

THE APPLICATION OF AUTHENTIC TASKS USING AUTHENTIC MATERIAL IN AN
EFL CHILDREN CLASSROOM BASED ON COMMUNICATIVE METHODOLOGY

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The process of learning English as a foreign language involves the development of skills, (listening, speaking, writing and reading.) which are all equally important in the language acquisition process.

The Colombian ministry of education decided to take the levels of performance given by the common European framework and adapt them to the Colombian education system, The Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) is a series of descriptions of abilities which can be applied to any language and can be used to set clear targets for achievements within language learning. It has now become accepted as a way of benchmarking language ability all over the world (n.d.) from <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/what-we-do/europe/cefr.html>.

Unfortunately the CEFR is a document designed with the purpose of being used in Europe where people in many countries have greater access to different languages which are not foreign languages, but second languages, so they can be used in real contexts of communication.

On the other hand in Colombia people do not have these opportunities, so the use of the English language is limited to a foreign language used almost exclusively in classrooms.

This research study was done with students who according to the CEFR are between the levels A1 or maybe A2, the students who are supposed to have reached these levels should be able to do or achieve certain objectives which are explained in detail in the document presented by the Colombian ministry of education titled “Formar en lenguas extranjeras: ¡el reto!” taken from http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co/html/mediateca/1607/articles-115375_archivo.pdf

In the previously mentioned document each CEFR level of performance is divided in five different parts which are: Escucha, Lectura, Escritura, Monólogos and Conversación, the

Conversación or Conversation part is vital for this study because it is related to the speaking ability and it provides the objectives that the students are supposed to reach at each level, one example of this objectives at level A.2 is: “Mantengo una conversación simple en inglés con un compañero cuando desarrollo una actividad de aula”, which means that the students should be able to keep a conversation going among them while doing a classroom activity, so if an EFL teacher wants to achieve the objectives presented in this document he or she would need to apply some tasks that will encourage the students to speak and use the English Language in a communicative way, and the tasks that this study will develop are aiming to that objective.

The developing of oral skills is relevant in the learning process, especially when the aim is to teach English to children as the government in Colombia intends nowadays. The use of authentic material to teach EFL to learners of all ages is an appropriate tool which captures learners' attention, especially children's attention in an effective way. This kind of activities can be used to encourage verbal expression and language development and that is why this research will take place. Although it is well known that authentic materials and tasks are of great importance in L2 instruction in ESL settings, the results in EFL settings may not be the same and as EFL teachers there must be an awareness of the tools and strategies that can be more effective, in this case, with children. This study will present an overview of literature concerned with speaking, tasks, authentic materials and syllabus design, which will hopefully inform other teachers about these current topics.

Problem description

It is important to start explaining that according to communicative methodology, which focuses on the language as a medium of communication, it is important for English teachers to encourage learners to use language to express themselves because that is the primary use of language: to allow people to interact with each other, expressing their ideas and needs. Besides, nowadays learners should not only be able to recognize structures or vocabulary inside readings or be able to write short texts in the L2 but they also have to develop their speaking skills.

There is also the issue of using authentic material in class which helps students not only to engage in the classroom but also in the use of authentic tasks and materials that will aid the students to realize that these activities are the same they will encounter in a real-life situation. In this way, the use of authentic material gives the chance to relate what learners have learned in class with real experiences (Aytunga and Bahar, 2008).

Exposure to the language that they would not get from a different source and authentic tasks makes the learning experience of a new language even more fulfilling for the learners. The issue is that sometimes teachers may not use these authentic materials because they feel satisfied with using the official materials from the school or they do not know where to look for these materials. However, nowadays, it is imperative that teachers use additional materials and that those materials are as close as the elements that they are likely to find in real life so that learning is enhanced by authenticity and by the motivating aspects of these materials, especially for young learners.

Taking into account the previous ideas, it can be said that students need to be taught through the use of materials and tasks that encourage them to express themselves in a real situation. Howatt (1984) (quoted by Richards & Rodgers, 2001) explains the weak and strong

versions of the communicative language teaching, this study will be focused in the strong version which explains that language is acquired through communication.

The reasons stated above lead to the conclusion that there is a need in creating a syllabus for an EFL class which will allow teachers to provide their students with interesting and motivating tasks in order to develop their speaking skills in a communicative context and also provide insights to teachers in how to use authentic material.

Problem statement

The problem previously presented leads us to the following question: Could a syllabus based on authentic tasks and material help to improve students' vocabulary in order to improve their oral skills and consequently their communicative interaction?

Objectives

General objective

To determine the effects of using authentic materials and tasks in an EFL children classroom in combination with the application of CLT at Cambridge English academy

Specific objective

To identify the learners' initial L2 proficiency in order to develop a communicative syllabus and tasks which enhance the learners' vocabulary and comprehension during oral interaction.

Significance of study

The study aims at establishing if the application of authentic tasks and communicative methodology would contribute to improve learners' interaction abilities in the process of learning English as a foreign language with a specific group of learners in Pasto. This study took into account some aspects related to the field of TESOL such as motivation, authentic tasks and materials, CLT and interaction.

First of all there is the motivation issue. A motivated learner is defined as "one who is willing or even eager to invest effort in learning activities and to progress" (Ur, 2006). This study took into account the previous statement when creating the activities and tasks which were done by the participants because one important element in carrying out tasks is the involvement of learners.

Another element that supports this research is the use of authentic materials to encourage and maintain interest in class (Aytunga and Bahar, 2008). This study focuses on learner-centeredness, a concept that may not be well-known in our environment where classes seem to be mostly teacher fronted. Using authentic materials that aim at appealing the students' interests is an important feature of this research and the study will rely on them. This research is also relevant because the tasks and materials will be chosen with a focus on the learner and under the premise that children do not have short attention spans but that their attention span is in close relation with the difficulty and appeal or unattractiveness of the activities (Brown, 2001).

Finally, this study is relevant because the principles of communicative language teaching will be applied inside an EFL setting, with a specific population (children) and in combination with tasks, a group of elements that have not been thoroughly researched in our context. It is believed that the communicative principles that will be applied, will contribute to the study by

providing a strong theoretical and procedural framework to work on. As mentioned by Chambers (1997) quoted by Brown, (2001) in CLT the attempt is to build fluency focusing on meaning, instead of paying attention to grammatical rules. This supports the research because the participants are young learners who may not be interested in learning complicated grammar rules but instead in developing their speaking skills.

Other studies carried out by student-teachers of the University of Nariño may have focused on interaction, but a new aspect of this project is that it focuses on the interaction among children, an aspect that might be overlooked by teachers who believe that teaching children means teaching them only vocabulary or chants. Interaction, we believe, plays a relevant role in communication and it is expected to develop at least some of the aspects that Brown (2001) states regarding interaction:

“Interactive classes will most likely be found

- Doing significant amount of pair work and group work
- Receiving authentic language input in real-world contexts.
- Producing language for genuine, meaningful communication.
- Performing classroom tasks that prepare them for actual language use “out there”.” (p. 48)

This study will provide some insight about whether applying this kind of activities is somehow useful for teachers and learners. Taking into consideration the previous points it is a must to show different and innovative strategies to teach a second language when we work with children, because they are more receptive to the natural use of a language than to learn complicated grammar rules which they are not even familiar with in their L1.

Definition of terms

Communicative Competence: This is a term coined by Hymes (1972). The goal of language teaching is to develop what Hymes referred to as the acquisition of the linguistic means to perform different kinds of functions.

Content Based Instruction (CBI): Refers to an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around the content or information that students will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or other type of syllabus (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): This is a method derived from the communicative principles set forward by Savignon, Hymes, Halliday and Wilkins among others and that aims at attaining communicative competence by means of instruction focused on meaning, not on grammatical forms (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Authentic material: defined as “those materials which were not created or edited expressly for language learners” (Nunan and Miller, 2005) meaning that most everyday objects in the target language qualify as authentic materials.

Classroom Interaction: it is the process whereby classroom language learning is managed. Classroom interaction in the target language can be seen as not just offering language practice, nor just learning opportunities, but as actually constructing the language development process itself (Yu, 2008).

EFL: Is used in contexts where English is neither widely used for communication, nor used as the medium of instruction. (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

ESL: Is used to refer to situations in which English is being taught and learned in countries, contexts and cultures in which English is the predominant language of communication. (Carter & Nunan, 2001).

Speaking: The ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication. Nevertheless, “speaking in a second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills”

Task based language teaching (TBLT): refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. It draws on several principles of communicative language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Communicative language teaching

In this chapter the importance of CLT, classroom interaction and authentic materials are discussed among other important issues that are essential for the design of the activities in this study.

This research aims at proving if a task based syllabus which uses authentic materials can promote interaction and improve oral skills and vocabulary among young learners in an EFL class. In order to achieve this goal it is necessary to employ the principles of communicative language teaching. One relevant characteristic of CLT is that “students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must, therefore, equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.”(Brown, 2001, p. 43). Taking into account the previous statement made by Brown it can be said that there is a need in preparing students for a real context in which they would be able to use the language for a mainly communicative purpose. This research tries to comply with the CLT principles, some of them mentioned by Richards & Rodgers (2001) include: “Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities” “Learners learn a language through using it to communicate”. Following these principles the study will attempt to improve learners’ oral production.

An important part of the study is that it is focused on children and for this reason some specific aspects had to be considered. According to Brown (2001) the activities are focused on the immediate here and now, and are designed to capture their immediate interest, because there is a misconception regarding children who have a short attention span, thus they cannot be focused or interested in a particular activity for a long time, Brown (2001) also explains that this

short attention span only works when children are engaged in activities that they consider useless, difficult or even boring, so the study is aimed at finding a set of activities that prove not only to be motivating and interesting for children but also provide them with an opportunity to practice their speaking skills and interact among each other and perhaps also improve their oral proficiency.

Another important aspect of teaching children is the use of materials. As mentioned by Murcia (1991) in an EFL class for adults, the materials are often text books and the blackboard but in an EFL class for children all kinds of materials can be used such as stuffed animals, art supplies and costumes. These kinds of materials are called authentic material. Authentic material becomes especially useful at the moment of working with CLT because its use complies with an important characteristic of CLT mentioned by Brown (2001) which is that “language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes”. As mentioned before the use of language for meaningful and communicative purposes is essential nowadays and that is the reason why the study will rely on this type of material.

Some of the advantages of using authentic material are the following: “authentic material had a positive effect on increasing students` motivation and made learning more enjoyable” Karpova (1999); Katchen, (1993) as cited in Su (2008). The previous statement shows that applying this type of material with children could work due to the motivational effect that it produces. Other important advantages to take into account for this study are: “(a) give the students the opportunity to practice English, (b) help the students gain confidence in their English ability, (c) expose the students to cultural differences and customs, and (d) help students

to develop their ability to find pertinent information quickly” (Kelly, Kelly, Offner, & Vorland, (2002, p. 12) as cited by Su (2008).

Considering the affirmations mentioned above the use of authentic material will provide the research study with the appropriate tools to achieve its goal which is to create motivating activities that will help students to improve their English proficiency in the target language.

Although the use of authentic material alone is not enough to successfully teach children, Brown (2001) presents some points that need to be considered at the moment of planning a class for children, one of them is “to elicit as much oral participation as possible from students, especially the quieter ones to give them plenty of opportunities for trying things out”. Another important statement presented by Murcia (1991) is that “activities need to be child centered and communication should be authentic”. These previous statements have contributed to focus this study on one of the four skills which is speaking; the activities contained in the syllabus are aimed at encouraging children`s oral production.

Motivation and interaction will also play an important role in this research. Yu (2008) mentions that classroom interaction can facilitate students` language development and communicative competence and also mentions Vygotsky`s socio cultural theory which explains that “learning is to awaken a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers”. So the goal of the research is to use activities that help to encourage interaction in the classroom and also motivate students. The motivation factor as stated by Ur (2006) makes teaching and learning immeasurably easier and more pleasant as well as more productive.

As it was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter the authentic tasks are designed following the principles of CLT. Two other approaches that also rely on its principles are Task-

Based instruction and the other one is content-Based Instruction which are also employed in this study. Task-Based instruction is needed in order to create the syllabus and the tasks to be applied in classrooms ensuring that the tasks will have a communicative purpose. The definition of task according to Peter Skehan (as cited in to Brown, 2001) is an activity in which the meaning is essential and there is a communication problem to solve and also there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities. Brown (2001) also mentions that TBI makes teachers think carefully about the pedagogical purposes of the activities used in class if they contribute to communicative goals. The other approach which is Content-Based Instruction emphasizes learning about something rather than learning about language (Davies 2003). The characteristics of CBI can contribute with the development of the syllabus providing the opportunity to design interesting and enjoyable activities for children. “Teachers can use almost any content materials that they feel their students will enjoy” (Davies 2003).

Learner roles

The emphasis in communicative language teaching (CLT) on the processes of communication, rather than mastery of language forms, leads to different roles for learners from those found in more traditional second language classrooms. Breen and Candlin describe the learner’s role within CLT in the following terms:

The role of learner as negotiator – between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning-emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way. (1980: 110). There is thus an acknowledgment, in some accounts of CLT, which learners

bring preconceptions of what teaching and learning should be like. These preconceptions constitute a “set” for learning, which when unrealized can lead to learner confusion and resentment (Henner - Stanchina and Riley 1978). Often there is no text, grammar rules are not presented, classroom arrangement is nonstandard, students are expected to interact primarily with each other rather than with the teacher, and correction of errors may be absent or infrequent. The cooperative (rather than individualistic) approach to learning stressed in CLT may likewise be unfamiliar to learners. CLT methodologists consequently recommend that learners learn to see that failed communication is a joint responsibility and not the fault of speaker or listener. Similarly successful communication is an accomplishment jointly achieved and acknowledged.

Teacher roles

Several roles are assumed for teachers in Communicative Language Teaching, the importance of particular roles being determined by the view of CLT are adopted. Breen and Candlin (1980) describe teacher roles in the following terms:

The teacher has two main roles: the first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first role and arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher; first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities.... A third role for the teacher is that of researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities. (1980:99).

Other roles assumed by teachers are needs analyst, counselor, and group process manager.

The Role of instructional materials

A wide variety of materials have been used to support communicative approaches to language teaching. Unlike some contemporary methodologies, such as Community Language Learning, practitioners of Communicative Language Teaching view materials as a way of influencing the quality of classroom interaction and language use. Materials thus have the primary role of promoting communicative language use. We will consider three kinds of materials currently used in CLT and label these text-based, realia.

The primary goal of materials in the Natural Approach is to make classroom activities as meaningful as possible by supplying “the extra-linguistic context that helps the acquirer to understand and thereby to acquire” (Krashen and Terrell 1983: 55), by relating classroom activities to the real world, and by fostering real communication among the learners. Materials come from the world of realia rather than from textbooks. The primary aim of materials is to promote comprehension and communication. Pictures and other visual aids are essential, because they supply the content for communication. They facilitate the acquisition of a large vocabulary within the classroom.

Taking into account that the whole study is held around a syllabus designed on tasks which uses authentic materials is worth to take into account what is mentioned by Nunan (2001),

“Any approach to language pedagogy will need to concern itself with three essential elements: language data, information, and opportunities for practice” This statement is really important for this study because the first element “language data” which he defines as samples of spoken and written language, could be authentic or non-authentic data, the authentic data being

samples created without the purpose of language teaching and the non-authentic data being created specifically for this purpose, this provides insight of what has to be done at the moment of creating the tasks mentioned for this study. The tasks need to have a balance between these authentic and non-authentic samples of language in order to provide learners with different aspects of language.

The second element “information” is defined by Nunan as “linguistic information about target language systems”, in other words, what we know as grammar rules. He explains that learners can obtain this information deductively which happens when the teachers provide the explanation or inductively when the learners by themselves formulate the rules after studying samples of language.

The tasks for this research study will attempt not to provide a grammatical rule but instead it will focus in the communicative interaction of the students who will probably understand the grammatical rules.

The final element is “opportunities for practice” and these are the opportunities that the learners have to practice the L2; in order to practice Nunan (2001) distinguishes between tasks, exercises and activities. As this study focuses on tasks, it is important to know the definition of task that he provides which is the following: “A task is a communicative act that does not usually have a restrictive focus on a single grammatical structure. It also has a non-linguistic outcome”. Nunan (2001) also makes a difference between various types of tasks the one which is applied in this study is the “activation task” He defines this type of task as “a piece of classroom work involving communicative interaction, but NOT one in which learners will be rehearsing for some out-of-class communication. Rather they are designed to activate the acquisition process”.

The activation task is the model of task that this research applies, because, as mentioned before it involves communicative interaction which is the main purpose of this research study.

All of the previous aspects regarding methodology, materials and tasks help to build this research study.

CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design

This research focuses on the development of students' communicative interaction and vocabulary building. It focuses on a quantitative approach but also on a qualitative approach in order to describe, understand and interpret the results of the tasks applied to the experimental group.

Hypothesis

H_1 = the use of authentic materials and tasks based on communicative methodology may improve students' vocabulary and oral skills.

Taking into consideration that the present study will take place in an experimental way it is also true that the use of authentic materials may not accomplish the expected results, that is why the following may be anticipated.

H_0 = the use of authentic materials and tasks based on communicative methodology may not improve students' vocabulary and oral skills.

Variables

The independent variable in this study is the use of authentic materials and tasks based on communicative language teaching (CLT).

The dependent variable in this research is the student's performance oral skills and vocabulary.

Participants

For this research study children were chosen as the population, they are students that belong to “Cambridge Academy of English”; their ages range from eight to nine years old.

Sample

The samples of the research are two courses, one course consisting of eight (8) students and another course consisting of eight (8) students; their range in age is from eight (8) to nine (9) years.

Setting

“Cambridge Academy of English” was the institution chosen to carry out this study. Its director is Mrs. Ruth Montezuma. This academy is located in the North area in Pasto city. It is placed in the urban zone of the city and it offers foreign language courses to people from different ages and interests. The courses are mainly communicative and they are supported by a textbook. There are small classes, which facilitates interaction and the use of different materials.

Data gathering

The data collection techniques chosen for this research were a video camera, a voice recorder, a digital camera and direct observation, since cameras provide spontaneous images of the performance of each student and also provide a record of the speaking. The information gathered with these techniques can be analyzed in depth

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data was analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative approaches. The two groups of students participating, a control group and an experimental group, were given a pre-test and post-test. Only the experimental group received the treatment, meanwhile the control group was taught the same topics but without using any of the tasks applied to the experimental group. These topics are contained in the book “Ready to start” which is used in the classes for kids in the English academy where the research took place. The treatment consisted on tasks which were designed specifically for children, using authentic materials and emphasizing on fostering interaction among the students. The previously mentioned authentic material and tasks were designed according to the proficiency level of learners. In order to know their initial English proficiency level a test was applied. It is important to mention that this test was also designed keeping in mind the Common European Framework standards.

After having finished this part the study took place and the syllabus including authentic materials and tasks was applied to one of the groups of students. The information was gathered using a video camera and by direct observation, this information was analyzed after applying the post-test in order to draw the conclusions of the study. The election of a quantitative research design is based in the following affirmation:

After statistical analysis of the results, a comprehensive answer is reached, and the results can be legitimately discussed and published. Quantitative experiments also filter out external factors, if properly designed, and so the results gained can be seen as real and unbiased (Shuttleworth, M, 2008).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The application of this research was carried out during five (5) Saturdays each one of the sessions lasted (2) hours. The topics around which the lesson plans for each class were created were the following: Greetings, adjectives, jobs, animals, and fruits.

As we mentioned before authentic material was used during the classes. The material, mainly realia, consisted on puppets, pictures, costumes, fruits and toys. The authentic tasks were also designed taking into account that the materials used were authentic, meaningful, age appropriate and appealing to learners. The most important elements to be included in the tasks were the contextualized use of vocabulary and that the expressions taught were found in real-life interaction.

The results were analyzed from a quantitative and qualitative perspective in order to provide a more complete analysis of each class.

The first part of the research was carried out by applying a short oral pre-test to the students of the experimental and control group of this study. The experimental group consisted of eight students and the control group consisted of seven students. The oral test applied in order to know their current English oral proficiency was created taking into account the Common European framework (appendix A)

The first question of the pre-test: Hello! How are you? Was answered by twelve of the sixteen students some of their answers were: “fine”, “fine, thank you and you?” And only four of the sixteen students did not answer the question maybe due to nervousness.

The next question: What is your name? Was answered by all of the students ten of them answered with their full name and the other six answered only with their first name.

The third question: How old are you? Was answered correctly by only two students the other nine students answered: “fine” and five students did not answer it.

The fourth item of the pre-test: describe yourself, was not answered by any of the students.

The fifth item: Describe your favorite toy was not answered by twelve of the students only four students answered it and they rather than answering the question asked, the students asked for clarification using Spanish some answers were: “¿Qué es *toy*?”, “¿Que cuál es mi juguete favorito?” This made evident that learners could answer basic questions related to their name and that they could use formulaic speech, but when they were asked more complex ideas, they could not produce any output.

The sixth question: What do you like to do in the morning? Was not answered by any of the students. Again, it is evident that learners had memorized some short sentences or answers, but they were not able to produce more elaborate language.

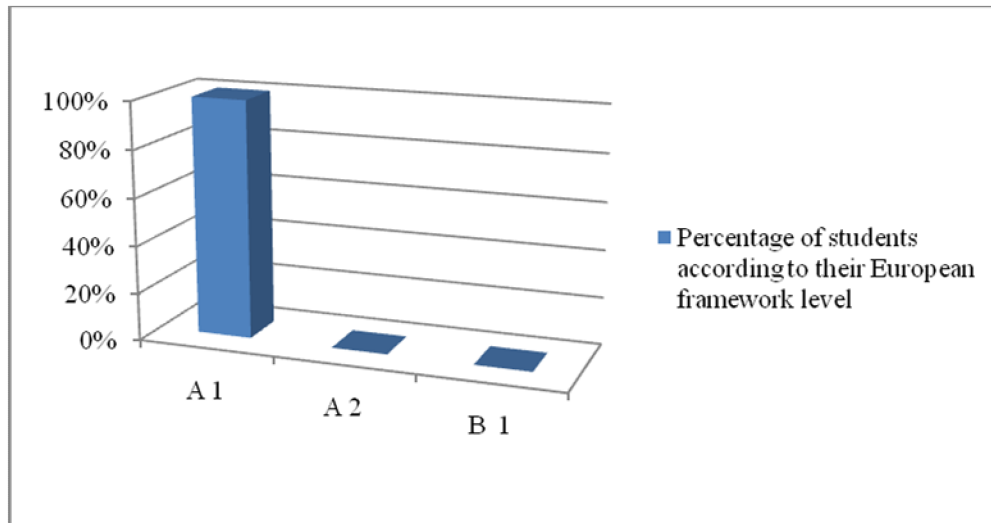
The seventh question: What do you like to do? Was not answered by any of the students. This made evident that in their regular English lessons, they are not asked to provide their personal opinions or to interact using English, but rather, as it is commonly observed in schools; students are trained to answer questions, but not to interact.

The eighth question: What is your favorite fruit? Was answered by six students some of their answers were: “¿apple es manzana, cierto?”, “¿como se dice piña teacher?”, “kiwi, banana and orange”. The other four students gave answers in Spanish and the six remaining students did not answer it at all.

For the ninth question of the pre-test which was "what are your plans for next weekend?" There were not any answers and students used Spanish to ask about what the question was about. It suggests that students are not familiar with producing extended pieces of discourse.

According to the Common European Framework of Reference, students in level beginner A1 should be able to answer to greetings and farewells, express their feelings and the things they like or dislike. In order to check if the surveyed students had reached that level, the first, second, third and seventh questions were asked. The purpose of asking the fourth question was to check if the students could describe themselves with short and simple phrases, which is part of the skills that a level A2 student should possess. Additionally, the fifth, sixth, and eighth questions were asked in order to check if the students are able to describe and object or a daily routine, which is part of the skills of the level A2 of the European framework, and the last question refers to talking about future plans, which is part of the skills of the level B1.

After having analyzed the results of the answers of the pre-test it can be said that 100% of the students are placed in level A1 which is the lowest level according to the European framework, taking into account that none of the students is in a higher level than A1 the tasks which were created for this study aimed to fulfill the required skills of level A1 and some of a higher level.



The next step in the research was to begin the application of the tasks to the learners of the experimental group. For this purpose, a short syllabus containing 5 lesson plans which were applied in each class was created; the first lesson plan (appendix B) whose goal was to teach greetings and farewells was applied in the first class.

The first part of the lesson plan was constructed in a way that the learners could learn or remember the most common greetings such as Hello! Or Hi! And also introduce themselves by saying their own names. The authentic material used for this lesson plan consisted on a set of puppets which were used to create a friendlier environment for the kids and also to encourage at least basic interaction and participation in the planned activities.



In the first part of the lesson plan it could be seen that the learners were willing to participate in the activities without any worries, this was helpful but it was somehow difficult to deal with some discipline issues, kids at this particular age are eager to play, so their energy has to be channeled into the task at hand, and during the first activity none of the students had any problems following it.

However the second activity in which the students had to use more formal greetings such as “good morning”, “good afternoon” and “good evening” presented some issues which were mainly related with the learners confusion at the moment of standing in front of the posters depicting the parts of the day, 3 out of 8 learners needed to ask again but they were quickly helped by their peers, after a few rounds every student was able to do it.



The third activity in which the students had to introduce themselves by saying their names went rather well. Some students hesitated when answering the question “What is your name?” But eventually all of them were able to introduce themselves by saying their own names.

The last part of the lesson plan consisted on a task in which the students had to work in pairs and they had 5 minutes to use everything they had practiced so far in order to introduce themselves to the class and also introduce their partner. Students were eager to ask new words in order to complete their presentation. The new element in this task was the fact that learners had to interact in English and carry out a simple conversation without translating, or without too much help on the part of the teacher. Before asking students to interact, they were given the necessary tools and basic vocabulary to interact and they had enough time to practice before the communicative part.



The topic of the second lesson plan was animals (appendix C). The students in the first activity had to stick pieces of paper with the names of the animals written on them next to a picture of that specific animal, 16 in total, but first the teacher had to pronounce the names of each animal and while pointing at each picture and each student had to repeat the names. The purpose of this pre-task activity was to help clarify meaning and to set the basis for acceptable pronunciation.

The students had no problem in this first activity; they got all the names right in their first attempt. However, handling the group of learners at the moment of choosing who would be first to stick the papers was complicated because due to their age all of them wanted to go first.

This situation generated some discipline issues which were easily solved by giving each one of them a number so they knew which his or her turn was.



The second activity showed positive attitude towards learning the new vocabulary, each student was motivated to participate and to guess the animal, even though some of their answers were elicited in Spanish: “caballo” “es de la granja?”



The task for this lesson plan was creating an album using a set of pictures of the animals previously shown in class, something similar to a portfolio, and students had to stick and decorate their album and then show it and present it to the rest of the class. This show-and-tell task was accomplished by all the students who projected again a positive attitude towards the creation of the album and were willing to communicate their results to the rest of the class. The students showed their finished album to the class, opened the pages pointing at each animal and saying each animal name, one of their presentations was this:

This is my album

- It is a cat
- It is a rabbit
- It is a hen
- It is a cow
- It is a... (unclear pronunciation)
- It is a pig
- It is a elephant
- It is a [burerfli]
- It is a dog
- It is a horse
- It is a frog
- It is a chicken

Even though this task looks simple, it is meaningful first because it involved creating a product and also, students could choose the content they wanted to present. Finally,

instead of learning lists of vocabulary, students had to connect meaning and complete sentences.

The topic of the third lesson plan was adjectives (Appendix D). In the first activity the teacher pronounced the names of some adjectives showing some pictures and also performing some gestures so the students could grasp the meaning of each adjective, For example big by stretching the arms or small by lowering the hand to the ground.

The second activity consisted on showing the colors to the students and then by making use of some toys, which were brought by the students, they had to interact with the classroom by describing their toys. Students used the vocabulary they practiced in the first activity. This task presented some problems 4 of the 8 students confused some colors black with white and grey with green, but they were able to describe their toys in a successful way.



One of their descriptions was this:

- Student: My toy is beautiful eh eh your color

- Teacher: its
- Student: its color pink black and yellow
- Teacher: black? White
- Student: white

The final task consisted on describing the physical appearance of a classmate. In this activity most of the students described their classmates using only short or tall and young and old, only three students used beautiful and thin, one of the students joked by describing his classmate with the adjectives ugly, fat and old, but the joke was well accepted and there was no problem at all.

This task was very effective in terms of positive attitude and participation and also in terms of communicative response; all 8 students were willing to participate.

The topic for the fourth lesson plan was jobs (appendix E). Students had to wear costumes of different jobs and practice asking and answering about each job. The first part of the activity related to the pronunciation of each job had some issues with the pronunciation of nurse pronounced by some students like it is written [nurse]. All of them showed a positive attitude towards the activity and the dressing up, in the task about asking their jobs according to their costumes 2 students did not remembered which was the job their costume represented, but they were helped by their peers who checked the pictures on the walls and immediately elicited the correct answer which was “lawyer” for the first student and “engineer” for the second student.

The task in which they had to ask and answer about their classmates jobs, showed some difficulties for them at the moment of asking: “What is her/his job?” they confused the possessive adjective his/her but the teacher provided the necessary feedback by making emphasis on it at the moment of eliciting the question. Students were able to interact by asking the

questions among each other when they were asked to do it, but their interaction was too limited because once they had asked about their classmates job and received the answer there was not much to do in terms of interaction. So this final task proved to be more suited for vocabulary building than for communicative interaction.

The fifth lesson plan topic was fruits (appendix F) and it consisted on using the vocabulary related to fruits and also to make a fruit salad with the help of everyone in the class. The directions and names of each item used in the class were mentioned during the first activity and later on students were given each one a fruit and they followed the instructions in order to complete a fruit salad.

While they were cutting the fruits they were asked some questions one of them was “do you like to eat fruit?” this question was answered by all the 8 students with “yes” one of them also answered the name of the fruit he liked by saying ” I like apple” another student answered by asking: “ ¿Cómo se dice mango teacher?”.



The next question was: “what is your favourite fruit?” This question represented no problems for the students, all of them answered it, but some needed to be reminded the names of some fruits. It is important to remark that again, translation was avoided and the task was aimed at providing a relaxed environment where teachers could ask questions about the topic and students would answer them like you do in a real-life conversation.

The next question was: “what fruit don’t you like?” just 2 students answered this question immediately, for the rest of the students the question needed to be clarified by the teacher using gestures indicating the negative part of the question, then they were able to answer it.

At the end, of the lesson the students with the help of the teacher mixed all the pieces of fruit and served a plastic plate of fruit salad for each one. After having finished the classes with these lesson plans, the next step was the application of the post-test. The post test consisted on a dialogue with each one of the students in both groups experimental and control. Some key questions were asked in the dialogue in order to check if the use of the authentic material and the tasks were somehow effective.

The control group which did not receive the treatment consisted on eight students. Students of this group, as was mentioned before, had their classes only using the text-book as learning tool. It of course contains the same topics as the lesson plans that were designed for this research and it is the textbook that children have to follow at the academy.

The experimental group which consisted on eight students received the treatment of authentic tasks using authentic material and exposing them to more contextualized and interactive activities.

The post-test (Appendix G) was applied to both groups showing the following results.

The first three questions of the post-test were: Hello! How are you? , What is your name? And how old are you? These questions aimed at diagnosing students' use of greetings. Students of the control group gave different answers to the question Hello! How are you? Some of their questions were:

- Very well,

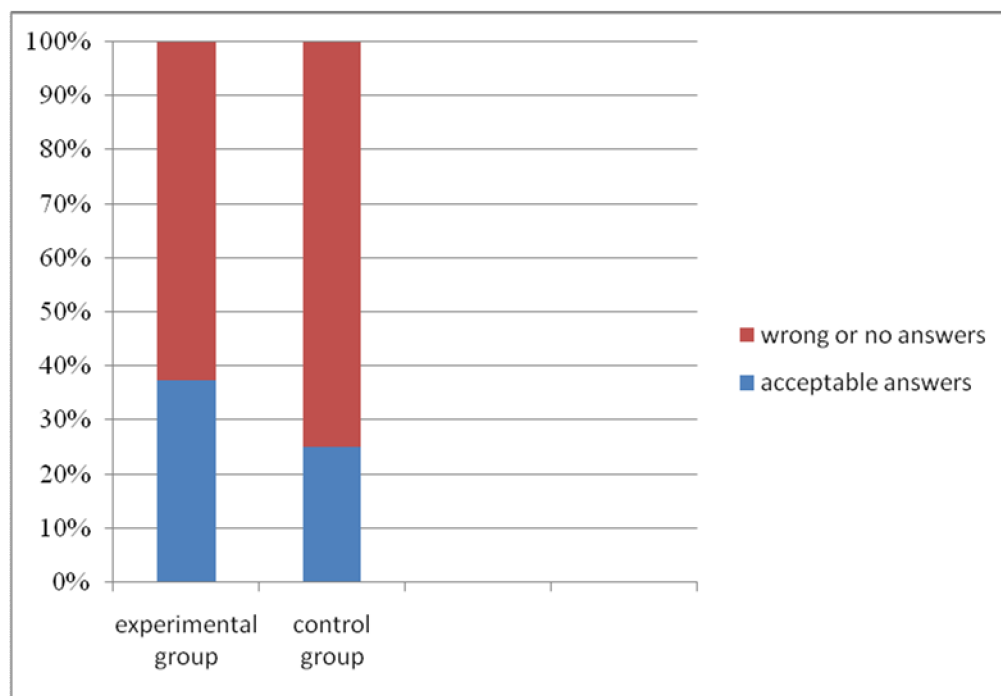
-Fine thank you, and you?

-Fine

When they were asked about what their names were, every student answered correctly, but when answering the third question about their age only two students answered correctly, three students answered: fine thanks, as if they were asked how are you? Instead of how old are you? Additionally, three students did not provide any answer.

In the experimental group the answers were similar but with the difference that when answering the first and second questions every student gave a right answer but with the third question five students confused how old are you? With how are you? again and only three students answered correctly.

This showed that the control and experimental groups had a similar improvement from what the pre-test had previously shown. In the graphic it can be seen that the experimental group had improved slightly from the control group. More than 30% of the students of the experimental group answered satisfactorily in contrast with more than 20% of students of the control group who answered satisfactorily. There was not a considerable improvement difference between the two groups, although students of the experimental group seem more confident when using greetings and they provide their answers faster, which shows that some automaticity was developing. The results are shown in the following graph.



The next question, what is your favourite fruit? Was given an acceptable answer by five students of the control group one of their answers was this:

Teacher: Ok Natalia, what's your favourite fruit?

Student: ... (a few seconds later)

Teacher: what's your favourite fruit?

Student :...(again no answer)

Teacher: what's your favourite fruit?

Student...: in English or Spanish?

Teacher: in English of course

Student :...(again no answer)

Teacher: my favourite fruit is apple, your favourite fruit?

Student: en español manzana

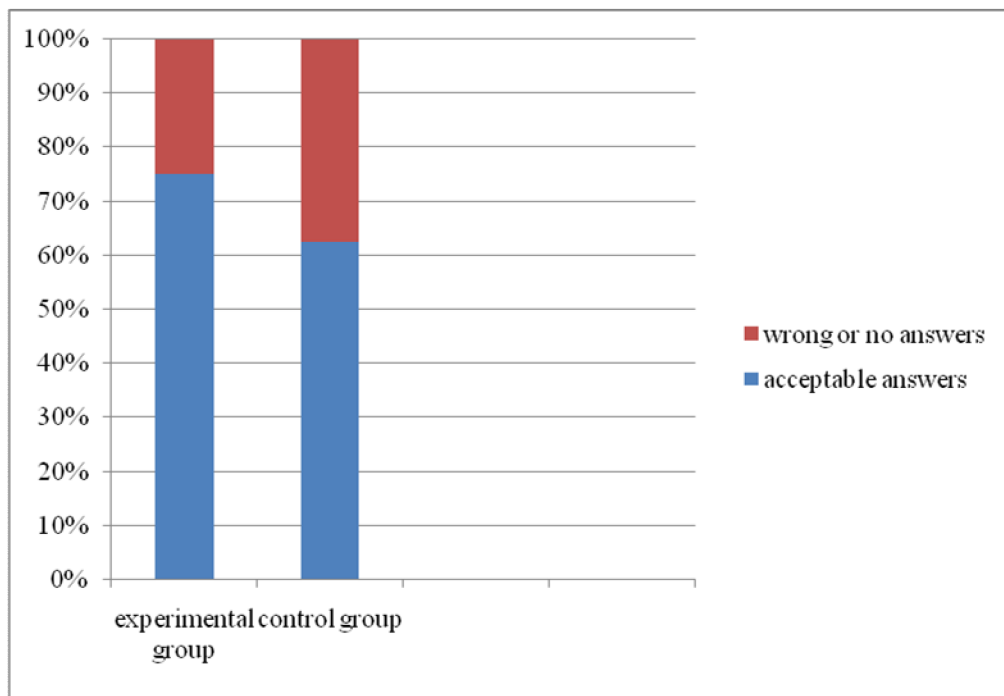
Teacher: how do you say manzana in English?

Student: apple

Teacher: apple, ok

The other three students gave answers in Spanish and again asked the teacher to tell them the names of the fruits that they did not know or did not remember.

The answers of the experimental group for this question were again similar to the control group, this time six students gave acceptable answers, and some of their answers were: “I like banana”, “apple” and” strawberry” the other two students gave their answers in Spanish.



For this item of the post-test it can be said that more than 70% of students of the experimental group answered in a positive way while more than 40% of students of the control group answered satisfactorily. It was observed that students of the experimental group remembered better the vocabulary words related with the fruits used in the fourth lesson plan. It could be attributed to the fact that they had direct contact with these items while they were performing the tasks of the lesson plan and the teachers were asking questions related to the

vocabulary being learned while manipulating the fruits, which may have helped learners to make stronger connections between the words and their meanings.

The next part of the post-test was aimed at diagnosing the knowledge and use that students had of adjectives using them to describe their partners, themselves and their favorite toys.

First, students of the control group were asked to describe one of their partners. One of the descriptions was this:

Teacher: please describe your partner, describe Claudia

Student: ¿que la describa?

Teacher: yes, please describe Claudia

Student: is tall ... ¿cómo se dice cabello?

Teacher: hair

Student: hair brown.

In the control group students were able to describe their partners by using one or two adjectives, meanwhile in the experimental group students could provide a better description of their partners, one description was this:

Teacher: describe your partner

Student: she is beautiful, is short, is young

Students in the experimental group showed more fluency, more willingness to produce longer pieces of discourse and a better use of adjectives when they were asked to describe their favorite toys. Previously, they were asked to bring to class one of their toys, and one example of their descriptions was this:

(The student was holding a toy rabbit)

Teacher: Claudia what's your favorite toy?

Student: rabbit

Teacher: rabbit; OK, please describe your toy

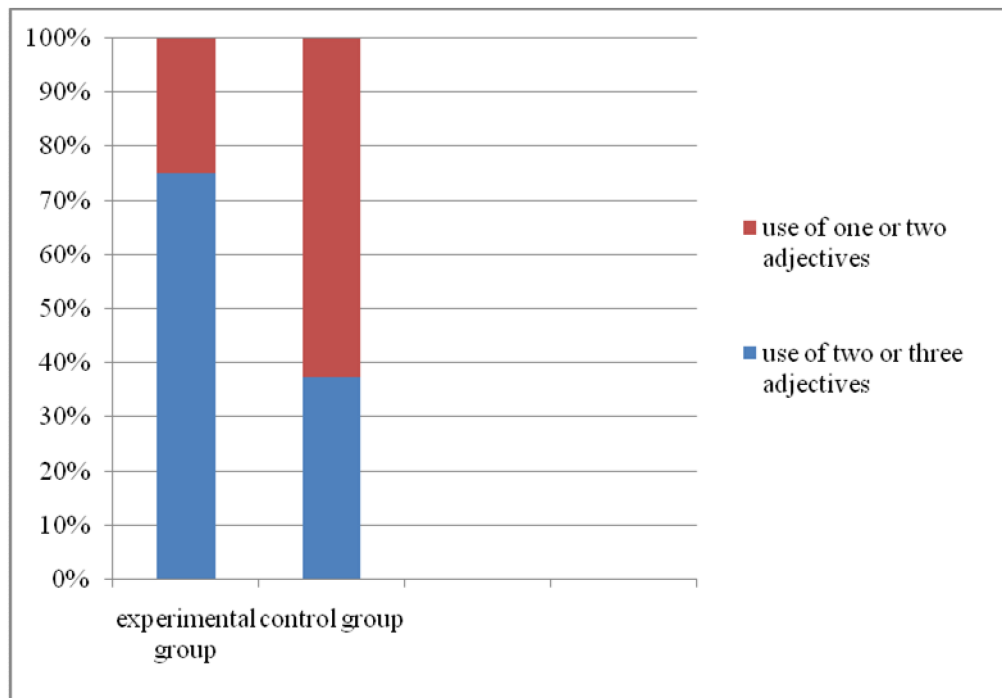
Student: eh...short color ah...Brown ¿Como se dice zanahoria?

Teacher: carrot

Student: ah carrot... orange...

Teacher: ok

Students were also asked to describe themselves, when students of both groups were asked to describe themselves similar results were obtained. Five students of the control group gave answers using two adjectives which are always short or tall, the other three students gave answers using three adjectives adding beautiful to the two adjectives previously mentioned. While in the experimental group six students used more than two adjectives which were tall, beautiful, and young only two students used two adjectives to describe themselves.



The previous chart shows that more than 70% of the students of the experimental group used more adjectives in comparison with the 30% of students in the control group. Taking into account these results, it can be said that despite the fact that the chart shows a difference of 40%, there was a slight improvement of the students' use of adjectives, because they limit themselves to use only two or three adjectives. The most significant difference was the way in which learners spoke. They were more fluent, they were confident and they answer quickly to the questions asked by the teachers, which indicates that there was an indirect effect on listening comprehension.

In the next item of the post-test students were asked to mention at least five animals, this question just aimed at checking if the students had improved their vocabulary rather than checking if their interaction had improved. Three students of the control group were able to mention five animals, one of their answers was:

Teacher: Natalia tell me the names of five animals

Student: ¿cinco animales?

Teacher: yes, five animals.

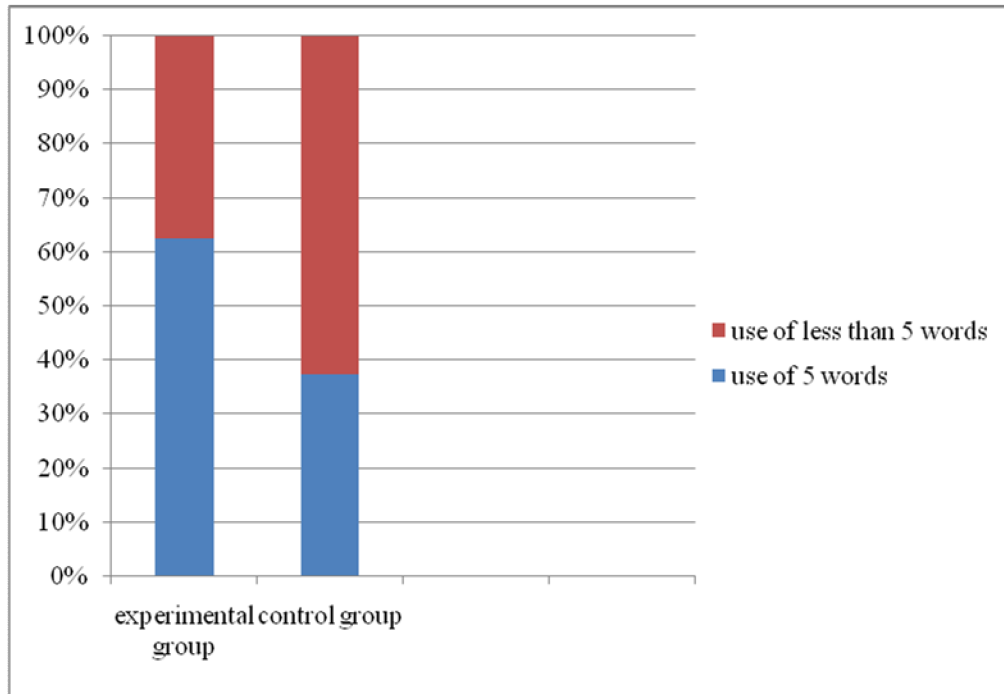
Student: cat, dog, chicken, tiger, fly

The other five students did not mention five animals only two or three.

While in the experimental group five students were able to mention the names of five animals and three students mentioned only two or three animals. One of their answers was the following:

Teacher: Daniela please tell me the names of five animals

Student: dog, monkey, bear, cat, butterfly, bear.

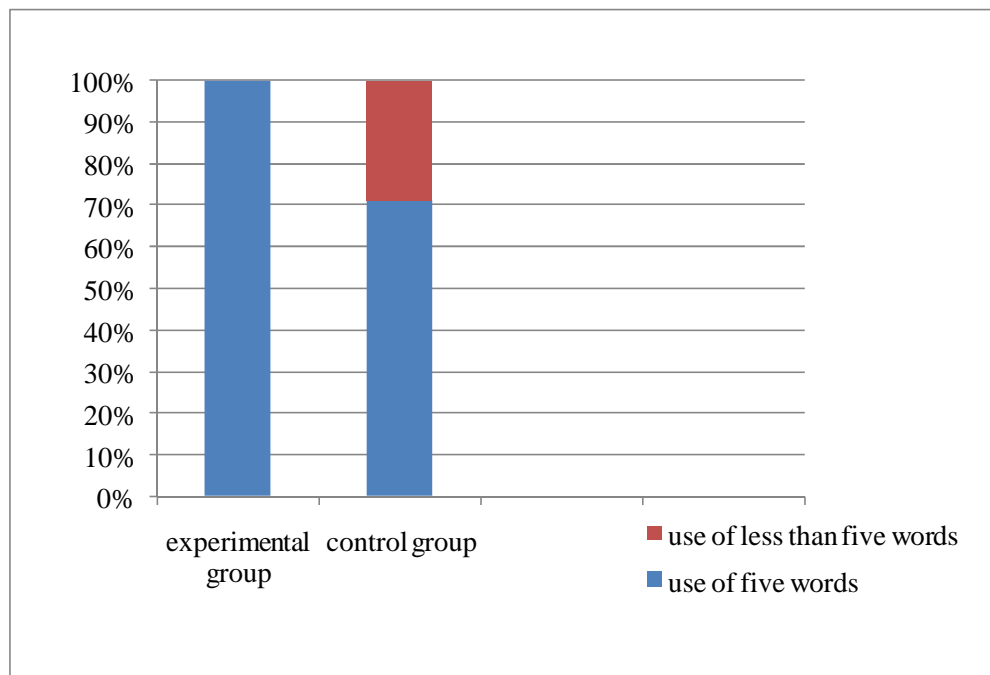


As the previous chart shows it is possible to say that more than 60% of students of the experimental group had improved their vocabulary, this was clearly seen because they mentioned the names of the animals showed in the second lesson plan; some of them were monkey, bear, snake, horse. Although the pronunciation of some of the words was not clear, students showed some pronunciation issues in the words butterfly which they pronounced as [burerfli] ,and with the word snake which they pronounced as [snake]. In contrast with the control group which showed that more than 30% of students were able to mention five animal names.

In the last part of the post-test students were asked to discuss what they would like to be when they grow up. In the control group four students were able to mention five jobs and in the experimental group were students were able to mention the five jobs asked. The other students mentioned less than five jobs. Some of the answers of the control group were: Doctor, nurse, lawyer. Meanwhile in the experimental group students were able to mention the jobs previously seen in the fourth lesson plan. Some of their answers were: soccer player, builder, nurse, doctor, lawyer, police officer.

For the question: what would you like to be when you grow up? The teacher had to explain this part with an example because students had problems to understand what the teacher was talking about, the example consisted on the teacher saying that she wanted to be a doctor and then asking: What do you want to be when you grow up? to one of the students and asking: do you want to be a doctor?

After this, students understood what kind of answer the teacher expected from them. In the control group six students gave acceptable answers by mentioning jobs such as doctor, nurse, and lawyer. Two students did not provide any answer. In contrast, in the experimental group, every student provided an accurate long answer mentioning some jobs of the fourth lesson plan which were police officer, nurse, soccer player.



The previous chart shows that students of the experimental group had increased their vocabulary, remembered the words and were able to use them in context accurately and quickly;

in this case it is possible to say that the application of the tasks and the use of the authentic material which were costumes proved to be effective.

It was also noticed during the research that the learners' attitude towards English improved. This was demonstrated by how students were more engaged and willing to participate in the activities in class such as dialogues and presentations, this was clearly appreciated during the application of the lesson plans previously mentioned. This attitude improvement can be attributed to the use of authentic material, which proved to be really effective at the moment of working with young learners, since this type of material contributes to create a good class environment where children are motivated to interact with the teacher and the rest of the class in a fun and enjoyable way, but which also contributes to reinforcing listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition and the development of basic speaking skills.

Another important thing to mention is that while their speaking skills were partially improved, as it was shown before, their listening skills presented a slight improvement and it could be observed that students in some cases still needed to ask again in order to check what they were asked, or they asked using their L1. However, it is important to mention that instead of answering in Spanish directly, students learned to ask again or to use clarification requests, something that was not an objective of the research, but that was interesting to observe.

To conclude, it is worth mentioning that there are many factors that could modify the results of this study and that should be considered by people who want to combine authentic materials with tasks or to apply this same study to students from different age group.

One of the issues that may affect the results of the study is that students who took part in this research had English classes in their schools while the research was taking place, so this could somehow yield different results. However, the use of the same topics, appealing materials

and more interactive tasks gave learners a different perspective on how to learn and use English so that what they were learning in school could be reinforced. Another issue that may affect the results is the amount of time that students devoted to studying English. They met only on Saturdays and only for two hours. Probably more exposure is needed in order to be able to further develop the students' oral skills.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After the data analysis collected from this research the following conclusions and recommendations can be provided:

The use of authentic material was a helpful tool to introduce the topics to the students and they were very motivated with its use. It also noticed that this type of material helps to foster interest in the students about the topics of the lesson plans, and allow students to interact in a more consistent way among them than without its use. This was clearly appreciated in the first, third and fifth lesson plans, where they were willing to speak through their puppets. Interaction among students increases significantly with the use of authentic material.

It was also rewarding to see the students following the directions of the teacher. They could infer them through the pictures, gestures and mimics represented by the teacher, although sometimes the teacher's help was necessary. It was seen that the use of authentic material also encouraged students to understand and perform the tasks at hand during the class. Initially, due to their lack of grammar knowledge, they were not able to understand everything. However, authentic material proved to be useful in order to fill some grammar gaps with students

Some difficulties that appeared with the use of authentic material were related to discipline issues. Students are too eager to participate and sometimes they lose track of what they have to do and of the tasks for the lesson, so teachers who are willing to use this kind of material should have a good class management to avoid these inconveniences and achieve the best of each class.

As it was mentioned before, the use of authentic material has more advantages than disadvantages, there is not much more to say in this regard just that it is important that the

teacher chooses the appropriate type of authentic material according to the level and needs of the students in order to enhance his/her classes and acquire the desired results from students.

Regarding the application of authentic tasks, the research yielded positive results, students accomplished the tasks and satisfactory results were obtained. The first lesson plan in which the task was to introduce themselves and a partner was performed by the students just with some difficulties which were quickly solved by the teacher. The task of the second lesson plan in which students had to create an album with pictures of animals also proved to be motivating and helpful for students to build up their vocabulary.

The tasks of the fourth and fifth lesson plans proved to be the most involving in terms of interaction. Students dressed up with costumes representing jobs. They described their partners' jobs according to the costume and also prepared a fruit salad with the collaboration of the whole class. The interest, involvement of the learners and the willingness to produce output in the class, showed that if students are provided with the right motivation a lot of different activities could take place in the classroom making every class enjoyable and facilitating the learning of each topic.

Regarding to the skills improvement it could be said that the oral skills presented some improvement as the listening skill which was benefited by the practice of the new vocabulary. writing skills showed that even though students had the opportunity to see and write the new vocabulary for example in the lesson plan of animals, they were not able to spell the words correctly, and finally for the reading skills students showed that most of them could remember the words they had practiced before but often they tend to confirm by asking in Spanish, which should not happen if they were sure about the vocabulary that they learned before.

Some recommendations regarding the application of authentic tasks and the use of authentic material are the following:

Taking into account that English is becoming more and more essential into the world and that children are starting L2 instruction at early ages, teachers who teach this language should be very creative to make their students feel more comfortable in the learning process, and even more, with a young audience. An important and practical tool to achieve this purpose could be the use of authentic material and tasks inside classroom; it can be consider important and useful for the teacher, because in this way he/she can improve student's attention and the class environment becomes more enjoyable.

We know the text-book is an important tool in the teaching process, but teachers should not be limited to just following it, but they also should use other tools. Teachers are able to create their own tasks to teach different topics, by using authentic material for example: drawings, pictures, magazines, puppets, cartoons, videos, songs, games, and so on.

It is not considerably important if students have a high English level to interact in the classroom, because they can start speaking in English from the beginning, and teachers should use communicative tasks to foster students' interaction, although during this research the use of the L1 was needed several times in order to clarify what was required from the students to achieve, it can be concluded that sometimes while working with young learners who lack of previous knowledge related to grammar and pronunciation the use of the L1 is needed sometimes but its use should be avoided most of the time in order to provide the students with the opportunity of listening and learning new vocabulary.

Regarding the teachers' roles during this research, it can be said that while working with authentic material and developing the type of tasks previously mentioned. Teachers assume more

interactive and varied roles in the classroom as the literature suggests. When trying to foster comprehension and communication, teachers select materials, create the tasks, organize the syllabus, monitor the students' performance, give feedback and become more like another student because they have to actively participate in order to show to the rest of the class what is expected from them in every task, modeling responses. This can be considered good in some aspects if the teacher is a kind of person who is willing to take a more active part in the classroom, which in this case is extremely important since we were working with children. This change of roles can be considered not so good if the teacher is more of a traditional teacher who will explain the topics explicitly and then assess the students. The use of authentic materials and tasks can be highly recommended for more active and extrovert teachers or for teachers who are willing to try new ideas different from teaching grammar and vocabulary in isolation.

One goal of this research was to see if students could apply what they had learned in class in real life communication. Regarding this matter, it can be said that students are able to apply most of the things learned in class in a real context. For example, the first lesson plan presented the topic of greetings which are really important when communicating, and adjectives which are essential when describing people, animals or objects. As it has been said before, the important thing is that learners could answer the questions more quickly and were more confident since they had had the previous practice. Other topics such as the topic of jobs and fruits need a more specific context in order to be used in real life, thus it can be concluded that the vocabulary learned by students can be used in real life situations although there is a need to improve some grammar issues, and also these topics have to be constantly practiced so students do not forget them.

Some important recommendations for teachers or researchers who want to work with this same topic are that they have to carefully choose the material that they will be using, because this material has to relate with the tasks that will be created. Authentic material can be implemented in a very effective way if the age and needs of the students are previously taken into account, the same recommendation works for the tasks. Students with a higher level of knowledge can be given more challenging tasks. The only limitations with the use of authentic material and tasks are in direct relation with the learner's level and with what the teacher is trying to achieve in class, otherwise there is no major inconvenience with their use.

Another recommendation is that the application of these type of tasks takes a great deal of time, at the beginning the lesson plans for the classes were planned with a length of time of 80 to 90 minutes and with 15 or 20 minutes for each task, this proved to be insufficient especially with tasks that are created to be done in group. This can be avoided by providing students with some tasks in order to measure their capacity and amount of time that takes them to complete them, so in that way when the real tasks, which are part of the lesson plan, are applied the teacher will have better knowledge of how that specific class performs in a determined set of time.

If possible it is much better to develop this type of activities with small groups in order to assess better each student during the application of each task, and to be able to manage the class which can present some discipline issues at the moment of working with the authentic material specially with children whose motivation should be channeled in the task at hand.

To conclude, the application of tasks using authentic material proved to be effective with a young group of learners, showing that their vocabulary building, motivation and attitude toward English improved in a meaningful way, but to obtain the best result from it, a considerable amount of time has to be spent in order to choose the right material and tasks to

accomplish what is wanted, also students in this research were not formally assessed, it means that if they were to take a written test for example they will probably have some problems because the majority of tasks were done in an oral way without paying attention to writing or spelling.

Also, as it was mentioned before, these types of tasks which work with vocabulary do not have a long lasting result if they are done only once, so these vocabulary items have to be fairly practiced in order to have a long term result.

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Appendix A (pre-test)

Pre-test

This pre-test was applied to both experimental and control groups, the aim of this test was to diagnose the student's current English level, and to check in which level of the European framework they are at the moment. It was designed with 9 oral questions.

The first question: Hello! How are you today? And the second question what is your name?

Were asked in order to check if the students knew the basic greetings and if they could introduce themselves.

The third question was: How old are you? This question had the same aim of questions two and three which was to check if the students could provide personal information about themselves.

The fourth item of the pre-test consisted on asking the students to describe themselves and the fifth item describe your favorite toy were asked in order to know if the students could use adjectives to describe different things.

The sixth question was: What do you like to do in the morning? And a similar seventh question: What do you like to do? Were asked in order to check if the students were able to describe their daily routines.

The eighth question was: What is your favorite fruit? It was asked in order to know if the students had any knowledge about vocabulary related to fruits.

Finally the ninth question was: What are your plans for next weekend? Was asked in order to check if the students were able to use future structures.

ORAL PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

1. Hello! How are you today?
2. What is your name?
3. How old are you?
4. Describe yourself
5. Describe your favorite toy?
6. What do you do in the morning?
7. What do you like to do?
8. What is your favorite fruit?
9. What are your plans for the next weekend?

Appendix B (lesson plan Greetings)

Lesson plan

Date:

Available time: 80 minutes

Topic: Greetings

Class description

This class is designed for eight (8) students of kids level of Cambridge academy of English, they are beginners in their process of learning English, and they range in age from seven to eight.

Their native language is Spanish.

Goal

Through the use of puppets students will learn how to greet and introduce each other.

Specific objectives

- Students will appropriately greet each other according to the time of the day
- Students will practice Greetings among them
- Students will introduce themselves.
- Students will introduce other students to the rest of the class.

Materials

- One set of puppets which represents students gender (male or Female)
- one set of poster which represents the time of the day (morning, afternoon, evening)

Procedure

First activity 20 minutes

The students will be provided with a puppet which represents their gender (boy or girl), the teachers and the students will make a circle, the teachers will also have a puppet and they will begin the activity by greeting each other puppets:

Teacher A: Hi I am (name), nice to meet you

Teacher B: Hello! (Name), I am (name), nice to meet you too.

teacher B will repeat the same dialogue to the student next to him/her, and this student will have to do the same with the student next to him or her until the last student reaches to teacher A again, so every student will have the opportunity to practice and interact with each other.

When the dialogue reaches to teacher A another round will begin this time with a different dialogue:

Teacher A: How are you today?

Teacher B: I am fine Thank you

The process will repeat again until the dialogue reaches teacher A again, and a final round takes place with another dialogue.

Teacher A: Good bye (name)

Teacher B : Bye (name)

During the whole activity teachers will make sure to check and help students if they have any trouble following the activity.

Second activity 20 minutes

After the first activity teachers will use the posters which represent the time of the day, these posters will be placed on the walls of the classroom, the activity consists on taking turns in front of each poster and greet each other using either good morning, good afternoon or good evening. Teachers will begin the activity standing in front of the morning poster and greet each others puppet:

Teacher A: Good morning I am (name) nice to meet you

Teacher B: Good morning (name), how are you?

Teacher A: fine thanks.

Students will be asked to stand in front of the morning poster and do as the teachers previously did using their own puppets.

This will be repeated in front of each poster changing the greeting, and giving them the opportunity to choose in front of which poster they would like to use their puppets.

Third activity 20 minutes

The teacher begins by saying:

My name is (name)

Then the teacher asks to one of the students the following question:

What is your name?

If the question is not answered she/he asks another student, when the question is answered the teacher introduces that same student to the rest of the class by saying:

She/he is (name)

Then the teacher asks one student to do the same with another student say his/her own name and then ask another student what is his or her name and the activity is finished when each student has introduced him/herself to the rest of the class.

Fourth activity 20 minutes

Students will have to introduce themselves using what they practiced earlier and also introduce one of their classmates to the rest of the class, the teacher would ask them to choose a partner to begin the task and give them 5 minutes to prepare what they are going to say so they could ask for any vocabulary that they might need.

Appendix C (lesson plan Animals)

Lesson plan

Date:

Available time: 60 minutes

Topic: Animals

Class description

This class is designed for eight (8) students of kids level of Cambridge academy of English, they are beginners in their process of learning English, and they range in age from seven to ten. Their native language is Spanish.

Goal

Through the use of pictures learners will identify the names of animals and employ the right adjective big/small for each one.

Specific objectives

- Students will know and practice the pronunciation of the names of some animals
- Students will know and practice the spelling of some animal names
- Students will make an album containing pictures of animals

Materials

- Various sets of pictures of animals.
- one set of colored sheets of paper and glue which will be used to make the album

Procedure

First activity 15 minutes

Teachers come into classroom and greet children in English.

Then the teacher begins using the pictures of animals and as teacher shows the pictures of animals to the students he/she pronounces their names, and the students also pronounce each name.

Then the teacher sticks the pictures on the board and on the desk there will be an equal number of pieces of paper with the names of the animals placed on the board, these will be upside down and the students will have to choose one at random and try to stick it below the right animal; if the student's choice is wrong the teacher will ask to the rest of the class if it is right and correct it.

Second activity 20 minutes

The teacher begins the activity placing pieces of paper with the names of the animals all over the classroom, and then stands in front of the class and uses a different set of pictures this time each student picks one of the pictures at random and has to imitate that animal, the rest of the class guesses the name and looks for the piece of paper with the name on it, and takes it and stick it on the student who previously imitated that animal.

Third activity 25 minutes

This last activity consist on making an album which will contain pictures and names of animals, each student will be given some pieces of cardboard, glue, and some images of different animals. They will decorate the album as they prefer; finally each student will show and present their own album to the rest of the class.

Appendix D (lesson plan adjectives)

Lesson plan

Date:

Available time: 60 minutes

Topic: adjectives

Class description

This class is designed for eight (8) students of kids level of Cambridge academy of English, they are beginners in their process of learning English, and they range in age from seven to ten. Their native language is Spanish.

Goal

Through the use of pictures, learners will identify the different adjectives and colors and they are able to employ the right adjective to describe people and their toys.

Specific objectives

- Students will learn and practice the pronunciation of the names of the adjectives.
- Students will know and practice the colors.
- Students will make a description of their toys. And they will describe themselves.

Materials

- Various sets of pictures of adjectives.
- One set of circles; each one represents a different color.
- Toys brought by the students.

Procedure

First activity 15 minutes

Teachers come into classroom and greet children in English.

Then the teacher begins showing a set of pictures related to different adjectives he/she pronounces each adjective pointing to the respective picture, then students have to pick up a piece of paper with the word for each adjective and they have to stick it next to the picture of the matching adjective.

Second activity 15 minutes

The teacher shows a set of color circles each one representing a different color, the teacher pronounces the name of each color and the students also pronounce them. For this activity students were previously asked to bring some of their favorite toys to the classroom.

The teacher describes a toy using the adjectives previously showed in class, and then each student is asked to do the same with their own toys.

Task 15 minutes

Students are asked to work in pairs and describe the physical appearance of their partner.

Appendix E (lesson plan jobs)

Lesson plan

Date:

Available time: 60 minutes

Topic: jobs

Class description

This class is designed for eight (8) students of kids level of Cambridge academy of English, they are beginners in their process of learning English, and they range in age from seven to ten. Their native language is Spanish.

Goal

Through the use of pictures and costumes, learners will identify the different jobs and ask and answer about them.

Specific objectives

- Students will learn and practice the pronunciation of the names of some jobs.
- Students will identify various jobs according to what clothes they are wearing.

Materials

- Various sets of pictures of jobs.
- Eight costumes matching the set of pictures, and some accessories related to each type of job.

Procedure

First activity 20 minutes

Teachers come into classroom and greet children in English.

Then the teacher begins showing a set of pictures related to different jobs, these pictures will be placed on the walls of the classroom then the teacher pronounces each job pointing to the respective picture, then students have to pick up a piece of paper with the word for each job and they have to stick it next to the picture of the matching job.

Second activity 20 minutes

The teacher puts the names of the jobs in a plastic bag and each student draws a piece of paper with the job and he/she has to wear that costume.

Task 20 minutes

When all the students are disguised they are asked to stand in a circle then to describe what is his/her job, having done that part each one has to answer what is the job of the student next to him/her. For example he is a musician or she is a lawyer.

Appendix F (lesson plan fruits)

Lesson plan

Date:

Available time: 60 minutes

Topic: Fruits

Class description

This class is designed for eight (8) students of “kids” level of Cambridge academy of English; they are beginners in their process of learning English, who range in age from seven to ten. Their native language is Spanish.

Goal

Through the use of fruit as authentic materials students will learn fruit names and they could use them in their real lives.

Specific objectives

- Students will recognize each fruit.
- Students will be able to identify the names of some fruits.
- Students will practice the pronunciation of fruits in English in a real context
- Students will know how to prepare a fruit salad.

Material

- Real fruit
- Whipped cream
- A container, plastic forks, knives, spoons.
- An apron for each student.

Procedure

First activity 15 minutes

The teacher will show each object to the class, which will be used during the session, then teacher will present the fruits which will be used by the students; they should repeat the pronunciation of these ones.

Second activity 15 minutes

The students will be provided with a different fruit, a plastic knife, and an apron. The students should cut the fruit into little pieces and put it in a big container, but before the teacher will show how to do it.

Third activity 15 minutes

While students cut the fruit, the teacher will ask them some questions like: do you like to eat fruit? / What is your favorite fruit? / What fruit don't you like?

And students will try to answer the questions.

During the whole activity teachers will check and help students if they have any trouble following the activity.

Second activity 15 minutes

Finally the students will mix all their fruits in one big bowl and the teacher will serve a portion for each student, and they will put some whipped cream on top, and eat it.

Appendix G (post-test)

Post-test

It was designed in order to diagnose if the students' oral skills and vocabulary had improved. Since the pre-test consisted only on oral questions, this post-test was also created using oral questions.

The first question was: Hello! How are you?

The second question was: What is your name?

The third question was: How old are you?

These three questions were aimed to diagnose how the students were using the greetings that they had practiced before, and to compare the differences with the pre-test.

The next question was: What is your favorite fruit? This question was asked to check if the students had improve their vocabulary and also if the use of authentic material helped them to remember what they had learned during the fifth lesson plan.

In the next part students were asked to describe one of their partners, this was done in order to diagnose if their vocabulary and the use of adjectives had been enhanced with the tasks.

The next two items had the same aim and consisted on asking students to describe their favorite toy and also to describe themselves.

The following item was related to the second lesson plan about animals. They were asked to mention at least five animals and also to answer the following question: What is your favorite animal?

Finally students were asked to mention five jobs and to talk about what they wanted to be when they grow up, this last question was asked to diagnose if the students manage to use the

vocabulary presented in the fourth lesson plan, it is needed to mention that in the pre-test there was no question which aimed to diagnose the use of vocabulary related to jobs.