

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING TO INTRODUCE ENGLISH VOCABULARY TO EARLY  
CHILDHOOD AT C.D.I REGIONAL RISARALDA

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## Introduction

The present classroom project relates to the introduction of English to Early Childhood Education involving children from 4 to 5 ages. The main objective of this study was to expose infants to different vocabulary in the second language through a methodology inspired in the theory of “Experiential Learning” whose purpose is to lead learners to have meaningful experiences through the use of their senses to recognize the word in real contexts. Besides, art and play were included in the process to provide more input to the learner and increase their long-term memory.

Subsequently, the main issue to be dealt is the lack of opportunities that this population has in terms of inclusion in a bilingual education; hence, the evidence collected in this research might be useful for fostering new educational projects that look for starting to incorporate English instructions in Early Childhood and its later contribution to the Colombian Bilingual Program. Otherwise, this project might benefit its participants due to the fact that children could develop abilities in the second language, parents could feel interested on English instructions for their kids, and the researchers could get new knowledge about the teaching of English to this population.

In order to accomplish this proposal, the methodology was elaborated based on the POAI (Plan Operativo para la Atención Integral) in order to follow the procedure already established but focused on exposing children to the foreign language.

Moreover, each intervention consisted of three stages: let's explore, let's create and let's play in which fine and gross motor skills were trained while infants were learning the language. To put it in another way, in the first stage, children were engaged into the

topic while they were exploring the new context and starting to be familiarized with the English vocabulary through the use of the senses perceiving the smells, seeing the objects, tasting flavors, and so on. After that, the same words were repeated during the creating part in which children were elicited to pronounce the words at the same time they were developing the handcraft. Least, children had the fun and playtime in which they performed a certain task while reinforcing their vocabulary or even demonstrate the knowledge already acquired; when five sessions were completed, the next one was focused on knowing how much children have learned and remembered.

At the end, the collected data and evidence are analyzed to calculate the extent of effectiveness of the methodology in children's outcomes and responses; or, determine the contribution that this study makes to our professional growth.

Consequently, in chapter number 1 you might know the purposes and the objectives set to base the study. Secondly, two researches related to the subject matter are going to be cited to contextualize the reader and support the purpose of this project. After that, some terms are going to be defined by different authors; and then, the methodology with context, setting, and design will be displayed. At the end, the reader might know the results and conclusions obtained from the analysis of evidence and data collected.

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## ABSTRACT

The present classroom project describes the implementation of experiential learning to promote and facilitate the English vocabulary acquisition in early childhood population. The implementation was carried out taking into consideration that vocabulary is a key aspect in language learning in view the fact that it guides to develop other language skills.

The population involved in this classroom project consisted of 31 children from kindergarten of a public, mixed C.D.I in Pereira, Risaralda. The participants were exposed to experiential stages like: explore, create and play in which the English vocabulary was taught implicitly for approximately three months, one hour per week. Besides, the three pre-service teacher in charge of the realization of the project, employed some instruments such as: facilitator's journals, children's artifacts and reflections to collect information and analyze it and notice the impact of the English classes.

Concerning the results, it is relevant to mention that although this project lasted only three months, children demonstrate an early acquisition of the L2 vocabulary responding orally or receptively to the proposed pedagogical activities; as well as strengthen cognitive, fine and gross motor skills. Taking in consideration the previously mentioned, this project could benefit future English lessons with early childhood population providing strategies and pedagogical activities that facilitate the process of teaching and learning a foreign language.

## RESUMEN

El presente proyecto de aula describe la implementación del aprendizaje experimental para promover y facilitar la adquisición del vocabulario con la población de primera infancia. La implementación se llevó a cabo teniendo en cuenta que el vocabulario es un aspecto clave en el aprendizaje del lenguaje, ya que ayuda a desarrollar otras habilidades de la lengua.

La población involucrada en este proyecto consiste en 31 niños de Jardín, de un Centro de Desarrollo integral público y mixto en Pereira, Risaralda. Los participantes fueron expuestos a etapas experienciales como: Explorar, Crear y Jugar en las que el vocabulario en Inglés se enseñaba implícitamente por aproximadamente tres meses durante una hora a la semana. Además las tres practicantes a cargo de la realización del proyecto emplearon algunos instrumentos como diarios, artefactos infantiles y reflexiones para recolectar la información, analizarla y notar el impacto de las clases de inglés.

Con respecto a los resultados, es relevante mencionar que a pesar de durar solo tres meses, los niños demostraron una adquisición pronta del vocabulario de la segunda lengua y respondieron oral y receptivamente en las actividades pedagógicas propuestas; también fortalecieron sus habilidades cognitivas, y motoras. Tomando en consideración lo previamente mencionado, este proyecto puede beneficiar las futuras clases de Inglés que se lleven a cabo con primera infancia proveyendo estrategias y actividades pedagógicas que faciliten el proceso de aprendizaje y enseñanza de una lengua extranjera.



## 1. JUSTIFICATION

Studies about education have shed light on the instruction in early ages such as the study carried out in the Harvard University (Center on the developing child, 2007) which has proved that the quality of the children's learning, health and behavior is measured by their own experiences from their personal lives and interactions with society. Besides, in early childhood, children have a significant increasement of neuro-connections reached in seconds, making more efficient their language abilities and cognitive performances. Hence, to start teaching English vocabulary in Early Childhood would be a fruitful idea due to the fact that they can take advantage of their brain development to facilitate the evolution of language abilities in L2.

### **Statement of the problem**

The government incorporated a program whose purpose was to improve the quality on the integral development of children during their first five years, working on different aspects such as: social, cultural, educational, familiar and other factor based on the necessities that the families and children have. In view of the fact that one of the challenges of this project was to increase various factors in terms of cognitive, motor skills, emotional and linguistic development in L2, one of our classroom project's objective is to incorporate a new methodology which would guide students to acquire L2 vocabulary related to the topics that children were familiar with in their mother tongue.

The teaching of English in the developmental process of early childhood is not evidenced in any public CDI (Centro de Desarrollo Integral) in Risaralda. Hence, it is fundamental for us as future English teachers to think about introducing English into the

learning process of this population to provide opportunities for them to start recognizing second language vocabulary. Furthermore, it would provide better results in the future in terms of Bilingualism in Colombia as kindergartens are going to be exposed to the language before they start the school; therefore, they would feel familiarized with some English sounds, terms, commands and words facilitating and making pleasant the English learning process. For instance, in first grade at school, students start recognizing and using greetings, being familiarized with rhythms and songs, and answering simple questions about their environment; all of those aspects are established in the Guia 22 and were considered in this project during its implementation. Additionally, the English vocabulary was learned implicitly in view of the fact that kids were engaged with activities in which they would explore and train their fine and gross motor skills through games and arts making easier the achievement of the objectives proposed in this classroom project.

It was accurate to notice that for teaching English to early childhood, we need to incorporate methodologies which allowed learners not only to comprehend, but also to be engaged throughout the English lessons. Thus, in order to develop comprehension and attractiveness, our classroom project was centered on experiential learning, proposed by Lengnick-Hall and Sanders (1997, p.1339), that would guide infants to learn in an untraditional form since this method let them follow their interest, work freely and be involved through “real” scenarios.

Additionally, for this classroom project physical movements take a significant role in the educational process. Different authors have given distinct benefits of applying corporal movements when learning; for instance, Improved Brain Function

(Medina 2008), Enhanced Cognition (Etnier 1997), prepares the brain for learning (Blaydes 2000), Improved Academic Performance (Dwyer et al. 2001). Besides, Asher (1966) have linked physical actions with the learning of a second language; in this case, he argues that the second language learning process is facilitated through actions which allow learners to develop listening comprehension leading them to produce the language without any conscious effort and also reduce stress and anxiety during this process.

Moreover, English is introduced in early childhood through vocabulary inasmuch words lead children to start communicated in the foreign language, facilitating the later development of listening, speaking and literacy skills. For instance, Hunt and Beglar (2005:2) argued that “the heart of language comprehension and use is the lexicon”. Besides, the words to be taught need to be measured by their significance level or usefulness based on the ages and topics treated. For example, there are some principles suggested by Stahl's model (1999) that boost the acquisition of vocabulary and make it a productive and suitable process equally applicable in daily life. Some of these principles relate the vocabulary towards learners background in order to create interest in the words. Also, present several exposures with the topic since kids tend to forget easily new knowledge; for this reason, promoting repetition ensures that kids remember for longer periods of time, the vocabulary they have learned.

Taking into account all of these aspects, we reached to the conclusion that English should be incorporated in the POAI (Plan Operativo para la Atención Integral); following the same procedure of this program, English is introduced accomplishing the improvement and strengthening of the attention to children. To illustrate this, English

lessons would be carried out across three pedagogical moments which are: let's explore, let's create and let's play. These sessions are oriented to stimulate the learning process of children through their right-brain\_which is associated with physical movement, acting and gesturing; it is said that while children are performing an activity, the left hemisphere of the brain focuses on learning the new information.

At the end of the implementation, we hoped that children could recognize and identify some of the words and commands already seen in English classes using song's vocabulary and games incorporated in their daily class activities. In this way, they would become familiar with some language and phonemes developing some receptive skills in English .

## 1.1 OBJECTIVES

### 1.1.1 Teaching Objectives

#### **General objective:**

- Teaching English to children through experiential learning as a method to introduce foreign language vocabulary.

#### **Specific Objectives:**

- To provide meaningful basic input in L2 related to topics that children already know in their mother tongue.
- To support themes with didactic material such as: English songs, musical instruments for involving children in L2 vocabulary learning.

### 1.1.2 Learning Objectives

#### **General Objective:**

- To reproduce orally vocabulary during the guided English activities.

#### **Specific Objectives:**

- Respond linguistically in L2 to tactile, visual and aural stimuli.
- Apply the vocabulary learnt in the assessment session called “ let’s play”

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies on the topic of second language acquisition in early childhood have been carried out in the world with the purpose of investigating and analyzing which approaches, methodologies and theories are evidently effective for engaging children to acquire a second language. Additionally, in the Latin American context there are some studies concerning with methods, didactic material and surveys related to the teaching of English in early childhood.

The first present research study was conducted by two researchers who belonged to the Universidad de Manizales and whose purpose was to impact the communicative English skills and guide the participants to face the language in the future formal primary education. Besides, the research study was implemented at the Child Development Center (C.D.I) "El Bosque" in Manizales, Caldas and whose participants were 10 girls and 7 boys from 4 to 5 year-old. The data collection method used was the execution of six workshops with the purpose of guiding learners to develop communicative skills in English through different child's dimensions such as: corporal, cognitive, social, communicative and aesthetic. The instruments utilized for the data analysis were: teacher's journals, parent's interviews and polls. Finally, the main findings of this research study were that the English communicative skills (listening and speaking) were strengthened from the development dimensions proposed on the national strategy "de cero a siempre". Additionally, that the performance of the six workshops assisted children to begin the formative process in L2 helping them to acquire knowledge to face future English classes in future primary education.

second language immersion as a purpose of discovering the advantages of exposing kids to the language and to notice what language abilities they would develop. The findings provided by this study suggested that language abilities as listening and pronunciation showed better results for an earlier start, and the acquisition of L2 grammar and vocabulary in older learner due to the fact that they are cognitively mature.

Different from the first study, the second one, whose name is “Enseñanza del Inglés en Educación Infantil El método Jolly Phonics”, was made by Nuriye Degirmenci Uysal and Fatih Yavuz from The University of Valladolid Spain (2014). This research was developed for several purposes such as to determine the most common methodologies used in ESL classroom; the advantages and disadvantages of Jolly Phonics methodology; the success during teaching and access to material; and, to know the opinions that teaches have about teaching English in Early Childhood. In addition, the participants of this project were 24 learners since 6 to 7 ages from Primary School and an English Teacher. One of those children had hydrocephalus and two more had some problems with L1; nonetheless, the learning of English in those cases was not a drawback due to the fact that this language was taught through single words and simple expressions with the aid of gestures. The data collection methods were an observation formats and a survey addressed to the facilitator who carried out the observations. To start with the findings, the most common methodologies used to teach English in Segovia context are songs, plays, videos, flashcards, and dramatizations. Second, Jolly Phonics is a good method to improve pronunciation, but it is incomplete as it does not have relation with the Spanish curriculum. Additionally, some professors

thought this methodology is for teach literacy to English speakers and not to teach English as a second language. Third, professors agreed the problems they face into classroom are related to motivation, participation and disruptive behavior. Otherwise, the most common materials were puppets, magnetic boards, and TICs for videos and interactive activities. Finally, the 91% of teachers said that English is useful in our society; 54% thought that English should be taught since 3 years age; 81% agreed that L2 does not interfere in L1; and, 54% said that children enjoy learning English.

To conclude, those studies contributed to our classroom project in view of the fact that they provided useful information about real experiences in the field in which we worked on. First of all, we gained knowledge about the language abilities that a second language learner could develop according to their ages. Besides, we noticed that it was significant to think about methods that guide children to understand and process the information and include fine and gross motor activities that would contribute to keep interest and motivation and make enjoyable the learning process. Lastly, the most important factor to highlight is that those children received instructions in their early stages of the learning process facilitating the later alphabetization although some of them had difficulties with their first language.



### 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

For broadening the knowledge of our classroom project which is focused on the teaching of English vocabulary to early childhood, four main concepts will be defined : early childhood education, experiential learning, theme based teaching and didactic materials. These terms will be described in this document by different authors who are scholars in those subjects and whose theories provide useful information that would guide the development of this project. Consequently, the early childhood education concept will be discussed by Cummins (2005), Robert Siegler (2010), Diane August and her colleagues (2005), Glen Dunlap, Timothy J. Lewis and Amy McCart (2006) who have different points of view on the cognitive, behavioral, and educational aspects; also, some valuable points about the constructivism theory are going to be mentioned. Additionally, Experiential Learning will be guided by Barbara Rogoff (2003), Cohen and Walker (2000), and Usher and Soloman (1999) and McGill and Warner Weil (1989) whose theories highlighted the main aspects of involving real experiences in the learning process . Theme based teaching is oriented by Mumford (2000), Smallwood (2002) and Halliwell (1992) whose theories incorporate English as a Second Language into topics that are connected with real life. Lastly, didactic material, specifically the utilization of songs with children is described by Murphey, T. (1992), Brewer, C.(1995), and García- Sáez (1984) as a promoter of motivation in learning environments.

### 3.1 Early Childhood Education

Early childhood in Colombian context includes infants from 0 to 5 years old. But our classroom project is mainly focused on children from 3 to 5 years old .

Cummins (2005) claimed that when children acquire two languages simultaneously, they start developing linguistic, cognitive, and academic abilities. That is to say that the learning of two languages in early stages of life will stimulate the brain development and provide more opportunities for kids in the school and social life.

On the other hand, some constructivism theories described by Sarah Lipoff (2011), complement what Cummins said in terms of teaching English to children. Sarah argues that activities which provide real experiences interesting for them are the best way in which they may learn due to the interaction they would have with people, places and things around.

Moreover, Robert Siegler (2010) agrees with the theory of constructivism mentioned before assuring that children construct and give meaning to things exploring the world around them. Also, he claimed that kids use their background knowledge to learn new things applying some level of thinking skill for making sense of it. In other words, memory has a valuable role in the learning process as learners remember what was learnt; additionally, when children are focused on something that calls their attention, they keep easier the information they are receiving; therefore, making classes fun and interesting would keep the children's attention during the performance to the lesson.

Otherwise, Diane August and her colleagues (2005) recall the Robert's view that gives importance to the concepts of reviewing and remembering the previous

knowledge as one of the main tips that are successful when new vocabulary is going to be taught. Additionally, she suggests to use the mother tongue of learners as scaffold to introduce the concept in the foreign language.

Apart from that, Glen Dunlap, Timothy J. Lewis and Amy McCart (2006) complement the previous hypothesis with the implementation of four strategies that will help teacher to accomplish the goals during the implementation of the lessons and carry out a well-organized class improving children's attention. The following tips are related to control behavior and avoid distractions for ensuring kids' learning and understanding; the first one talks about the planning of the lesson which should describe the classroom environment, the design material and an organized schedule; the second one suggests to implement routines and schemes for children to be familiar with and may follow them; the next strategy has as an aim to establish behavioral rules; and the last tip recommends to build rapport with infants for helping them to feel comfortable and behave appropriately during the classes.

All of these theories make valuable contributions to the implementation of this project due to the fact that authors gives us their points of view in regards to the early childhood education making us to be aware about the complexity of their development and behavior. Otherwise, the education in children have a great relation with the experience that children should have in their learning process through the interaction with all what is around them; therefore, it is relevant to define experiential learning as the base of the project and the foundation of methodologies to be implemented.

### 3.2 Experiential Learning

In second language teaching, multiple strategies are used for facilitating the process of acquiring a foreign language in a certain population, guiding them to develop language abilities and keep interest on learning. Experiential learning empowers children to enhance and gain skills, knowledge and experience while they are exposed to real life experiences, such as touch, feel, see and smell. This method enables children to increase understanding and knowledge since our implementation sessions have three stages denominated let's explore, let's create and let's play in which learners will have a mixture of cognitive, emotional and behavioral elements to be involved on heuristic approaches.

Barbara Rogoff, (2003), looks at experiential learning apart from the classroom, she emphasizes that the social and cultural dynamics forge the learning in and out the school. Due to it involves social relationships of control, active work, talk, experimenting and learning while a task is done. Besides, children face experiential learning activities while they are with their families and communities. It is relevant to highlight that during the implementation we are going to bring basic vocabulary that children already know in their mother language.

In addition to the previous theory, Hoover (1974) made emphasis on some aspects related to the involvement that learners have in the process of learning through experience. As the previous theory, Hoover mentioned the behaviourally but also cognitively, emotionally the learner's skills and attitudes developed during the performance of the tasks. The cognitive and emotional aspects are correlated inasmuch teachers construct the scenario for providing real experiences but learners acquire the

new knowledge when they are interested on, feel curiosity and have emotional reactions in a specific situation, changing their predispositions and attitudes. Subsequent to, learners become increasingly involved into the lesson in which they can explore their skills and aptitudes. The emotional intelligence is conceived as a feature that is linked with the human talent, person's behaviour, notably success and effectiveness that Sternberg (1996) denominated "practical or successful intelligence"

At the other side, Lengnick-Hall and Sanders (1997, p.1339) described the situations in which the high intensity learning experience is provoked such as activities that put in practice the cognitive skills like the perception, attention, memory, language, visual and spatial processing, inter alia. Secondly, there are stir activities which prompt learners to work their fine and gross motor skills while they are learning by doing; and lastly, the situations in which learners observe others behavior to later model it due to the fact that it calls their attention .

In keeping with Judith Lindfors, she defined the teacher's role in early childhood as *providing, learning, observing, and responding* (1987). Her descriptions of these roles contribute with a scheme to implement activity-based and experiential learning. As a guide, the teacher is the one who guarantees that there is space, materials and time for children to be engrossed in those self-experiential activities. The teacher is also the one who ensures a safe setting to facilitate children's experimentation, exposure and recognition including psychological support through acknowledgment of their choices. Lindfors, also emphasizes the importance of bring to light children's own interests and questions and pursue their ideas and beliefs. That is why, during the implementation

sessions, we will try to involve students in different context in which they would have the opportunity to interact with different material and settings that we have created for them.

On the other hand, the organization of the class, in regards to the content, has been included in theories related to Theme Based Teaching, in which professors are provided with several tools and strategies to the selection of topics in real contexts, due to the fact that it elicits students to use the language in daily life; therefore, it is appropriated to define which content would be useful for this type of population and what Theme Based Teaching means based on this specific background.

### **3.3 Theme Based Teaching**

The learning of English is tied by real experiences giving sense to the use and production of the language; it is to say that, teaching a second language should be thought in connection of the content with real life situations. This term is defined by Diana Mumford (2000) as an amount of topics divided by different units which look for teaching or improving students' skills and aptitudes in a certain field. Those units are stated in a defined curriculum in which activities for real life experiences are involved taking into account the interests of children to provoke their motivation. The same author states that the role of professors is to guide learners to connect their previous knowledge with the one that they are acquiring; and to use the appropriate material to accomplish the specific goal. That is to say that, it is relevant to determine which content is going to be used due to the fact that lessons should cover several scenarios in which children would feel familiarize with the context. To illustrate this point, there are some strategies stated by Smallwood (2002) to look for appropriated material. The first

strategy is to reflect about the selection of books to guide teachers to construct the lesson, inasmuch as some of the books do not cover all the objectives facilitators want to develop in a class, or even the material is not addressed for young learners.

Therefore, Smallwood suggests to answer some questions to opt for accurate books addressed to this population (Smallwood, pg. 2-3). First of all, it is relevant to determine if the content of the book selected implements a language not far from the basic level of learners, and even, if it uses the same patterns in the whole lessons. Next, the stories provided by the material should be fully illustrated and suitable for the ages of the learners. Lastly, the tools used by professors to engage students may cover the multicultural necessities that some classes face; also, they may be attached to the objectives that curriculum have specified.

### **3.3.1. Lesson plans based on Theme-Based**

Besides, during designing of curriculum, we need to consider some particular lessons to engage children effectively into the class. In particular, Susan Halliwell (1992) suggests some important dimensions for teaching to children, and some tips to carry out in the lessons. First of all, she mentioned children can learn in an implicit way through guessing words and phrases with constantly repetition of them, eliciting an impromptu and eloquent language. At the same time, imagination would be involved in activities to help teachers to appeal learners in a particular lesson, and put into practice the new knowledge with creativity, fun, and play when children develop skills and attitudes that stay for the rest of their lives including the need of express their thoughts and fantasies as was described by Dr. Bettye M. Caldwell (2016).

Another perspective is to give priority to the attitude for learning, making comfortable environments without pressure, allowing children to participate by their own will, or thinking about enjoyable activities to elicit risk taking. After that, Halliwell (1992) suggests to write which activities could keep children in calm and vice versa to equip teachers with strategies to carry on classes. Moreover, she claimed that it would be useful to classify those activities between that one which implicate the mental effort like guessing, and those which work with movements like acting or painting, to finally determine when is appropriate to use them.

Subsequently, the lesson plans should specify the length and frequency of the lesson, the styles to make lessons suitable, or even which ideas and material could be reused. Finally, Jeri Carroll and Dennis Kear (1993) provided in their book a lot of content for young children from which were selected some themes that will be implemented in this project and adapted for infants from 3 to 5 ages. They are:, birthdays, means of transportation, food, members of the family, names, plays, toys, values, environment, and parts of the body.

To conclude, those theories in regards to content facilitate the introduction of English in classes addressed to children, engaging them in real context and making more enjoyable the lessons. It is important to prepare activities that elicit imagination and participation, as well as repetition of the same patterns during lessons.

Meanwhile teachers are creating the curriculum they need to include the material and resources that support the lesson. Hence, it is necessary to look for accurate material as didactic as possible to teach English to children.



### 3.3.2 Didactic Material

The implementation of songs/ music as a pedagogical tool for teaching and learning a foreign language have shown effectiveness not only in second language acquisition , but also to promote motivation when learning takes place. To gain knowledge about the use of music as a method for teaching English to early childhood, it is relevant to define the impact that this method has during this learning process.

### 3.3.3 Music in the EFL Context

According to Murphey, T. (1992) music is a valuable material for the acquisition of a second language since it offers meaningful advantages such as: learning vocabulary, sentence structure and improving listening skills and pronunciation which work as the main input for producing the vocabulary. Further, this author mentions that music is a motivator in EFL classroom changing monotonous classes into an enjoyable experience.

Following the previous idea, Brewer, C.(1995) also suggests that the incorporation of music is a successful tool into the teaching and learning environments providing the next advantage : establish a positive learning state, create a desired atmosphere, build a sense of anticipation, energize learning activities, change brain wave states, focus concentration, increase attention, improve memory facilitate a multisensory learning experience, release tension, enhance imagination, align groups, develop rapport, provide inspiration and motivation, and finally, add an element of fun. Furthermore, García- Sáez (1984) affirm that apart from the benefits already mentioned, the meaningful benefit of using songs in language classes is that it generates an

atmosphere which helps learners to develop a positive attitude towards the language learning. Finally, it is noticed that songs are a useful material for assisting learners to develop language abilities and can also facilitate the learning process to children due to the fact that it creates enjoyable and pleasure environments in which learners will be stimulated to learn.

In other words, the use of didactic material, which helps teachers to turn a traditional classroom into one more enjoyable, facilitates the process of learning accomplishing the goal without stress or pressure. Songs provoke motivation in learners; hence, their minds are kept opened and ready to learn what is going to be taught.

In conclusion, all of those theories mentioned above are valuable since they strengthen the ideas which will be implemented in our classroom project; provide us main information about some relevant concepts; and guide us to think about new strategies, activities and procedures that can be applied for changing monotonous ways of learning and teaching English in early childhood, engaging and stimulating new experiences. Further, this project has as main purpose to teach English to children who do not have any background in the language and expect to play; thus, the implementation of the stages: “let's explore”, “let's create”. and “let's play” involve three main learning styles such are visual, aural, and kinesthetic, providing real experiences and building a significant learning process.

### **3.4 Visual Materials**

To involve experiences in the teaching of a second language has become one of the main factors to consider for making the process more meaningful leading learners to have contact with real scenarios. For this reason, the images and the sounds would be instruments that actually support the lessons in order to create a living environment in which the language can be used due to the fact that almost all of the information we perceived are transmitted for through those senses. Dorela Kaçauni Konomi (2012) claimed that the use of visual materials transmit the information to young learners through the sensory perception and motivate them to communicate. In addition, visual aids in the English teaching process work as a medium to provoke the long term memory in learners ( Porter and Margaret, 1992).

On the other hand, Allen who was cited by Dorela Kaçauni (2012), contributed to this approach encouraging the use of realia through the implementation of objects that would be interesting and fun for young learners. Subsequently, this strategy will be accompanied by gestures to explain the concepts, elicit the imagination, and get students attention.

Apart from that, Kaçauni also suggested the use of videos as one of the most useful sources in view of the fact that there are few hours in the curricula for teaching English; thus, young learners would be exposed to videos out of class and ensure their usually contact with the language.

Furthermore, Maria Ramirez Garcia (2015) made emphasis on all of the elements mentioned above such as film strips, pictures and pass- around objects for introducing concepts without using the mother tongue and leading learners to imitate

native speakers taking into consideration The Silent Way Method. In addition to this, the Oral Situational Approach mentioned by Shelena (2016), included the creation of atmospheres for involving learners in a real life situations through the use of pictures, concrete objects, realia, and flashcards. Another approach that would be supported by visual aids is the Total Physical Response in which the concept is represented by movements during the basic level of the language when learners are not able to communicate but imitate as the L1 is acquired.

Another benefit of bringing visual aids into the classroom involves the notion of the teaching of English as a second language. Mannan (2005) made emphasis on the implementation of this strategy which can facilitate the designing of the lessons due to the clarification, correlation and accuracy of the concepts selected for providing a more effective, interesting and meaningful learning process.

In conclusion, the visual aids are used as a support for the lessons during the process of learning vocabulary inasmuch as the knowledge is perceived by the sense of sight producing a memory in long term. This effect is improved through the implementation of different approaches or techniques such as TPR, gestures, videos and so on.

### **3.4.1 Handcraft**

Across the history, human beings have developed the art and craft to the same extent in which have increased their intelligence; therefore, those factors would be considered important to include them in curriculums as media to learn different subjects. In 2011, there was developed a research named "Reinvesting in Arts Education" which was carried out in Maryland School (PCAH, 2011), yielded the result that involving arts

into the curriculum aligned with the subjects, leave the class to get success in the achievement of the aims due to the fact that arts helped the process of learning, improved literacy, reading skills and mathematics abilities. Consequently, the researchers claimed that the inclusion of art education or the integration of creative opportunities increase motivation significantly that leads to get better results in the measurement of the knowledge acquired.(PCAH, 2011, p.52)

In addition, Mary Mayesky (2014) added that the teaching of vocabulary would be taught through the use of art where the creative materials and methodologies are part of the learning process. In this program, learners bring into the classroom their previous knowledge about the world around them to give characteristics to the things such as the color or size for representing them through different materials, using their perceptions for depicting the object. Otherwise, Mayesky argued that during the creation of the art-crafts, the children are elicited to develop the language inasmuch as interactions are involved into the activity through the repetition of the words that describe the certain item; besides, children start to understand some functions of the language when the facilitator is giving directions for the use of art material. Moreover, Mary claimed that the involvement of art into the classroom would be guided through steps that include exploring, creating and relaxing activities that benefit not only the cognitive development of infants but the socially, emotionally, and physically at their individual paces. Otherwise, she gave some guidelines for teachers ensuring a successful procedure in which there are included: to elicit the curiosity from students; to create spaces in the class to explore; to appreciate their original behavior; give time children to develop activities at their own pace; to create a calm environment; and,

promote the creativity through guessing activities at the time that good answers are rewarded.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Context

This classroom project was carried out in a public institution, specifically in a Centro de Desarrollo Integral C.D.I which is situated in Pereira - Risaralda, and it is called C.D.I Regional Risaralda. It is relevant to highlight that C.D.I institutions are part of the national strategy of early childhood created by the Colombian Government, with the purpose of exercising the kids rights for education. They focus their attention on children who are in situations of social vulnerability and they contribute to their growth and developmental process from the very beginning. Since this program prioritize low-income families, the parents or guardians don't have to contribute monetarily to give education to their small children. This modality works with different groups which are divided by children's ages; it was to say, that in the CDI were this project was conducted, there were 161 students who conformed nursery 1 with 25 babies between 6 months to 2 years old ; nursery 2 with 32 children; pre- kindergarten with 42 students between 3 to 5 years old; and lastly, kindergarten 1 with 31 kids, and kindergarten 2 with 34 children. Besides, there were six teachers and four assistants who contributed in this process.

The institution implemented an institutional project called POAI, that means Plan Operativo para la Atención Integral, which was a tool that guides the pedagogical processes based on Constructivist-social model. The POAI, which was addressed to parents, facilitators and children, was composed by four pillars: play, craft, reading, and explore the around world. Those components were part of methodological, pedagogical,

and didactic strategies that were divided in different activities carried out in various steps : welcome, let`s explore, let's eat, let's create, let's play, and finally, let`s go home, in which teacher guided, supported, accompanied, reinforced, developed and strengthened the learning process of the children. Additionally, the POAI was characterized by six items in which were included the community, social webs, and familiar components; they were: learning and cares environment; health and nutrition; pedagogical process; administrative and arrangement of process; and lastly, human talent.

#### **4.2 Setting**

In this public institution there were not English teachers since the curriculum did not include the teaching of English in early childhood. Therefore, students did not have any background knowledge in a second language, and the institution did not have English curriculum. This institution had five classrooms for each group with a tape recorder and TV set in each room. Also, the CDI had several rooms with different purposes such as the gym that had giant color blocks, stationary bikes, punching bags, and inflatable; the library in which teachers and children had access to books, and video libraries; the musical room where there were bongo drums, guitars, maracas, and other musical instruments; the game room in which children had toys of all shapes and for all genders; and finally, a kitchen, and a principal`s office.



### **4.3 Participants**

This project was carried out with children from four to five years old who belong to a public institution (C.D.I) situated in Pereira Risaralda, it was also a mixed institution, that is to say that we had girls and boys in the same classrooms. The total amount of children on the institution was one hundred sixty one. However, the implementation was carried out with a group of thirty one children. Further, The implementers of this project were three teachers in development who were ending the career of Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con énfasis en Inglés at the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira. They were three women between 20 and 24 years old. In addition, the English teachers were at level B2 of proficiency in English according to the CEFR, (2011)

### **4.4 Implementation**

The classes were addressed through experiential learning. The purpose was to help kids to develop receptive skills, in this case listening using input like english songs, crafts and games that encourage children to start recognizing the second language phonology, vocabulary, and pronunciation, guiding them to acquire foreign language abilities.

Lessons should be carried out based on the schedule that the institution has established such as the welcome, let's explore, let's eat, let's create, let's play, and let's go home. This project incorporated three of those pedagogical moments which are: Firstly, exploring in which children was engaged by the context that involved the contextualized classroom and songs to enhance their awareness about the topic. The second part was "creating" that was when children internalized the vocabulary using

crafts, with the performance of several material and repetition of the representation of the vocabulary in which they were working on . Finally, the game session that included gross motor skill activities and facilitated children to connect concepts with meaning .

This execution took place once a week with the same steps that backward design poses, during eight classes. It is relevant to highlight that the music was related to the topics proposed in each class . For instance, birthdays, nature, parts of the body, days of the week, greetings, animals, fruits, food, etc.

As a result, we have expected to notice that children understood in which context they were involved and recognized the words presented with the respective topic. They should felt engage by the environment, the objects, and music that was included on the lessons. In addition, it should elicit motivation due the fact that experiential learning offers the chance to create, mold, paint, draw, paste, build and other activities that made the lesson pleasant for them. Lastly, the project provided a time for playing where English could be practiced through physical games, English songs and nursery rhymes provoking stimulus in the second language learning.

#### 4.4.1 Lesson plan

Implementation number one

**Topic:**

Parts of the body.

**Materials:**

Songs, body's pictures, a doll, lottery game, figures in color paper, glue, pencil.

**Vocabulary:**

Head, shoulders, knees, toes, and arms.

**Steps:**

Stages	Specific aim	Procedure	Time
<b>Let's Explore.</b>	1. Contextualize the Ss with the topic.	At the beginning of each class, we started with the Hello Song. Then, facilitators adequated the room where the lesson was taking place according with the topic that was taught; in this case, parts of the body that were distributed around the classroom where children could <b>explore</b> and discover where the images were distributed and they should repeat in English the specific part of the body . Next, a song called Head, Shoulders; Knees & Toes were played twice. We	15 min

		<p>pointed out every part of the body to help them to recognize the meaning of every word. Meanwhile we passed through each image, kids were observing their own part of the body respectively accompanied by expressions like “see how beautiful, what is bigger?” what is the shape of your head? ”, etc. It is relevant to mention that in each expression teacher was using gestures, body language, and options to allowed kids to infer what was the question about and answer in English.</p>	
<p><b>Create</b></p>	<p>Involve children in activities to internalize the vocabulary introduced in the previous stage.</p>	<p>In this stage we have divided the group into five groups.                  Besides, we have gave every group an incomplete body that they need to completed by their own using the pieces provided .After that we have provided each group a silhouette of a body which they filled with ice cream sticks and lentils following the instructions, It was done with the purpose of determining if children were able to recognized the missing parts and identified what were the part that teacher was mentioning to strength the vocabulary presented in the previous phase “ let’s explore” .</p>	<p>30 min</p>

<b>Play</b>	Reinforce vocabulary through games at the same time class is assessed.	In this stage, teacher used a balloon and passed it from one kids to another using the part of the body mentioned. For this activity, the whole group were divided in two; then, the balloon was handed around until teacher says other part of the body to be used to pass the balloon. This exercise allowed us to identify how much they learnt, how many of them know the words, and if the lesson needs to be reinforced.  Finally, the Goodbye Song were sung at the end of each class as a strategy to create routines to give students enough input to produce the language.	15 min

#### 4.4.2 Assessment

In this chapter, the assessment procedures applied in our classroom project will be explained, but it is mainly accurate to clarify that assessment is a process in which multiple pedagogical tools are implemented for collecting information about what the learners know, understand and can do with the knowledge acquired as result of the educational process. ( Huba and Freed 2000).

In this classroom project it was implemented “observable behavior” as a strategy to assess children, that is to say that at the end of each lesson, during the “let’s play” session, they were going to demonstrated the knowledge acquired in the English classes. In that sense, the practitioners had the possibility to recognize the vocabulary learnt by the children who should respond both orally, or receptively in the proposed activities. Besides, it also allowed facilitators to reflect on those activities to identify which ones supported the learning process of the children and which ones needed to be changed.

#### **4.4.3 Reflection**

At the end of the implementation, evidences were useful in order to collect data and maintain valid and reasonable the accomplishments to carry out the analysis about how this project will contribute in the second language education in early childhood, and even be able to suggest what specific strategies can strengthen this project to make it useful. According to Grace, C., and Shores ( 1991), it is helpful to make a portfolio which is a file where professor can keep all the comments and observations about the performance of kids during lesson, as well as informal notes to capture important ideas emerged in class; also, teachers can get information from parents to know if the learners use the new knowledge at home. Additionally, the Grace, C., and Shores ( 1991) proposed to implement checklists in which indicators of competences are specified to rate what goals has been achieved and what competences and abilities learners have developed.

On the other hand, the folder contains the artifacts or products from students obtained after each lesson activities which include meaningful work , several photographs, and different videos.

Apart from the artifacts, journals play an important role in the collections of the data in terms of the specifications and the reflections made after the implementation of the lessons. That is to say, practitioners became aware about their practices based on the strategies implemented and the weaknesses of the learners, establishing correlations between both aspects and improve teaching through the experiences already gained. This notion was be supported by D. P. Dash and Werner Ulrich who claimed that the aims of a journal are related to the compilation of the theories and their applicability within a recorded experience in a certain context to lead the research into the discovering of new issues and trends. In addition, Paul Thompson and Ken Hyland made comments about “The journal of English for academic purposes” which allows practitioners and researchers to have a wider and updated view of the language in different fields and contexts in terms of the assessment, methodologies, language use, among others.

## 5. DESIGN

This classroom project was addressed to early childhood who were introduced to bilingual education through the implementation experiential learning which aid children to internalize the new language. In order to reach the goal, the approach which was applied during the development of the lessons was the Backward approach designed by Richard Culatta who proposed to start the lesson with the outcomes, which are activities where language is produced in real scenarios, for teachers to notice what the student's gaps are to create the content and put it into practice. Focusing lessons on Backward design, outcomes included amusing activities to engage children and elicit their motivation for discovering new topics in English meanwhile they learnt unknown vocabulary; and then, the process part that was during practice involved exercises with crafts, guessing, commands, games, etc.

Apart from the approach, this project was developed through the implementation of three pedagogical sessions that guided learners to maintain their attention during the whole performance of the lesson. First, the “let’s explore” whose purpose was to get the attention from students and involved them emotionally. Second, “let’s create” part in which learners were focused on the explanation given by the facilitator and repetition of the vocabulary while they were doing artistic activities. Next, the final section “let’s play” where learners produced the language in real scenarios such as the greengrocer, happy birthday party, visit to the doctor, etc.



## 6. RESULTS

In this document, we will describe the linguistic outcomes obtained from the implementation of some English classes in which Experiential learning was the method that guided the performance of this classroom project executed in C.D.I Regional Risaralda. The method of Experiential learning was focused on provide to the learners the opportunity of being involved in real scenarios in which they had a closer contact with objects through the five sense such as smell, touch, sight, hearing and taste while they were contextualized. For ensuring a more meaningful process of learning, the lessons were divided in three stages that are going to be explained below.

In the implementations of the project, children were exposed to various kinds of pedagogical activities divided in three stages: Let's explore, Let's create, and Let's play. In the first stage, learners were engaged in the context in which they were stimulated to connect English vocabulary words and its meaning having contact with the real objects through their sense. Then, the " create" stage was developed through the incorporation of crafts that allowed children to internalize the vocabulary previously seen while they were repeating the word several times and creating things in their real colors and shapes .At last, "Let's play" in which learners were exposed to distinct kind of games that allowed practitioners to recognize the new vocabulary that children acquired when they performed activities in right way selecting the correct fruit, jumping to the color they named in English, pointing out the right animal, asking for things in English, and so on.

## 6.1 Learners linguistic results

### 6.1.1 Productive Skills

#### Strengths

Before starting the implementation of the sessions, we leaded the group to another place different from their room for adequating it in regards to the topic while different nursery rhymes such as “Hello song” were taught to them as a routine. One of the most outstanding results occurred when the in-service teacher told us that most of the kids repeated during the whole week the “Hello song”.

On the other hand, the oral production of the children was evidenced during the diverse stages of the lesson. During the first intervention whose purpose was to teach parts of the body, facilitators proposed TPR activities and the song “ head, shoulders, knees & toes” for guiding them to associate the word with its appropriate part. As a result of this activity students acquired some of the vocabulary singing and pointing out each part of the body. Additionally, when the session concluded they pronounced the new vocabulary including the rhythm in L2 and touch their parts autonomously.

Further, in the third implementation about the colors, one poster with cute monsters was provided per group for they paint them with the colors assigned. Meanwhile the infants were painted the monsters, the question: /What is this color?/ was asked several times for making them to repeat it in L2; as a result, they started to remember the color they were using and answered to the previous question saying: | blu: | or | 'jeləv |. Moreover, this was observed in the last stage in which we included a game where they needed to cross the “ color stair” while saying the correct color on

which they jumped. Some of the children were able to remember, say and pronounce the color blue, red and yellow correctly and the most remarkable result was evidenced when some of the them passed through the whole stair mentioned all of the colors without any help.

At the other side, in the fourth implementation in which the topic was fruits, children had a real experience with the new vocabulary through the use of the senses such as smell, touch and taste while their eyes were covered to identify what fruit was in their hands followed by the repetition of the word in English. Besides, we usually used rhymes “*This is an apple. Apple, apple, apple*” to introduce the vocabulary. In addition, as a way to elicit learners to produce the new vocabulary, facilitators hid each fruit and asked them to call it for making it appears. For example, one fruit was hid and the facilitator said: / *What is this?* / *Llamen la fruta para que aparezca!* / *Llamen más duro!* and they repeated | 'æp | or | peə | making changes on the tone of voice. When the “let's explore” finished, we gave pieces of fruit to the kids and after several repetitions, they were able to answer simple questions such as /¿Amiguito que estás comiendo?/, /What is this?/ saying the name of the fruit in English like | peə | and | 'æp |. At the end of this lesson when practitioners were collecting the materials and the pieces of fruit used in the first stage, children started asking for one of them: “profe, me da /æp|/”, others: “profe a mí un pedacito de /peə/” and others: “ ayyy profe, a mí una /greɪps/, ¡ si profe!”. They also were humming the song, “*This is a pear. Pear, pear, pear*”

On the other hand, we implemented the lesson “wild animals” and these were some findings that the facilitators collected by the incorporation of some stages. In the “let's create” part was asked to children to assemble some pieces of the animals while

they were repeating the name of each animal. Consequently, as learners were engaged on the activity, many of them continued repeating the word without putting the piece. Additionally, we started asking to them: /what is this animal?/ but did not understand the question, so the facilitator repeated the question L1 and as a result children responded in L2: | 'elɪfənt | , | dʒɪ'ra:f | , | 'laɪən |. Consequently, kids familiarized with the same question in English and without hesitation they gave the same responses. After that, during the “let’s play” stage in which they played “chinese whispers” with the words already taught, various participants remembered the name of the animal, corrected the pronunciation of the word and continued passing it to others. Finally, for concluding the session and after providing linguistic input, learners mentioned each animal in English after showing them the image and started singing by themselves the song included in this session: / *this is a lion, lion, lion, lion*/, / *this is a giraffe, giraffe, giraffe, giraffe*/, / *this is an elephant, elephant, elephant*/.

Subsequently, learners were contextualized with a pet store to teach them some animals in English such as cat, dog and fish. To carry it out, the draws of the pets and their houses, the sounds of the animals and the song were implemented, getting success in regards to the attention and participation of kids. Other strategy was the use of movements to represent each animal. The first result obtained in the “let's explore” stage was evident when the facilitators asked to the students: /What is this animal?/ after playing the recording of the sound of the animal and they answered : | dog | doing the movement that represented that animal and so on. Then, the knowledge and understanding of the infants were measured through a game that consisted in taking the animal and putting it in its house but first, they should ask for them in English; the

finding of this part was observed when most of the children remembered the animals when they asked for them and practitioner addressed the question: / What is this animal? / and they answered correctly putting them on their house.

Apart from that, in general terms, the use of sentences such as “I have a dog” or “This is a pear” made easier for infants to repeat and remember the vocabulary with its functional meaning. Besides, the activities implemented in some of the lessons engaged children in the extent that they wanted to participate, fostering the practice of the vocabulary when they heard the other kids mentioned the words during the performance of the activity. One of the session in which it was evidenced, was in the lesson of the pets in view of the fact that kids should ask for the animals in English and carry them to their house respectively. Thus, as participants felt drawn for the activity, all of them participated and mentioned some of the animals although they did not know the name in English. First, they asked for the animal in Spanish but as the facilitator did not handle it to them, they heard others saying: /Yo quiero un cat/ and they repeated the same.

Finally, after 5 weeks, the review session was realized with all the vocabulary already seen, and after a little review they remembered almost two of the words taught in each session mentioning in English such as : | hed |, | 'fəʊldə |, | bə'lu:n |, | keɪk |, | 'æp |, | peə |, | dʒɪ'rɑ:f |, | 'elɪfənt |, | red | inter alia.

## **Weaknesses**

During the sessions we also faced different challenges with our lessons. We need to take into account that since the children are on an intermediate production period, they are still learning words on their main language. In consequence, some

children have limitations to pronounce some words. Others just did not understand what they needed to say and they just stay quiet or repeat the words in Spanish. On the first lesson, about the parts of the body, not all the students were able to produce the vocabulary. There were students that said “*mix*” instead of “*knees*” or. Another part of the group, just touch the part of the body when they saw their partners doing the same, however they didn't repeat the words. During the fruit lesson, students also have difficulties with the vocabulary; some of them said “*graps*” instead of “*grapes*”. On the let's create stage, they needed to complete a big drawing using little pieces of silk paper. While they put the pieces of paper on the drawing they needed to say the word out loud, there were some students that did not produce the vocabulary while they complete this activity. Most of the drawback we had during the lessons were the oral production, as we mentioned before most of the students were able to produce the language, still, less than the half of students have difficulties with the vocabulary. The lesson number five included a game called Chinese whispers in which the students make a row and they repeat the word to the next student. With this game some students were afraid to repeat the word to their partners so they just stay quiet.

### **Learners Linguistic Results**

The effectiveness of the experiential learning in early childhood is measured for the amount of outcomes obtained from kids after the implementation of this project; thus, the linguistic results of learners evidenced along this process are going to be listed below.

## 6.1.2 Receptive Skills

### Strengths

It was significant to highlight that the acquisition of the vocabulary was not only reduced to the words and simple sentences that children produced in oral way, but also to the understanding of commands, greetings, simple questions and words implemented during the English interventions.

First of all, when we implemented the first lesson about parts of the body children demonstrate understanding not only singing the song “ head, shoulders, knees and toes” but also pointing out the appropriate part when the facilitators asked: / *what is head?*/, / *what are shoulders?*/, / *what are knees?*/. On addition, in the performance of the fruits lesson, specifically during the “ let’splay” stage they received and reacted to the commands given by one of the facilitators identifying and picking up the fruit mentioned by her for carried it to the big appropriate representation . Also, in the “ let’s create” session some of the infants followed the instruction when the facilitator asked them to paste the silk paper on a specific fruit named in L2. Moreover, the English intervention concerning colors allowed us to notice the vocabulary learnt by children since some of them were able to pronounce the colors while jumping on them, but most of the infants identified and recognized them when some of the practitioners said:/blue/, /red/, /yellow/. On addition, It was perceived in this part of the process that learners were able to comprehend some words due to its repetition during the all implementations. For instance, when practitioners said: / *repeat after me*/ most of students repeat the word or the sentences without necessity of translating it. Also, they

understood when it was asked to do silence in L2 since it was one of the norms of the class.

Next, in the “wild animals” lesson there were certain activities which facilitated us to perceive what children comprehended . For instance, facilitators started asking to children: / *what is this animal*/ and although students responded on their mother tongue, they comprehended the intention of the question. Moreover, children got to recognize the animals when the implementers produced the sound that they emit and also when they were named. In the “let’s play” they indicated acquisition of some wild animals vocabulary due to the fact during the game “ Chinese whisper” it was asked to listen the name of one animal and touch them and most of the infants accomplished the goal of this stage.

Besides, in the lesson plan “pets” learners started recognizing some of the pets in view the fact that one of the facilitator encourage children to represent those animals by sounds or movements when they were mentioned they responded performing the appropriate action for each one. For example, the practitioner mentioned the word cat, learners made the cat mustache and produce the sound: / miuw/, it was almost the same with the fish and the dog. Both of them were named and learners responded using movements and sounds.

Finally, it is evidenced that learners were able to understand the vocabulary of each session and as a result of the input and repetition in all interventions they were also able to comprehend some simple questions and commands given during the performance of the lessons. Consequently, it also guide us to identify that there are



children who are shy at time to produce orally, but they could demonstrate what they learnt by responding with movements as pointing out, touching, jumping, interalia.

### **Weaknesses**

Some of the flaws we experienced regarding receptive knowledge, were the limitations that some students have to understand simple questions in English. During the lesson of the fruits, the practitioners ask students to go to the other side of the classroom and bring the image that has the pear, the apple or the grapes. Students needed to take a little piece and put it with the corresponding fruit. The majority of them find the picture without any complication and others just take one randomly.

There was a moment during the Pets session in which teacher point a cat and ask students: "what is this?" Students instead of saying the word "Cat", they made the sound "miau miau". This was clearly a misunderstanding with the lesson since while we were introducing the vocabulary we pronounce the words and make the sounds at the same time.

They also have difficulties with the colors. Few students when the practitioner ask them "*which is the blue?*" They tried to guess but they didn't actually know which one were the blue.

### **6.1.3 Students Responses**

As it is well known, when emotions are involved in any situation of the life, the memory keep for long time; in consequence, the reaction of students in from of this experience is going to be mentioned.

## Strengths

In order to carry out the lesson, it was fundamental the cooperation of the students to achieve rewarding sessions. In every class we need to take into account which kind of activities and material we will bring towards getting the attention of all the students and make sure they were immersed on the exercises.

One of the sessions in which students were very engrossed on the game of the wild animals, they needed to form a row in order to play Chinese Whispers, then they needed to run and touch the animals. Children are very curious and they were very involved on the context, when the classroom was dark and silent.

On the let's explore part, we were able to engaged students due to we use a lot of body language and ask the students to do the same while they repeat the words. We also use the sound of the animals, so when students hear a barking they repeat "dog, dog"

The use of musical instruments to engage students with the words was also very effective because we use sticky songs to made them repeat, this way they could remember the vocabulary. Also when we asked them to sing the songs alone, all of them were singing loudly "I have a cat, cat cat"

On the let's play stage, on the class about animals, children were very divert, they needed ask the teacher for an animal in English and she will give the students an image of the animal that they need to match with a the house of each animal. When students said: Profe me da el perro? She asked them how do you say that in English and most of them were able to remember and say the same word in

English. Another important resource we use was the videos about the topics. Children were very quiet while we show put songs and videos on the TV and they start to sing and ask us to play the songs again and again. We also take advantage of students' imagination. We hold their attention when we ask them to use "magic dust" to discover what items we had on the Magic Bag In order to avoid disorder, we also asked students to crawl instead of run around the classroom. This was very effective when we need to get around the classroom with the entire group.

### **Weaknesses**

In contrast to the good results observed during the lessons in terms of the reaction of students in front of the activities, there were some strategies that did not function and generated great challenges during the lesson. One of them was evidenced when the let's explore part of the first lesson in which kids were leaded to go to each image located in different parts of the classroom, was disrupted for the behavior of the learners in view of the fact that the practitioner ask them to run to the other image making them to be very excited and run in different directions while screaming. For this reason, we decided to make them to crawl on all four to pass to the next images and yielded very good results. Besides, the classes that took place outside the classroom were a truly challenge due to the fact that most of the infants lost their attention to the activity and they started running around and playing with other children of another group that were outside the classroom as well. Therefore, the class was not led in another place distinct to the classroom unless when it was necessary. In addition, kids felt engaged with things different from the lesson when there was an interruption by the in-

service teachers when she scolded them; hence, get their attention again was time consuming inasmuch it took time of the class.

Apart from that, infants showed the desire of going to the bathroom in several occasions during the activities, generating pauses in the learning process as some of them did not continue with the stage and get distracted by other things different from the subject matter.

On the other side, we perceived that although we always greeted children in English and they did not use greetings to respond in the same way. Other aspect to consider was the fact that children were scattered when practitioners arrived to the class and it took time to get their attention or even keep it during the whole lesson; for this reason, there were some participants who did not learn the new vocabulary.

Additionally, the biggest disadvantage facilitators faced in the sessions was the fact that students have short lapses of attention and they had too many distractions inside the classroom like their toys and bags. They were constantly saying. “Profe, mi muñeca” or “¿Profe, puedo ir a sacar algo de mi maletín?”.

Another important aspect to highlight was the fact that children have a short span of attention what become an authentic challenge regards to keeping their interest on the topic. For instance, the session in which English vocabulary about colors was taught, kids were very distracted although practitioner tried to implement a rhythm; in consequence, there were taken two decisions related to some strategies implemented during the first stage of the lesson and were the include only three words per class and involve various musical instruments to accompany the rhythm or song. These two factors give an real turning point in the view of the procedures and produced a great

positive impact on the students responses and reactions towards the planned activities for introducing the new vocabulary.

Despite of these facts, the distractors were other activities that were taken place around the kids calling their attention and started to do something different to the session. This aspect affected to development of the lesson with the whole group and the learning process of children.

Lastly, the camera was another distractor for the kids inasmuch as they felt attracted to it. To illustrate this point, in the lesson of the pets, the observer was at the back of the group and one of the girls tried to touch it but fell down after step on another child.

#### **6.1.4 Professional Growth**

Although this classroom project was addressed to early childhood population with the purpose of teaching vocabulary in L2, The implementers of this project also strengthened their abilities regarding classroom management, teaching strategies, material design and cooperative work.

#### **Strengths**

##### **Classroom management:**

First of all, the implementation of the English lesson with this population guided practitioners to deal with diverse situations such as: large group, crowded classrooms, and children's behavior which allowed facilitators to think about possible techniques for facilitating the appropriate development of the classes. To illustrate this point, at the

beginning of each English class, facilitators enter to the learners in small groups asking them to be placed on a specific side of the classroom . Additionally, when infants were so energetic, practitioners incorporated the use fine gross activities which assisted children to maintain the appropriate behavior. Also, in view the fact that in almost all the lessons practitioners invited children to move around the classroom, but they started running and getting distracted, the way in which they moved to one side to another was changed to crawl.

### **Teaching strategies:**

Working with early childhood was a challenge due to the fact that it was required to bring to the English interventions new ideas and sources that assisted children to learn vocabulary in L2. However, the implementers included various strategies which were useful at time to teach. English nursery rhymes were really effective since it was noticed that was easier and simpler for infants to learn words when they were supported by a rhythm, it was the reason why implementers also utilized in their classes musical instruments as in this way language was reinforced in a natural way and structures such as: / blue, I see something blue/, / this is a lion, lion,lion, lion/, / i have a dog, this is a dog/, / hello, hello how are you/ were taught implicitly. Besides, it also guided children to develop listening and pronunciation skills.

### **Material design:**

In view the fact that this classroom project was based on experiential learning, it was mandatory for practitioners to create material depending on the topic that was

going to be taught. Consequently, in the eight English interventions there was diverse material for each stage. For instance, in the lesson about pets were designed three of them: a dog, a cat and a fish with the purpose of contextualizing them with the topic and facilitate the association of the the world with its real meaning. Besides, in the “ let’s create session” there were produced by the practitioners three posters in which those pets were drawn and in which children were working their fine motor abilities through tearing and pasting sick paper on each animal, and language abilities through the repetition of each word. Lastly, all classes covered the “ let's play stage ” in which interactive material was used for noticing the vocabulary acquired by the infants. All those sessions gave to the facilitators the possibility to observe and analyze the impact of the material designed on the L2 progress of the learners and also enable practitioners to broaden their creativity.

### **Cooperative work:**

One of the most significant aspects for having success in the development of this classroom project was not only the rapport with the learners, but also the affinity among implementers since it allowed them to work cooperatively in an more efficient way. Thus, this allowed practitioners to assume responsibilities such as design material, propose activities and plan the classes on time. Additionally, the interpersonal skills were also strengthened due to the fact that the interaction during the implementation of the project guide them to understand and accept diverse points of views and ways of working. Further, it was relevant to highlight that this factor guide implementers to grow professionally because values like honesty, tolerance, respect, cooperation, maturity,

patient, responsibility and others were the ones in which this classroom project made facilitators worked on implicitly.

### **Weaknesses**

During this process, we need to take into consideration some of the limitations we have which hamper the progress of the implementation. One of the aspects, was that facilitators could not use the English language all the time due to the fact that children started to play and be distracted due to their inability to concentrate for long periods. Additionally, we needed to take into account that there were students that have learning limitations and they needed special attention and more time to get the idea of what was taught, in this case, we need to grant more activities or strategies to make these students involved on the lessons along the rest of the class.

Another important thing was the fact that the students needed to be involved in the context and the idea was to create a space for them; however, the budget was not enough and the School did not have a space either; in consequence, we should to adapt the classroom to make the activities. Finally, the time to perform all the activities was not enough. Sometimes owing to the activities that students were performing before our sessions, we need to wait for them to be ready and quiet, also it took a lot of time on the create stage and teachers tried to organize them every class. We coincide that one hour to deal with little ones is not enough.



## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this project was to teach vocabulary to Early childhood population through the employment of experiential learning. Hence, after its implementation and analysis of the obtained results the practitioners could state the most relevant conclusions based on some factors found during the performance of the English interventions. The following information concerns social, material, and activities impact on the acquirement of a second language in early years.

In terms of social impact produced by the realization of this classroom project, it is significant to mention that it offered the possibility to children in vulnerability conditions to started recognizing and acquiring vocabulary of a foreign language through a set of pedagogical activities incorporated with the purpose not only to learn English vocabulary, but also to work on fine and gross motor, language, cognitive and socio affective skills. On addition, Implementers have the conviction that the few weeks of the implementation, implicate a positive impact on the development of children, in view of the fact that we got good responses from students and we could evidenciate their evolution with not many lessons. These results were very significant and make practitioners think that if we include more lessons during a year, children will have a breakthrough increasing their vocabulary and we will achieve better results.

Another outcome of this experience is that despite of the challenges of working with children it is absolutely possible to engage them and teach them vocabulary considering that they could recall the words and songs about the topics we brought for the class.

Concerning the Impact of the material, Implementers could state that through the inclusion of songs children were motivated and completely engaged being able of acquire in a funny and relax way some of the vocabulary proposed. Additionally, it allowed infants to reproduce sentence structures of the language, improve listening skills, work implicitly on pronunciation and enjoy the process of learning a second language. Moreover, it is essential to consider the type of visual materials to make an outstanding impact for the children. We could realize that infants are very perceptive and the multi colored and vibrant images are effective to catch their attention which make advantageous to recognize the vocabulary. For example during the pet's lesson, we bring big and bright images to teach the vocabulary. Children were fascinated with the colors and all of them wanted to touch and hold the figures.

English pedagogical activities were addressed to facilitate the learning process in this population and although during the performance of some of them children misbehave, implementers could affirm that: first, the “let’s explore stage” was effective since it let learners to know in a different engaged form what was the topic about and aroused curiosity for what was going to happen next. Second, that the “let’s create moment” have a significant impact on the learner's ' vocabulary acquirement due to the fact that at the same time children were tearing, painting, cutting, pasting or molding they were also repeating several times the name of the image or representation in which they were working on. Lastly, that the “let’s play” was the key activity in which implicitly learners demonstrated the vocabulary learnt by both productive and receptive responses.

As a conclusion, contextualize the topic is the most effective way to stick the vocabulary, however it takes time and patience. Implementers need to take into account that first, toddlers learn by listening so their word acquisition needs to be lead by constant repetition followed by high doses of creativity. Facilitators need to bear in mind the time of exposition during the class, the type of material and the type of activities and techniques we implement to carry out successful lessons so this way student will be able to spontaneously recall the vocabulary.

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