an ...and breakfast an six o...a quarter...a quarter to six

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

Furthermore, as the following segments illustrate some students showed a tendency to use the verb to be before an action verb in a sentence when is not necessary or to talk in first person singular instead of the third one.

**Student 5:** He is a brushes teeth at quarter to seven

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

**Student 3:** Tom ...tom is get dressed at six at half past six

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

**Student 2:** I go to the bathroom and ... then I go to the bathroom and takes a shower and six o clock

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

In other cases they did not keep in mind the third person singular when conjugating the verbs as the extract below exemplify.

**Student 5:** He brush his teeth a quarter to seven

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

In regards of fluency, students repeated some words to keep the track of the message they wanted to express. So, we noticed the use of false starts in their speech in order to search for expressions as well as to repair communication. In the following excerpt, the student repeated “goes to the bathroom” three times. In this way, the student could save time and think of the vocabulary and the grammar structures to construct the sentence that he/she wanted to say.

**Student 2:** Next, he goes to the bathroom ... (goes to the bathroom x3) and take a shower an six o'clock

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

Likewise, students tended to use fillers to try to search for expressions. In the following segment, the student made a long pause to try to remember a time expression.

**Student 3:** He get dressed...hmm...hmm and past six

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

During the fourth pedagogical intervention, in terms of range students showed a good control of words and simple phrases when comparing two pictures. In the following segment, the student did a proper use of the words to construct a comparative sentence.

**Student 1:** The burger is more delicious than the sandwich

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

On the contrary, there were some cases in which students were not able to construct a comparative sentence as they did not manage the core vocabulary. The following fragment below exemplifies that.

**Teacher:** Ok, listen to Bolivar.

**Student 1:** The classroom

**Teacher:** The classroom

**Student 1:** the more organiz... organiz...organiz... the more...

**Teacher:** ok, thank you. Bolivar

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

Concerning accuracy, some students mostly showed domain of some grammatical structures and sentence patterns. In this excerpt, the student used a proper adjective to make the comparison.

**Student 1:** The car is more modern than the bicycle.

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

Nevertheless, in few occasions the students did not have a good command of the grammar structures required for the activity. As noticed in this fragment, the student used two adjectives in the same sentence. Besides, he did a generalization when using the article “the”. Likewise, the student did not include “more” as it is an adjective with more than one syllable.

**Student 1:** The biology is modern hmm... interesting is than sport

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

In other excerpt, we could notice that the student did not include the word “than” to make the comparison accurately.

**Student 1:** The family ...ya teacher? The family is more ... impor... (laugh) important

**Student 1:** is teacher?

**Teacher:** Continue... the family, repeat from the beginning.

**Student 1:** The family is more important...y

**Teacher 1:** is more important.

**Student 1:** the friends

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

In the view of fluency, students tended to repeat some utterances to search for expressions. In this excerpt, it can be evidenced that.

**Student:** The compu...the computer...the computer is more and the modern...

**Teacher:** modern

**Student:** thanTV.

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

In this excerpt, the student showed hesitation and made some pauses to repair communication. Therefore, it is important to highlight that the student was aware of the inconsistency in relation to the meaning of the sentence so that the sentence was corrected immediately.

**Student 1:** The washing machine is more expensive than the ...

**Teacher:** Listen to Ramirez

**Student 1:** The iron is more expensive than the...the perdon. The washing machine is more expensive than the iron

**Teacher:** Excellent, Thank you so much

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

Moreover, as the following excerpt shows, the student made a pause in order to articulate less familiar words within the sentence, especially when the words were not familiar to them. In this particular case the word "shark" was not included in the bank of the vocabulary studied throughout the classes.

**Student:** Elephant is more aggressive than ... the shark

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

During the development of the fifth pedagogical intervention, in connection with range it can be highlighted that the students showed mostly a good command of the vocabulary related to places and actions to express in past simple and continuous the answer to the questions prompted

by their peers during the game. The following segment illustrates the use of the key vocabulary to ask the questions and also to answer them.

**Student 1:** three, aquí .Yo le pregunto. What were they doing yesterday?

**Student 2:** They were eating.

**Student 1:** bien, ahora where were they yesterday?

**Student 2:** They were...they were at the ocean

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

As the extract above showed the students were able also to assess their peers even they did it in their mother tongue. They provided feedback to their classmates highlighting the correct and wrong answers.

Despite of the improvements in relation to the knowledge of vocabulary acquired by the students throughout the process of the implementations in very few cases it was evidenced a lack of repertoire when constructing an answer. Similarly, in the matter of accuracy the extract below shows that some students sometimes did not use the correct past form of the verb to be when constructing the sentence.

**Student 1:** What were they doing yesterday?

**Student 2:** They was...in ...was

**Student 1:** Noo..perdio..

**Student 3:** Ay no...pobre jaider

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Secondly, in respect to the aspect of accuracy it is important to recognize the advance the students showed at this point of the process. It was evidenced that they have control of the simple grammatical structure when expressing themselves in the target language. They mostly



used the correct past form of the verb to be as well as the past continuous tense properly when constructing the answer for the question as illustrated in the following segment:

**Student 3:** 6, what was she doing yesterday?

**Student 4:** She doing...ah...she was running ...she was running

**Student 3:** Where was she yesterday?

**Student 4:** She was in the forest yesterday.

**Student 3:** Mueve 5 espacios...uyy pregunta

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Besides, as the extract above demonstrates students were aware of their own mistakes and they took advantages of communication strategies like pauses to correct themselves at the moment of speaking.

Thirdly, considering fluency it was noticeable that students were capable of expressing accurate answers without using pausing as the extract below exemplifies:

**Student 5:** What were they doing yesterday?

**Student 6:** They were playing

**Student 5:** Where were they yesterday?

**Student 6:** They were in the park.

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Nevertheless, there were very few cases in which students switched the language to their mother tongue to show hesitation and anxiety as they did not know how to construct the sentence or also to gain time to find the word for complementing the sentence. Then, the group peers provided feedback in Spanish and assessed the answer. The following extract exemplifies the above mentioned.

**Student 7:** ehh... What were...? Cómo comienza eso

**Student 7:** They were...ehh... they were ehh...cooking no?

**Student 8:** Se queda, se queda

**Student 8:** Where were they yesterday?

**Student 7:** They was ehh...donde esta ocean

**Student 8:** Se devuelve, la dijo mal

**Student 7:** Por qué?

**Student 8:** Primero que todo, es eating no cooking

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Despite pronunciation is not a category to be analyzed in our research study we found that regarding this aspect there was a tendency to pronounce the words the same as their written way. When students did not know the pronunciation of a particular word they mispronounced it. However, those mistakes were not an obstacle for students to participate in the activities as they did not pay too much attention to that aspect. The words underlined were pronounced literally, as the following extracts illustrate:

**Student 1:** She speaks English

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

**Student 2:** The second class on Tuesday is Sports

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

**Student 3:** He gets dressed at quarter past six

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

**Student 4:** The cinema is more interesting than the theater

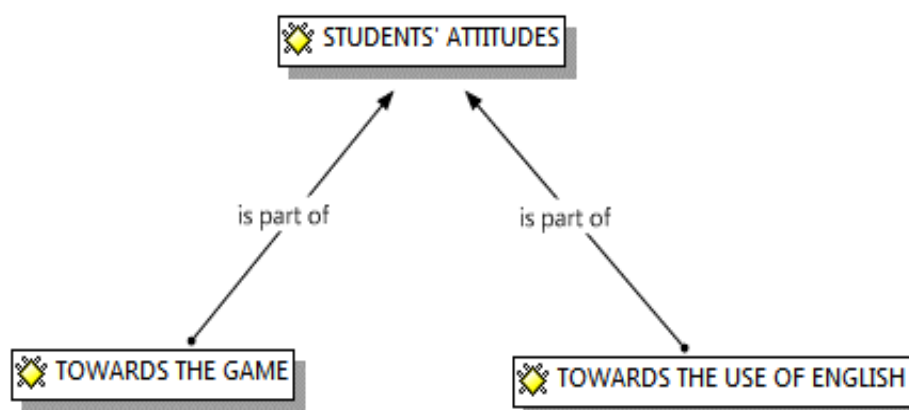
*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

**Student 5:** What were they doing yesterday?

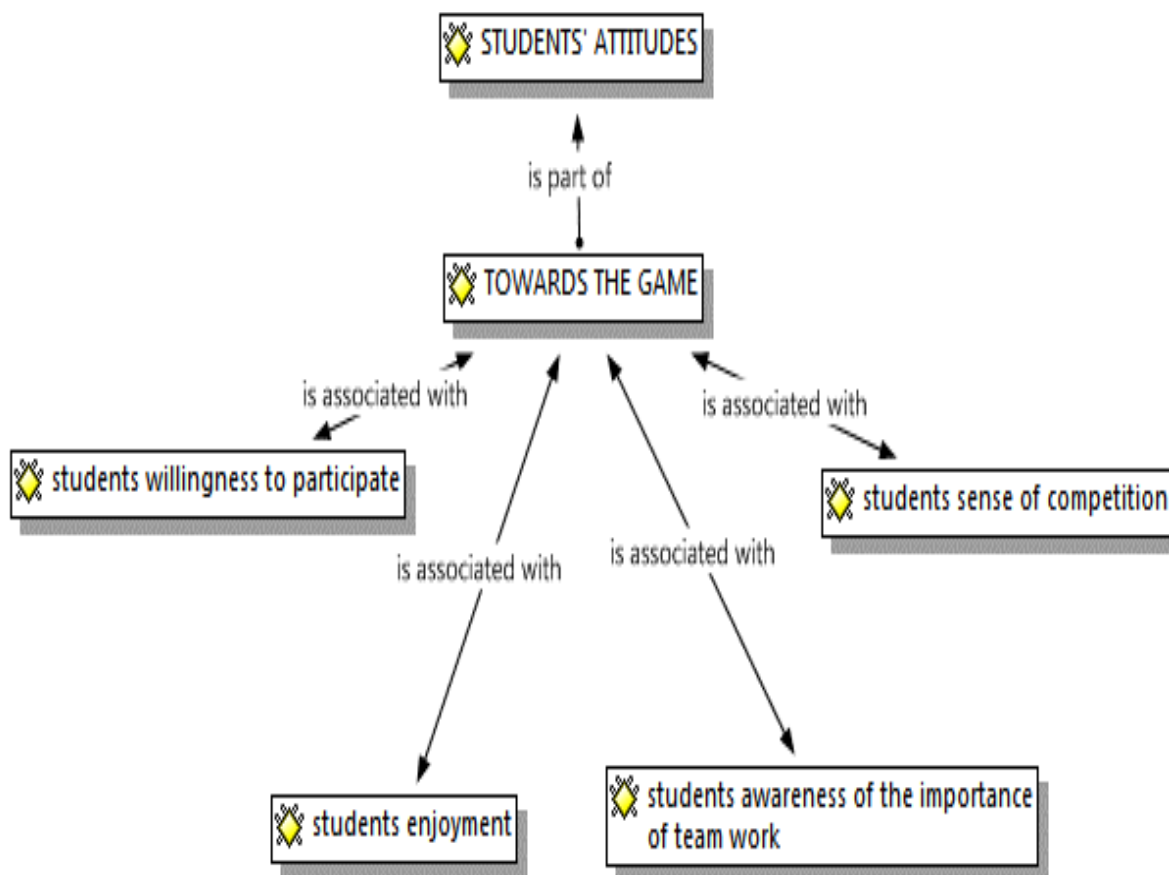
(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)

In general terms, after having analyzed the students' oral language performance we could find that students showed a progressive improvement of their range, accuracy and fluency throughout the implementation of the five pedagogical interventions. As noticed, students mostly were able to manage the core vocabulary and simple sentence patterns when constructing a sentence. Even though they showed difficulties regarding fluency because of the lack of grammatical structure or vocabulary they took advantages of the use of Communication strategies like pauses to correct themselves at the moment of speaking. Besides, they relied on repetition of content words to keep the track of the message they wanted to express, to search for expressions or to repair communication. Moreover, their attitude was an essential aspect to be analyzed within the process. Next, we present the analysis of students' attitudes towards the games and towards the use of English.

**Students' Attitudes.** After doing a systematic analysis of two sources of information, the categories found were towards the game and towards the use of English (See graph 1. Categories) in order to address the second research question.



**Graph 1.** Categories.

*Towards the game***Graph 2.** Towards the game: open codes

In regards to the category of towards the game, four open codes emerged (see graph 2. Towards the game: open codes). The four codes that support this category are students' willingness to participate, students' enjoyment, students' awareness of the importance of team work and, students' sense of competition.

*Students' willingness to participate*

The following open code found is students' willingness to participate. During the interventions, students' participation increased considerably in each intervention due to intrinsic

and extrinsic factors such as gaining more confidence, appealing games topics, being awarded with stars, receiving group's support, knowing the vocabulary and grammatical structures required for the activities, among others. The games proved to be a powerful tool to make students use the language eagerly without feeling inhibited or ashamed when making mistakes.

The students showed a good disposition as they participated actively in the memory activity telling the sentences with the school subjects and ordinal numbers corresponding to their schedule.

(Observer's field notes\_G#2\_12-05-16)

1. Te gustó participar en la actividad.

SI  NO   
 Porque: por que a mi me gusta  
participar en clase

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_08\_G#2\_12-05-16)

1. Te gustó participar en la actividad.

SI  NO   
 Porque: era muy buena me gusto porque me gus  
taba participar

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_10\_G#2\_12-05-16)

### ***Students' enjoyment***

In this regard, this study gives evidence that students took the games as a means of learning and enjoyment. Hence, games also contribute to build stronger relationships between the participants as they have fun with their peers and support each other in order to understand English better. Furthermore, students' enjoyment made it possible for students to speak and perform more freely and reduce the level of anxiety. From these excerpts, it is certain that a game is an important technique to use when students are unmotivated or not eager to use the language.

The students were highly motivated towards this activity as it was a different one, outdoors and for them fun and entertaining.

(Observer's field notes\_G#4\_07-07-16)

They were excited to play with their classmates.

(Observer's field notes\_G#5\_31-08-16)

5. ¿Qué es lo que más te gustó de la actividad? Que todos trabajamos en equipo  
la profesora muy chévere y la buena actitud de la teacher

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_02\_G#1\_13-04-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? ES MUY CHEVERE Y ES RICO PORQUE NO SE  
aburre y se distrae.

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_01\_G#3\_01-06-16)

### ***Students' awareness of the importance of team work***

Regarding this open code, the excerpts taken from the teacher's field notes and the students' questionnaires give evidence as follows:

I could notice that they were committed when working in the groups.

(Teacher's field notes\_G#3\_01-06-16)

They all did cooperative work by helping each other to make up the answer of a given question.

At this point of the implementation stage, they were not reluctant to participate in the activity as they were more committed with their groups.

(Teacher's field notes\_G#1\_13-04-16)

The groups were strategically made in order to join the students with a better command of the language with the novice ones. It was evidenced that the outstanding students from each group were in charge of guiding their partners.

(Teacher's field notes\_G#1\_13-04-16)

During the development of the game, most of the students showed enthusiasm when working in groups as they feel more supported.

(Teacher's field notes\_G#2\_12-05-16)

4. Fue fácil o difícil participar en el juego utilizando el inglés.

FÁCIL  DIFÍCIL \_\_\_\_\_  
 Porque: me apoyaban y a su padre

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_09\_G#2\_12-05-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?

SI  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 ¿Por qué? Porque nos divertimos, había esta unión en el grupo

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_08\_G#1\_13-04-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?

SI  NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 ¿Por qué? Porque nos ayudó a trabajar en grupo y nos motivó a hablar inglés.

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_06\_G#3\_01-06-16)

For the purpose of this study, the games were a crucial factor to make students raise their awareness about the importance that team work has for achieving a common goal. During the interventions they worked collaboratively in order to convey meaning, to provide feedback and support and give vocabulary, among others. In this sense, students felt more comfortable when expressing in the target language in front of others. Moreover, they showed themselves eager and enthusiastic to participate in the activities.

### *Students' sense of competition*

Connected to students' attitudes towards the game, the sense of competition seems to arise when students showed their encouragement and enjoyment in competing for achieving a goal. In this sense, competition is assumed in this project as a positive factor, in the fact, it increased motivation and team work. Additionally, students were more committed when using the language as they learned as much as they could to win the game. Despite of having lost in some occasions, students' motivation and participation was not decreased. It is important to point out that competition and team work are two essential aspects which are interrelated in order to educate students for being competitive but cooperative individuals.

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? porque estaba divertida y desiamos cosas en ingles y competitivo

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_01\_G#1\_13-04-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? me gustó la actividad porque me pareció competitivo y divertido

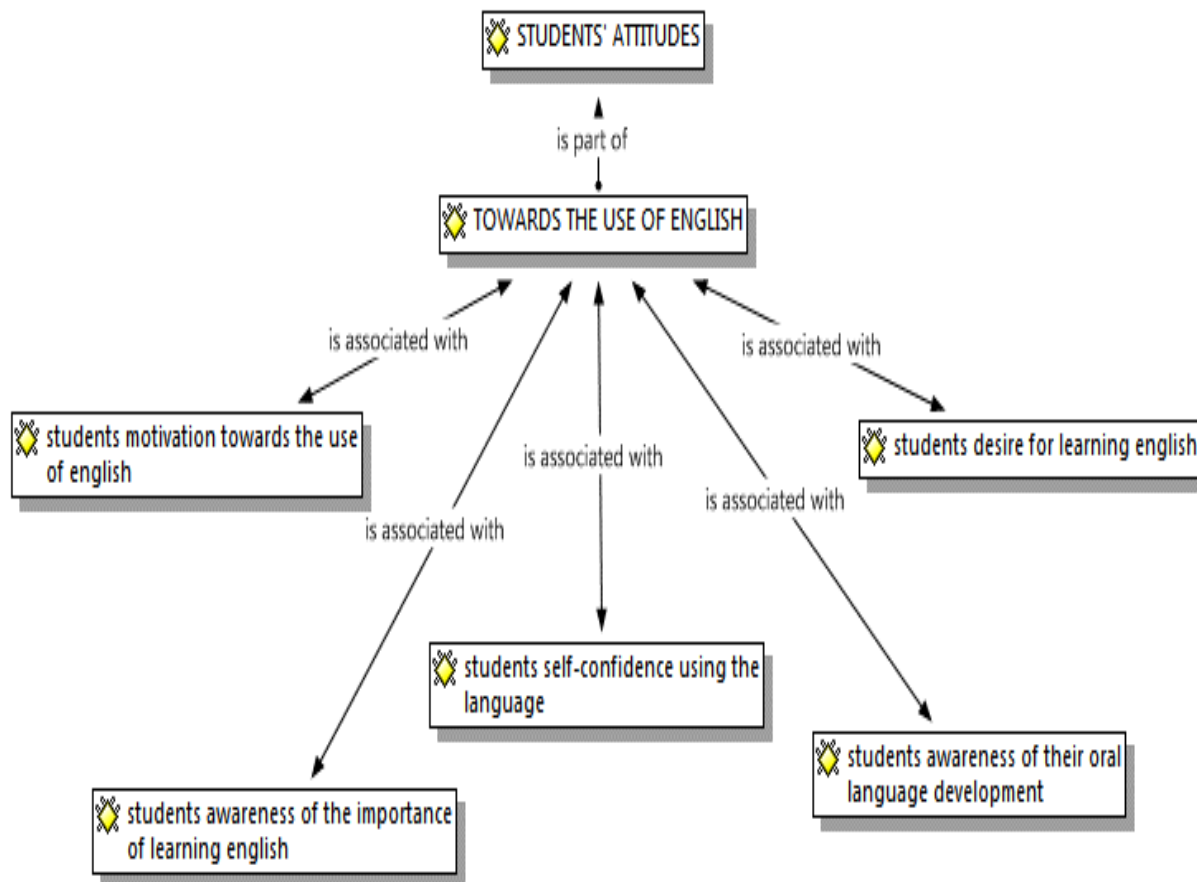
(QUESTIONNAIRE\_05\_G#1\_13-04-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? por que me gustaba competir

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_09\_G#1\_13-04-16)



### *Towards the use of English*



**Graph 3.** Towards the use of English: open codes

Towards the use of English was another emerging category found after analyzing data. For instance, the open codes that compose this category are students' motivation towards the use of English, students' awareness of the importance of learning English, students' self-confidence using the language, students' awareness of their oral language development and students' desire for learning English.

#### *Students' motivation towards the use of English*

In relation to this open code, motivation played an influential role in students' willingness to speak in English. In this sense, students who were motivated showed a high level of achievement as they were naturally interested in playing. Furthermore, this study gives evidence

that by implementing games as a pedagogical strategy, students were immersed in an environment where English was at the forefront of the interventions carried out. Following this idea, the teacher also played a key role in motivating students to speak in English by means of praising words, permanent support and instant feedback. The extracts below provide support to this open code.

3. ¿Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? Porque lo teníamos que decir todo en inglés  
y como estaban grabando me motivó a hablar inglés.

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_08\_G#1\_13-04-16)

3. Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés.

SI  NO   
 Porque: Jugar a mí me motivó a hablar inglés y  
aprender.

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_07\_G#2\_12-05-16)

3. Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés.

SI  NO   
 Porque: mi profesora y mis compañeros  
me motivaron

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_03\_G#2\_12-05-16)

### ***Students' awareness of the importance of learning English***

As noticed from the segments below, students were highly aware about the importance of English as a global language as well as the significance that learning English could bring to their personal and professional lives. Games seemed to be a beneficial factor for helping students to gain a more positive attitude towards the learning of English. That is to say, that students can cope with it not only as a mandatory subject in the curriculum but also as an important language that can lead them to reach progress.

3. ¿Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? me parece que el ingles es divertido  
 y a la vez un idioma util

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_05\_G#1\_13-04-16)

3. ¿Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? Porque creo el ingles es una carrera  
 muy importante para mi

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_02\_G#3\_01-06-16)

### *Students' self-confidence using the language*

This open code is about how students can build security when speaking in the target language through the use of games. Thus, this study demonstrates that games could provide confidence among the participants since the feeling of being in a group that is committed in participating in the games could develop a sense of self-confidence using the oral language. Besides, this study showed that the participants' confidence increased when communicating and expressing ideas or providing information during the interventions. In this sense, oral language performance is directly related with students' confidence in the sense that the more confident the participants were, the more frequently and accurately they expressed ideas. The following excerpts show participants' confidence in the pedagogical interventions.

4. ¿Fue fácil o difícil participar en el juego utilizando el inglés?  
 FÁCIL  DIFÍCIL   
 ¿Por qué? porque sabia hablar y por que me ayudaban

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_02\_G#4\_07-07-16)

3. ¿Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? no sabía contar historias en inglés y ahora sí

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_08\_G#3\_01-06-16)

### *Students' awareness of their oral language development*

Undoubtedly, the more contact with the language students have, the more advances they achieve in terms of their oral language performance. The point of learning a language by means of games is not only to master a language accurately, but to make them conscious of their significant progress in their own language learning process. Equally important, along the five pedagogical interventions students realized that after playing there were improvements as they could perform better in the language.

3. ¿Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? Porque aprendo mucho

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_03\_G#1\_13-04-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?  
 SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? Me divertí, disfruté y ahora se habla mucho más inglés.

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_10\_G#1\_13-04-16)

### *Students' desire for learning English*

The following fragments give account of students' desire for learning English as they expressed in different occasions their interest in participating in the target language. That is to say that games provided students with the confidence and willingness to participate as they felt they were able to perform orally in each intervention better. Likewise, games appeared to be a source of inspiration for students to keep learning the language.

3. Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés.

SI  NO   
 Porque: me inspira a seguir aprendiendo

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_01\_G#2\_12-05-16)

3. Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés.

SI  NO   
 Porque: por que a mi me gusta mucho aprender ingles

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_08\_G#2\_12-05-16)

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?

SI  NO   
 ¿Por qué? para aprender a hablar ingles

(QUESTIONNAIRE\_08\_G#3\_01-06-16)

**Communication Strategies.** In order to address the third research question, the following qualitative analysis presents five frequency forms that classify the communication strategies used by students during the development of the five pedagogical interventions. Therefore, the five communication strategies (word-coinage, use of nonlinguistic means, code switching, appeal for help, use of fillers/hesitation devices) previously identified are going to be described within this analysis.

### First intervention

STRATEGY	NUMBER OF TIMES	PERCENTAGE
<b>Word-coinage</b>	0	0%
<b>Use of nonlinguistic means</b>	16	38,1%

<b>Appeal for help</b>	14	34,2%
<b>Use of fillers/hesitation devices</b>	3	7.14%
<b>Code- Switching</b>	9	21.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	42	100%

**Table 2.** Communication strategies used during the first intervention.

As Table 2 shows, of the total of communication strategies used by students during the second intervention, 38,1% were use of nonlinguistic means, 34,2 % were appeal for help , 7,14 % were use of fillers-hesitation devices , 21,4% were Code- switching .Word- coinage was a communication strategy never used by the participants.

Therefore, the first most used strategy was nonlinguistic means with a 34,2 % .The following excerpt of one of the teacher-student interactions illustrates how the participant used mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation to show anxiety or to make a pause to think how to articulate the sentence accurately. The symbol (-) represents the use of gestures and mimics.

**Teacher:** What language does she speak?

**Student 1:** She speaks (-) China (-) Chinese

**Teacher:** Very good. The pronunciation is good and the sentence is correct.

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Subsequently, the second most used strategy was appeal for help. The symbol (<) represents the use of this strategy. Therefore, the segment below exemplifies how a student asked

to their group partners for help indirectly by rising intonation, and making a pause. Meanwhile, the group provided the missing word to complete the sentence.

**Teacher:** What language does he speak?

**Student 2:** He speaks (<)

**Students:** Italian

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Besides, there were cases in which students showed puzzled expression when making a mistake in a sentence and turned to the teacher for correction indirectly as the symbol (\*) represents. So the teacher helped the participant to repair the message by correcting the mistake as the following extract below shows:

**Teacher:** What language does she speak?

**Student 3:** She speaks (\*)

**Teacher:** It's a boy

**Student 3:** He speaks (\*) French

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Thirdly, the most used strategy was code switching. The following example illustrates the language switch from English to Spanish firstly for expressing eagerness to answer the question. Also, when offering support from the group to the participant as the following excerpt demonstrates.

**Student 4:** uy me la voy a ganar

**Teacher:** Ok what language does speak?

**Students:** Venga, venga

**Student 4:** USA

**Students:** No

**Student 5:** She lives United States

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Therefore, as the extract above showed the language switch was done with simple exclamations in Spanish or slangs. Similarly, students showed a tendency to switch to Spanish when asking the teacher for repetition to the question prompted as the following segment below demonstrates:

**Teacher:** what language does she speak?

**Student 6:** Señora

**Teacher:** What language does she speak?

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Furthermore, the next fragment illustrates how participants switched to their mother tongue to assess their peers answer in regards to the sentence accuracy.

**Teacher:** Where does she live?

**Student 7:** She lives in French

**Students:** Nooo teacher, dijo French y es france

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

Lastly, fillers and hesitation devices were the strategy most used by students with a 7.14%. Particularly, students used filling words or gambits to fill pauses and to gain time to think the complement to the sentence. Meanwhile, the teacher encouraged the student by asking him-her to repeat the sentence. So, it helped students to overcome their anxiety and nervousness when expressing orally in the language. As the following excerpt shows:

**Teacher:** What language does she speak?



**Student 1:** She speak ahmm...English

**Teacher:** Again

**Student 1:** She speak ...English

*(Transcript\_G#1\_13-04-16)*

### Second intervention

STRATEGY	NUMBER OF TIMES	PERCENTAGE
Word-coinage	1	3,03 %
Use of nonlinguistic means	12	36,36 %
Appeal for help:	7	21,21 % %
Use of fillers/hesitation devices	10	30,30 %
Code- Switching	3	9,10 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	33	100

**Table 3.** Communication strategies used during the second intervention.

As Table 3 shows, of the total of communication strategies used by students during the second intervention, 36,36% were use of nonlinguistic means, 21,21 % were appeal for help , 30,30% were use of fillers- hesitation devices , 9,10 % were Code- switching .Word- coinage was a communication strategy less used by the participants with a 3,03%.

The following excerpt of one of the teacher-student interactions illustrates how the participants used nonlinguistic means, fillers and hesitation devices. In this case, student 1 asked

the teacher for support by making visual movements and using fillers and pauses, too. Meanwhile the teacher helps participants by providing the clues to complete the sentence. The symbol (...) represents the use of non-verbal cues when asking for help.

**Student 1:** The sixth class... the sixth class

**Teacher:** on Monday is.?

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

Subsequently in the same excerpt the student used the strategy of word coinage to complete the sentence with the missing unknown word as well as the use of fillers and pauses. The teacher provides feedback to the student by correcting the word.

**Student 1:** The sixth class on Monday ... ahmm the sixth class is Religion.

**Teacher:** No, that's not religion. The sixth class on Monday is Religious Education.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

The second strategy most frequently used by students was the use of fillers and hesitation devices. The following segment exemplifies how afraid of speaking in English and making mistakes some students were. However, their peers provided support to complete the sentence in a correct way. That was a key factor to overcome some students' shyness and difficulties when expressing orally in the language.

**Student 2:** The fourth class on Tuesday is ... ahmmm ehhh .

**Students:** Maths, Maths

**Student 2:** The fourth class on Tuesday is Math

**Teacher:** Let me see, hmmm, very good. You have 2 stars.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

The third strategy most often used was appeal for help. In different occasions participants turned to their group partners for help indirectly by rising intonation, pause, eye contact and puzzled expression. The following excerpt exemplifies the use of this strategy by means of the symbol (...).

**Student 3:** The third class (...) Third class

**Students:** on

**Student 3:** The third (...) ehh third class on (...) on

**Students:** on Wednesday is English

**Student 3:** The third class on (...) Wednesday is English.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

As the extract above shows, student 3 asked the group for help by making pauses to show hesitation. The group supported the participant by complementing the sentence and the participant repeated the answer using a complete sentence.

The next strategy most used was language switch. The following example illustrates the use of code-switching from English to Spanish when expressing an answer during the game. The use of language switch was done with simple exclamations in Spanish or slangs.

**Student 4:** The fourth class on Tuesday... ay diganme rapido

**Student 5:** Is sports

**Student 4:** The fourth class on Tuesday is sports.

**Teacher:** The answer is correct but remember do not to use Spanish.

**Teacher:** Wednesday, second

**Student 6:** ... no se...

**Student 7:** The Wednesday...third. ..third is English

**Teacher:** So, sorry the sentence is not correct.

*(Transcript\_G#2\_12-05-16)*

The two segments demonstrated how the student states something, and then when he-she does not know what to say they show anxiety by saying words in Spanish that help them to gain time to think about the correct form of the sentence or ask for their classmates' help.

### Third intervention

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>NUMBER OF TIMES</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>Word-coinage</b>	0	%
<b>Use of nonlinguistic means</b>	1	3.84%
<b>Appeal for help:</b>	16	61.5 %
<b>Use of fillers/hesitation devices</b>	5	19.3 %
<b>Code- Switching</b>	4	15.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	26	100%

**Table 4.** Communication strategies used during the third intervention

As Table 4 shows, of the total of communication strategies used by students during the implementation of the third pedagogical intervention, 3.84% were use of nonlinguistic means, 61.5 % were appeal for help , 19.3% were use of fillers- hesitation devices , 15,4 % were code-switching and word- coinage was a communication strategy not used by the participants.

Considering the strategies used by the participants, the first most used was appeal for help. The following excerpt of the students' interactions illustrates how the participants showed puzzled expression, pauses and repetition of a word in order to ask indirectly for help or to gain time to think to complement the sentence. The symbol ( > ) represents the use of pauses, puzzled expression or intonation rise when asking for help.

**Student 1:** Tom > Tom> Tom > is a soccer player. Is > a quarter

**Student 2:** Next, he goes to the bathroom > goes to the bathroom > goes to the bathroom and take a shower an six o clock.

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

Subsequently in the same excerpt, another student used the strategy of code switching. The example below shows how the student switched from English to Spanish, to express he/ she did not know how to retell the story and to obtain the correct answer from the teacher. So, the teacher provides guidance to the student by showing the picture of the story to remind him/her the sequence of the story.

**Student 3:** a get dressed > mmm >no teacher no me la he aprendido

**Teacher:** Look at the picture.

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

In another group two students switched to Spanish from the beginning to say they were not able to retell the story. Meanwhile the teacher tried to encourage them to see the picture again and retell the action displayed on it.

**Student 1:** Tom is > a soccer a soccer player. He wakes up and get up at a quarter to six

**Student 2:** No me la se >

**Student 3:** Tom > Tom is get dressed at six at half past six

**Student 4:** He brush his teeth a quarter to seven

**Student 5:** No teacher.

**Teacher:** No?.ok..Try.. Look at the picture again

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

The second strategy most frequently used by students was the use of fillers and hesitation devices. The following segment exemplifies how afraid of speaking in English and making mistakes some students were. The time limit was a key factor to make students feel anxious and hesitated to retell the story in a wrong way. The symbol (...) represents the use of non- verbal cues to show anxiety or hesitation when expressing their ideas in English. In a particular case, a student of the group switched to Spanish to give up from the storytelling activity.

**Student 3:** He get dressed (...) amm (...) and past six

**Student 4:** He breakfast eh hh (...) six (...) six (...)

**Student 5:** After that (...) he brushes his teeth (...) and

**Student 6:** Finally (...)

**Teacher:** Finally...

**Student 6:** No teacher, no me recuerdo

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

The third strategy most often used was code switching with As the extract above showed students usually switched to their mother tongue to express they were not able to retell the story because they did not remember the sequence of the story. Therefore, that segment above demonstrated how the student tried to state something, and then when he-she did not know what to say they showed anxiety by saying words in Spanish to leave the message incomplete.

Finally, the fourth strategy used by students was the use of non -linguistic means. The following segment again exemplifies the use of this strategy. This occurred in a context in which the students have a time limit to retell a particular story previously worked in groups. As they did not remember the sequence they made visual movements and use fillers and pauses, to gain time to think, to ask the teacher indirectly or their peers for support or also to show anxiety towards the activity. The symbol (-) represents use of non-verbal cues when participating in the activity.

**Student 1:** Tom (-) Tom is soccer a soccer player. He wakes up and get up at (-)

**Student 2:** At a quarter to six. After that, he goes to the bathroom and take a shower at six o clock.

*(Transcript\_G#3\_01-06-16)*

#### **Fourth intervention**

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>NUMBER OF TIMES</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>Word-coinage</b>	0	0%
<b>Use of nonlinguistic means</b>	5	17,24%
<b>Appeal for help:</b>	15	51,73%
<b>Use of fillers/hesitation devices</b>	3	10,34%
<b>Code- Switching</b>	6	20,69%
<b>TOTAL</b>	29	100%

**Table 5.** Communication strategies used during the fourth intervention

As Table 5 shows, of the total of communication strategies used by students during the second intervention, 17.24% were use of nonlinguistic means, 51.73 % were appeal for help , 10.34% were use of fillers- hesitation devices , 20,69 % were code- switching .word- coinage was a strategy not used by the participants.

Considering the strategies used by the participants, the first most used was appeal for help. The following excerpt of the students' interactions illustrates how the participants showed puzzled expression, pauses and repetition of a word in order to ask indirectly for help or to gain time to think to complement the sentence. The symbol (>) represents the use of pauses, puzzled expression or intonation rise when asking for help.

**Student 1:** The compu (>) the computer...the computer is more and the modern

**Teacher:** modern

**Student 1:** than tv

**Teacher:** Very good, the computer is more modern than the tv, excellent, two stars

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

Subsequently in the same excerpt the teacher provides guidance to the student by repeating the comparative adjective in order to help student to complete the sentence.

In another group a student switched to Spanish to ask the teacher for a word when constructing the sentence. The teacher replied to the question with the answer in English to help the student to construct the sentence. Similarly, she provides the corresponding feedback for the student to answer. So, we could say there was also code switching.

**Student 2:** Teacher, how do you say tiene?

**Teacher:** Tiene, has

**Student 3:** The bed is more comfortable than the .... Hammock



**Teacher:** Hammock

**Student 3:** Hammock

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

The second strategy most frequently used by students was code switching. The example below shows how the student switched from English to Spanish to ask a question, to obtain the confirmation from the teacher and to gain time to think of the complement for the sentence. Then the teacher replied the question by repeating the beginning of the sentence in English for the student to finish it. The student replied with a linking word in Spanish and the rest of the sentence and finally the teacher provided the feedback for the sentence. Also, within the example we can notice appeal for help in the sense that student 4 showed puzzled expressions to ask the teacher for help in an indirect way.

**Student 4:** The family is more...ya teacher? The family is more ... impor..(laugh)  
important

**Student 4:** is teacher?

**Teacher:** Continue... The family...repeat from the beginning

**Student 4:** The family is more important ...y

**Teacher:** is more important...

**Student 4:** the friends

**Teacher:** Ok. Juan Camilo le faltó algo muy importante

**Students:** than. No stars porque la oración está mal no está comparando

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

On the other hand, the following segment exemplifies how the student states something, and then when he-she does not know what to say they show anxiety by saying a particular word in Spanish or rising intonation in order to gain time to think the correct form of the sentence.

**Student 5:** The washing machine is more expensive than the ...

**Teacher:** Listen to Ramirez

**Student 5:** The iron is more expensive than the...the perdon. The washing machine is more expensive than the iron

**Teacher:** Excellent, Thank you so much

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

The third strategy most often used was the use of non-linguistic means. The following segment again exemplifies the use of this strategy. This occurred in a context in which the students have a time limit to make sentences using specific adjectives and words. As they did not remember the structure or grammar patterns of the sentence, they made visual movements and used fillers and pauses to gain time to think, to ask the teacher indirectly or their peers for support or also to show anxiety towards the activity. The symbol (-) represents the use of non-verbal cues when participating in the activity.

**Student 1:** The washing machine is more modern (-)

**Student 2:** shh (-) the washing machine is more practical

**Student 2:** The washing machine is more practical than the mop

**Teacher:** Excellent, two stars. The washing machine is more practical than the mop

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

Finally, the fourth and fifth strategy most used strategies were the use of fillers and hesitation devices and word coinage. Students usually use both strategies together when feeling

afraid of speaking in English and making mistakes .However, peer and teacher support was a key factor to overcome some students' shyness and difficulties when expressing orally in the language. The symbol (...) represents the use of fillers or hesitation devices when expressing an idea in the target language.

**Teacher:** Ok, listen to Jaider.

**Student 5:** The train ...

**Teacher:** The train

**Student 5:** The train is broader tren

**Teacher:** The train is

**Student 5:** The train is

**Teacher:** Give me one star

**Student 5:** The train is

**Teacher:** is ...popular

**Student 5:** ..... popular eh...the

**Teacher:** than

**Student 5:** tren

**Teacher:** ok jaider, the sentence is not right you said plain and is plane and is more popular because you are comparing .so sorry no stars for you

*(Transcript\_G#4\_07-07-16)*

#### **Fifth intervention**

STRATEGY	NUMBER OF TIMES	PERCENTAGE
<b>Word-coinage</b>	0	0 %

<b>Use of nonlinguistic means</b>	7	17,07 %
<b>Appeal for help:</b>	18	44,0 %
<b>Use of fillers/hesitation devices</b>	5	12,19 %
<b>Code- Switching</b>	11	26,82 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	41	100 %

**Table 6.** Communication strategies used during the fifth intervention

As Table 6 shows, of the total of communication strategies used by students during the implementation of the fifth pedagogical intervention, 17,07 % were use of nonlinguistic means, 44,0 % were appeal for help , 12,19 % were use of fillers-hesitation devices , 26,82% were Code- switching .Word- coinage was a communication strategy never used by the participants.

The following excerpt of one of the students' interactions illustrates how the participants used nonlinguistic means. Therefore, the symbol ... represents the use of mime, gesture or facial expression. In this case, student 1 made student 2 two questions related to a pair of pictures - What was she doing yesterday?. Where was she yesterday? The following statements were generated from the questions asked:

**Student 1:** What was she doing yesterday?

**Student 2:** She was ...she was and the ... swimming

**Student 1:** Where was she yesterday?

**Student 2:** and the...she was... at the ocean

**Student 1:** pa atras...

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

As the extract above shows the student made use of mime and gesture when expressing an action word in a sentence. Also, the student used repetition or sound imitation to gain time to think the complement for the sentence.

Thus, considering the strategies used by the participants, the first most used was appeal for help. The following excerpt of the students' interactions illustrates how the participants showed puzzled expression, pauses and repetition of a word in order to ask indirectly for help or to gain time to think the complement for the sentence. The symbol (>) represents the use of pauses, puzzled expression or intonation rise when expressing a message in the target language.

**Student 3:** What were they doing yesterday?

**Student 4:** They were (>) they were eating yesterday

**Student 3:** Ahora ...where were they yesterday?

**Student 4:** They were in the (>) in the beach

**Student 3:** La de where estuvo mal así que no avanza.

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Subsequently in the same excerpt the students provide feedback to their peers in Spanish highlighting the mistakes or correct answers.

The second strategy most frequently used by students was code switching. The below example shows how student 5 switched from English to Spanish, to ask a question and to obtain the confirmation from the group or also to gain time to think the complement for the sentence.

**Student 5:** Bueno diego le toca, tres. What were the doing yesterday?

**Student 6:** ehh... What were...? Cómo comienza eso

**Student 6:** They were...ehh... they were eh...cooking no?

**Student 5:** Se queda, se queda

**Student 5:** Where were they yesterday?

**Student 6:** They was eh...donde esta ocean

**Student 5:** Se devuelve, la dijo mal

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

The student replied with expressions in Spanish to assess the answer provided by participant. So, we could evidence that the use of Spanish is influenced by the group and as a result of that students rely on their mother tongue to help themselves to build an answer to the question asked by the group.

Therefore, the use of this strategy is more connected to the process of giving feedback among students. The following segment exemplifies how the student states something, and then the group assesses the answer with expressions or exclamations in Spanish or rising intonation when correcting the mistakes in the sentence.

**Student 7:** What were they doing yesterday?

**Student 8:** What were they doing dancing

**Students:** Noo...se equivoco hahah

**Student 7:** What was he doing yesterday?

**Student 8:** He was in the ocean.

**Student 7:** No...Se tiene que devolver donde estaba antes

**Student 7:** What were they doing yesterday?

**Student 8:** They was...in ...was

**Student 7:** Noo...perdio..

**Student 7:** Ay no...pobre jaider

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Lastly, the third strategy most used by students was the use of fillers and hesitation devices, pauses and puzzled expression. Students usually use both strategies together when feeling anxious of making mistakes while participating in the activity. Also, they tended to switch the language to ask the group for help or confirmation. The symbol (-) represents the use of fillers or hesitation devices when expressing an idea in the target language.

**Student 1:** Bueno diego le toca, tres. What were the doing yesterday?

**Student 2:** ehh -What were -? Cómo comienza eso

**Student 2:** They were –ehh - they were ehh-cooking no?

*(Transcript\_G#5\_31-08-16)*

Broadly speaking, throughout the fifth pedagogical interventions the most used strategies were appeal for help, use of non-linguistic means and code-switching. As evidenced, students rely on the use of gestures, mimics and other facial expressions in order to ask their peers or teacher for support when participating in the games. Also, it was key the use of rising tone, fillers, pauses, hesitations and the mother tongue for students when they did not know how to express something in the target language and they felt anxious or shy. Finally, to try to convey meaning within their groups they switched to Spanish as it was easier for them to ask for support or confirmation in a language all of them managed natively. Following the line of the project, the final chapter comprises the conclusions and pedagogical implications within this research study.

## **Chapter V. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications**

The following chapter presents the conclusions, limitations and pedagogical implications of this study.

### **Conclusions**

After analyzing the results from the data obtained, the following conclusions were drawn to meet the three main research objectives: 1) To examine the effect of games in oral language performance of fifth graders in an EFL setting 2) To determine the sort of attitude that fifth graders adopt in regards to the use of games to develop their speaking skill 3) To identify the communication strategies used by students when expressing orally in the target language.

Altogether, games should be considered as a compensating tool for the students' oral language performance because students are indeed able to expand the language exposure they need to develop their oral skills. As it was evidenced in the previous chapter related to the findings, from an overall perspective, there was a high the impact of games on the development of students' oral language performance. Also, we noticed that students got involved easily in the activities and as a result of that they reinforced and gained more vocabulary, short utterances, sentence structures and gained more confidence in terms of fluency. They did a really good effort to keep track of a message by means of false starts, the invention, repetition and use of isolated words, in order to look for new expressions to communicate their ideas better when playing. These activities seemed to be highly accepted by students as they serve as way to promote their oral production.

When incorporating games in ELT, a relevant aspect is how students' attitudes towards the game and towards the use of English are established. As noticed, since the beginning of the interventions, students showed a high interest in participating in games as they enjoyed



competing and working in group to achieve a common goal. Therefore, games definitely are worth as an innovative strategy to achieve integration and team work among students what promoted not only team work but also cooperative learning. Undoubtedly, games helped students to trust themselves, as they made more pleasant the learning atmosphere in the classroom.

Consequently, students are more willing to use the target language when involved in the games as they highlighted that these activities helped them to achieve significant improvement in their oral language performance. Besides, students showed a high sense of awareness of the importance of learning English as they reckon it is an essential language at the forefront of the demands of our globalized world that can bring benefits for their personal and professional development.

In the view of communication strategies we found that students used communication strategies frequently when participating in games as they sometimes did not know how to answer a question or to structure a sentence accurately. Hence, they replied with doubts or fillers, made pauses, used their mother tongue or even mispronounced the word. However, it is important to highlight that the use of the strategies by students appeared to be positive for their oral language performance as these language tools served properly to repair their communication and keep the track of a message.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

Nowadays for most of the students, speaking in English is a very complex and demanding skill they are exposed to. In order to show them that developing their oral skill could be easier and enjoyable, activities like games should be used as one of the alternatives to gain more benefits when using the target language. The data showed that there were potential improvements on students' oral performance.

This study allows us to reflect on our pedagogical practice and look for new alternatives to encourage oral communication among learners. Therefore, the teachers' role can be transformed when implementing games as a pedagogical alternative that lets us act as facilitators of students' language learning process. In regards to ours today's globalized world demands, students are expected to perform in the target language accurately in order to achieve a good command. Having this in mind, it is important to mention that the use of games in the classroom challenge traditional conceptions of EFL teaching and learning by setting an easy and more enjoyable way to learn the language.

Although, games proved to have evident results in terms of the students' oral English language performance, there were some issues that interfere in the flow of the process. First, students' attendance was a limitation for the study as sometimes they missed class. Also, the school's schedule affected the implementation process as a one hour class was not enough for developing the activities with the students. Moreover, we could perceive that sometimes the eventual development of extracurricular activities made it difficult or even impossible to carry out the implementations with the students. Additionally, the space was also a limitation for the development of some of the games as they required students to move constantly. Finally, the recording process was difficult as the camera was not available when needed and as a result of that, we had to postpone some implementations.

Further research needs to be conducted not only to identify the effects of games in the students' oral English language performance, but to enhance EFL learning in regards to the teachability of the communication strategies as well. As suggested by Dörnyei (1995) (as cited in Rodriguez and Roux, 2012) communication strategies need to be taught as teachers should raise

students' awareness, encourage them to take risks and provide them with models and opportunities to use communication strategies in the EFL classroom.

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## Appendix A: teacher's interview

## INTERVIEW No. 1 APPLIED TO THE TEACHER

Dear Teacher:

This instrument aims to know your perceptions and the implemented methodology for the development of oral skills. Please answer each of the following questions from your point of view. The information provided is critical for assessing the quality of the learning process of your students.

1. How long have you been teaching English to children?
2. How do you describe the population and context in which you work?
3. Which linguistic skills do you develop the most in the English class?
4. ¿ Does the educational context in which the population is immersed contribute to the learning of a foreign language? Why?
5. What kind of activities do you usually implement in your teaching practice?
6. Which activities are complex to develop in this context? Why?

## Appendix B: Teacher's reflective journal

### MY EXPERIENCE IN THE LANGUAGE TEACHING PROCESS

Teaching brings different challenges everyday so that I must be very prepared to do my best in any situation. After adopting a critical position observing myself and focusing on my role in the classroom, I have found different concerns regarding my students' language learning process.

One of my main concerns as a teacher is maintaining a warm and relaxing learning classroom environment out of pressure for learners to learn naturally. In this way, during my classes, I usually develop listening (songs, videos) , reading and art and craft activities (contained in the textbook). I can say that children have a lot of potential and willingness to learn a second language. Additionally, they can understand mostly through hands, eyes and ears and their span of attention and concentration is very short.

However, as a language teacher I need to trigger the necessity to communicate something. From this perspective, my primary concern has been the lack of oral production in most of the activities I have implemented in my classes. When my students use the target language face several difficulties in regards of vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and grammar structure. During the development of a speaking activity they tend to show a lot of anxiety and hesitation when expressing orally. The most outstanding students are usually the ones who participate actively in the classes. Hence, there is a high tendency of some learners to dominate while others speak very little or not at all.

Unfortunately, I could notice that students tend to use the first language when I am not close to them. That is, because it is easier for them to communicate in their mother tongue as they feel less under pressure. So, the purpose of the activities is misunderstood and not meaningful in

the sense of oral production development. On the other hand, I have evidenced that my students are worried of making mistakes as some students are used to make fun of the ones who cannot speak accurately. For that reason, they remain silent and afraid of participating orally.

Some learners lack of motivation to speak in English because they do not find a real need to express themselves in the language. Undoubtedly, motivation is a crucial factor in the development of communicative activities in the classes. Another factor that influences this issue is the large classes because when participating orally in the class only one student is allowed to talk at a time. To me it is difficult to cope with those difficulties separately as the class time is too short to monitor students' individual progress. Sometimes my teaching strategies contribute negatively to this issue as they are not suitable to the development of speaking and writing skills.

Regarding this, I think that a group teaching style can be beneficial concerning the possibilities to involve learners in a sense of reliance and commitment. Cooperative learning is fundamental to set a communicative learning environment in which learners can be free to use the language naturally. Group work activities are always very good choices when my main concern is promoting communication. Perhaps, the implementation of group work would be a positive strategy to struggle with the issues found in my classes.

## Appendix C: Consent form

**Universidad Surcolombiana**  
**Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés**  
**Carta de consentimiento informado**  
**Título del proyecto de investigación:**

**Desarrollo de la habilidad oral a través de juegos en el contexto de aprendizaje de inglés como lengua extranjera**

Yo, María Goretti Díaz, docente de inglés del Colegio San Miguel Arcángel y estudiante de la Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés, me encuentro realizando una investigación como requisito de grado. El objetivo de la investigación es el desarrollo de la habilidad de los estudiantes para comunicarse en inglés a través de juegos interactivos. Para el desarrollo de este estudio se requiere la participación de su hijo(a) mediante la respuesta a encuestas y grabaciones audio-orales para estudiar el proceso y responder a los objetivos de la investigación. La participación de su hijo(a) es voluntaria y si desea retirarse no tendrá consecuencias negativas de ninguna naturaleza. El informe final de la investigación no hará referencia a los nombres de los estudiantes ni a ninguna característica que los identifique. La información recolectada y los análisis correspondientes solamente se utilizarán para responder los objetivos del proyecto. Copia del informe final reposará en la Institución, la cual ha sido informada sobre el desarrollo del proyecto. *Envío la autorización sobre derechos del artista porque los estudiantes son menores de edad y el padre o madre de familia debe dar consentimiento para que su hijo(a) sea participe del proyecto y pueda ser grabado y encuestado.*

*Agradezco su colaboración*

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**Importante:** Adjuntar un escaneo/foto claramente legible del Documento de Identidad

## Appendix D: Students' questionnaires

Cuestionario a estudiantes del grado quinto del Colegio San Miguel Arcángel

**Universidad Surcolombiana**  
**Maestría en didáctica del inglés**

**Nombre del estudiante:** \_\_\_\_\_ .

**Nombre de la actividad:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Objetivo:** Obtener información acerca del desarrollo de las actividades, de acuerdo al punto de vista de los niños.

**Instrucciones:** Lee los siguientes enunciados y marca con una x tu respuesta cuando aplique y a la vez responde las preguntas.

1. ¿Te gustó participar en la actividad?

SI \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué?

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---

2. Si tuvieses la oportunidad de cambiar algo de la actividad, ¿lo harías?

SI \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué?

---



---

3. ¿Tú crees que la actividad te motivó a hablar en inglés?

SI \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué?

---



---

4. ¿Fue fácil o difícil participar en el juego utilizando el inglés?

FÁCIL \_\_\_\_\_ DIFÍCIL \_\_\_\_\_

¿Por qué?

---



---

5. ¿Qué es lo que más te gustó de la actividad? \_\_\_\_\_

---

6. ¿Qué es lo que menos te gustó de la actividad? \_\_\_\_\_

---

### Appendix E: First game: Spin the wheel

**Purpose:** To talk about countries, nationalities and languages by means of pictures.

**Procedure:**

1. The teacher reviews the structure of a sentence in present simple by means of some slides with pictures about people and their nationalities.
2. As she models an example, students look at the slide, identify the nationality, country and language from the person in the picture and come up with answer for the questions prompted by the teacher.
3. The classroom is divided into six groups of four or five students.
4. There will be ten slides with 10 pictures of people from different countries. Each image will have a number. The teacher explains that there is a wheel which has three different colors. Each color represents a category (Yellow: country Green: nationality blue: Language). Each group has to spin the wheel to get a color.
5. When a student of one of the groups spin the wheel and gets a color , he/she will also have to choose a color card with a number that corresponds to one of the pictures of the slides .
6. Then, according to the category they get, they have to answer a question related to one of the categories mentioned previously in thirty seconds. The teacher has to set the stopwatch.
7. Once the time has run out each group has to say aloud the answer. E.g. The student gets color yellow which corresponds to “country” and he also chooses a color card with the number 1 which corresponds to the slide 1. So the teacher will ask “Where does he live?”



and the group will have 30 seconds to think the answer according to the picture they took and answer for instance: "He lives in France".

8. The winner will be the group with more correct sentences.

## Appendix F: Second game: My Schedule

**Purpose:** To talk about a school schedule.

**Procedure:**

1. The teacher shows a schedule in a slide and models some sample sentences related to the game for students get familiar with the type of sentences they are expected to produce during the game.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
mathematics	biology	Spanish	history	English
mathematics	biology	Spanish	geography	music
<b>BREAK</b>				
English	English	sports	mathematics	art
geography	music	sports	art	English
<b>LUNCHTIME</b>				

*The schedule will be displayed in a slide during the pre-activity.*

2. In addition, the teacher asks some questions for students to answer about the schedule shown. E.g:

What is the second class on Tuesday?

The second class on Tuesday is biology.

3. The classroom is divided into groups of four or five students.

4. The school schedule will be projected during one minute for students to memorize it.

Students will have to remain quiet.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
MATH	ENGLISH	SCIENCE	ART	SPANISH
SPANISH	ART	SOCIAL STUDIES	SOCIAL STUDIES	ENGLISH
SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	MATH
B	R	E	A	K
ETHICS	MATH	MATH	SPORTS	SCIENCE
SOCIAL STUDIES	SPORTS	ENGLISH	MATH	COMPUTER SCIENCE
SCIENCE	SPANISH	SPANISH	SPANISH	RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

*The schedule will be displayed in a slide for students to memorize it.*

5. There will be two dice. One of them will have the days of the week from Monday to Friday and a try again option on each of the sides. The other die will have the ordinal numbers from first to sixth on each of the sides as well.
6. One of the members of each group chosen at random will throw the dice to get a day of the week and an ordinal number. The teacher has to set the stopwatch and the group will have 30 seconds to construct the sentence according to the schedule previously shown.
7. The winner will be the group with the higher number of right answers.

## Appendix G: Third game: Story race

**Purpose:** To retell Tom's daily routine.

**Procedure:**

1. Learners make five groups of six and five students.
2. The teacher places a desk in the middle of the room and puts 6 envelopes with sentences.
3. Each group is given a piece of paper with six pictures of a story to put them in order.
4. The teacher explains that one student from each group runs to the desk and picks one envelope up and turns it back to the team. Each envelope contains a complete sentence.
5. Once the group has the sentence, they have to find the corresponding picture and number it.
6. Another student turns the envelope back to the desk and takes the following one.
7. When students have finished, they are given 5 minutes to review the daily routine orally in their groups and prepare themselves to retell it in front of the other groups. Each member of the group has to choose a number card at random which indicates the sequence of the scenes in the daily routine in order to retell it.
8. The winner is the group with the most accurate daily routine.



### What a busy day!

1. Tom is a soccer player. He wakes up and gets up at a quarter to six.
2. After that, he goes to the bathroom and takes a shower at six o'clock.
3. Then, he gets dressed at a quarter past six.
4. Next, he has breakfast at half past six.
5. After that, he brushes his teeth at a quarter to seven.
6. Finally, he takes his bag and goes to school at seven o'clock.

## Appendix H: Fourth game: Pita fiber bag

**Purpose:** To make comparisons about different pictures.

**Procedure:**

1. The teacher models an example of a comparative sentence using two pictures. Then students are asked to compare different pictures using the list of adjectives given by the teacher.
2. Students are divided into five groups.
3. The students from each group form a line. Every group is going to be assigned a pita fiber bag that is worn by every student once he/she gets the turn according to his/her position in the row.
4. The teacher sets a finishing line. At the line there are some desks and on the desks some cards for each group to be picked up.
5. Every student from each group should wear the pita fiber bag and runs to get the finishing line where he/she needs to take one card containing two pictures to be compared. Then, he/she comes back where his/her classmates are and make a comparative sentence in group using the pictures provided in the card.
6. Each group will have 1 minute and 30 seconds to get the card and make the sentence in group. When time runs out the student in the pita fiber bag has to say aloud the comparative sentence. If it is correct they will get a star.
7. At the end stars are counted and all the groups are prized according to the number of sentences they had done correctly.

## Appendix I: Fifth game: Reviewing the past!

**Purpose:** To talk about what people were doing and where in a certain time in past.

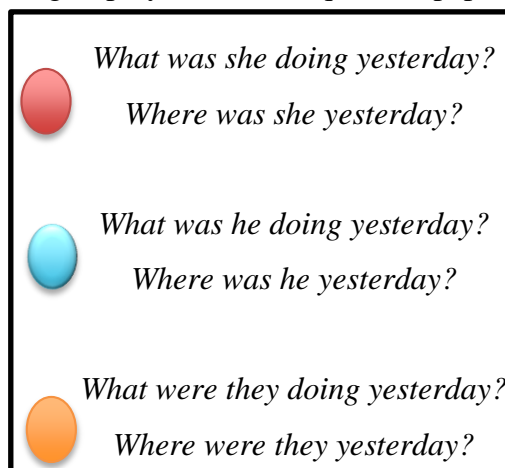
**Procedure:**

1. Teacher displays some slides with pictures and talk about people doing certain activities in the past as she models two main questions:

*Where was he/she yesterday? / Where were they yesterday?*

*What was he/she doing yesterday? / What were they doing yesterday?*

2. Then, the teacher shows more pictures with different time words for students to participate answering the questions using the past continuous tense.
3. Students will be divided into groups of five or six students.
4. The teacher explains students the instructions of the game. There will be three different circle figures (blue, orange and green). Each one represents two kinds of questions according to the picture of each box. Those questions will be provided to each member of the group by means of a question paper.



5. Every group will be given a card board, a die and five counters.

6. Students take turns to throw the die and according to the number they get, they have to move as many spaces as the die shows. When getting a box with a picture, students look at the question paper and ask the two questions to the player student. If the answer is correct the student will stay in that box, if not he/she goes back to the one he/she was. Also there are other options like up or down, back or move any number of spaces as well as questions related to their own experiences or other people's experiences in the past.
7. The winner will be the student that gets to the end first. The group will be in charge of assessing the answers provided by each student participant