COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

**Universidad Andrés Bello**

UNIVERSIDAD ANDRÉS BELLO

Facultad de Educación

Escuela de Pedagogía en Inglés

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**CLASSROOM.**

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Autores:

Fernanda Espina, Jaime Lagos, Andrea Medina, Samuel Pilquinao
Profesor tutor: Carol Gómez Merino.

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## ABSTRACT

This study discusses the outcomes of a qualitative research, which engaged a pre-service teacher as the teacher-researcher (T-R) in an Action Research (AR) design at a school in Santiago, Chile. The aim of this study was to explore the benefits of Collaborative Action Research (CAR) as a practice to foster the inclusion of speaking skills in Chilean EFL classrooms. The T-R used journals as an instrument to reflect on his teaching and speaking practices which were applied at the school. Those speaking practices were obtained from two group interviews with pre-service teachers from a Chilean university, who were the collaborators of this study, as well as the mentor teacher (M-T) from the school where the T-R was doing his practicum. The findings showed that the practices obtained in the group interviews encouraged students' participation and interaction during classes. In addition, the T-R was able to perceive the importance of reflection on the practices in order to make changes and improvements in his teaching. Collaboration among peers, which was represented in the group interviews, allowed us to recognize our strengths and improve our weaknesses when teaching. Finally, this study suggests that all teachers should share their experiences, opinions, feelings, or thoughts with their colleagues in order to implement collaboration, and make reflection a common method in their teaching to prevent common errors committed by teachers in the classroom.

*Keywords*: Action research, collaboration, reflection, teacher-researcher.

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## RESUMEN

Este estudio discute los resultados obtenidos en una investigación cualitativa que involucra a un docente en formación como profesor-investigador en una Investigación-Acción, en un colegio de Santiago de Chile. El objetivo de este estudio fue explorar los beneficios de la Colaboración en Investigación-Acción como una práctica para promover la inclusión de la expresión oral del idioma inglés en las aulas chilenas. El profesor-investigador utilizó un diario como un instrumento para reflexionar sobre sus clases y actividades orales, las cuales fueron aplicadas en el colegio. Esas actividades orales fueron obtenidas de dos entrevistas grupales con docentes en formación de una universidad chilena, quienes fueron los colaboradores de este estudio, así como también la profesora mentora del colegio en el cual el profesor-investigador estaba haciendo su práctica. Los resultados mostraron que algunas de las actividades obtenidas en las entrevistas grupales promovieron la participación e interacción de los estudiantes durante las clases. Además, el profesor-investigador fue capaz de percibir la importancia de la reflexión de las actividades con el fin de hacer cambios y mejoras en su docencia. Asimismo, la colaboración entre pares, la cual fue representada en las entrevistas grupales, nos permitió reconocer nuestras fortalezas y mejorar nuestras debilidades cuando enseñamos. Finalmente, este estudio sugiere que todos los docentes deberían compartir sus experiencias, opiniones, sentimientos o pensamientos con sus colegas para así implementar colaboración, y también hacer de la reflexión un método habitual en su enseñanza para prevenir errores comunes representados por profesores en la sala de clases.

*Palabras claves*: Investigación acción, colaboración, reflexión, profesor-investigador.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we discuss the national context regarding teaching English as a foreign language. This means that we will tackle the national curriculum, and its changes through time. We will also mention how teachers and schools follow the educational proposal for English.

### 1.1 The Chilean Context for English Language Teaching

Knowing a language is fundamental for the interaction with the rest of the world and to access new knowledge, particularly the English language, which is defined in the Chilean context as English as an International Language (EIL) (Bases Curriculares, 2012). Thus, language and communication are key elements for human development; without them, personal relationships would not be possible, and most importantly, education would not exist.

As the influence of English speaking countries is extremely prominent around the world since English is the language for global communication, Chilean authorities have been interested in improving the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL); for instance, by implementing initiatives such as the English Opens Doors program in 2003, which "aims to increase the English proficiency of Chilean students and teachers of English as an indispensable skill to aid in Chile's continued development in our globalizing world" (retrieved from: http://www.centrodevoluntarios.cl/). Later, in 2009, the national curricular adjustment for EFL teaching took place, setting the definitions for the English subject, in which it was established that the language should be learned under the umbrella of five teaching approaches: a) Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), b) Natural Approach (NA), c) Cooperative Language

Learning (CLL), d) Content-Based Instruction (CBI), and e) Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

In the first place, CLT approach leaves behind the old teaching method of teaching, in which the focus was on grammar and on a set of contents; hence:

> Grammar stops being the main focus of teaching English, and becomes one more element to develop communication. In this way, grammar must be taught in a contextualized way. This is to say, it must be at the service of interaction and communication (Translated from Propuesta Curricular Idioma Extranjero Inglés Segundo Básico, 2012, p. 8).

As for the NA, it focuses on developing vocabulary among students with different materials such as visual aids, realia, and concrete objects. Its main principle is to provide students with comprehensible and meaningful input in order for them to acquire the language in a way that resembles their natural environment. As Krashen stated in 1982: "The best methods are therefore those that supply comprehensible input in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear" (p.7).

In the case of CLL, students develop their learning by doing different activities that involve communication through interaction with their peers, since "though interaction students support each other to achieve the objective of the class, creating an appropriate atmosphere to learn a language that promotes

intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, and reduces the levels of anxiety and prejudice" (Translated from Bases Curriculares, 2012, p. 223).

Concerning CBI, this method emphasizes that language must be presented in a meaningful and contextualized way where students are encouraged to relate the contents presented in classes with their own experiences and/or other subjects at school (Translated from Bases Curriculares, 2013).

Finally, TBLT proposes that the students should perform meaningful tasks and contextualized activities, which are similar to real-life situations that promote interaction between students and production of the target language (Translated from Bases Curriculares, 2013).

Although all the suggested approaches work as a guideline for teachers to design their lessons, it does not mean that teachers have to use all the different approaches in every class, but that they should keep in mind that the focus of every class has to be on communication and not on grammar (Propuesta Curricular Segundo Básico, 2012). However, institutions are free to design their own planning for English lessons, as long as teachers review all the contents proposed for each level.

## 1.2 The Problem of the Study

Up to date, it has been twelve years since the change in the focus of the curriculum was made. Nevertheless, according to what we have experienced in our practicum as pre-service teachers, a problem arises in the way English classes are conducted, especially at the secondary level of education, as

communication is not given the importance it should have. Teachers are more concerned with covering many contents in a shorter period rather than making students produce the language orally. As a consequence, students have few opportunities to produce the foreign language in the classroom thus, it is difficult to interact with their peers, or perform meaningful activities during every class. As a matter of fact, students are accustomed to working with grammar-oriented activities, in which grammar is taught in isolation and decontextualized, rather than using the foreign language for communicative purposes.

Even though teachers are aware of how the system for language teaching should work, they face difficulties when implementing communicative tasks in the classroom. As we have witnessed, in some situations, it is extremely difficult to change the teaching paradigm due to the fact that teachers do not have enough time to cover all the contents given by the ministry. The excessive use of L1 in the classroom from teachers and students, and that schools prioritize to prepare and train their students to have good results in Sistema de Medición de la Calidad de la Educación (SIMCE) test – which evaluates writing, listening and reading, but not the speaking skill – are all factors that prevent the production of the target language.

Because of all the stated reasons, we are concerned about the mismatch between what the approaches state and what actually teachers do in the EFL classroom. Nevertheless, mostly we aspire to overcome this mismatch through collaborative work, and encourage teachers to put into practice all the knowledge and methodologies that they learned in college by creating similar instances to the ones that the government has implemented for teachers' professional development. For example, the English Opens Doors program has

created a research network (RICELT: Red de Investigadores Chilenos en English Language Teaching) for EFL teachers to promote investigation among school and university teachers to share their experiences and to make this a common reflection practice.

Nevertheless, in our practicums we have experienced the lack of communication between EFL teachers of the same institution. Consequently, teachers face the difficulties in isolation instead of sharing and collaborating with ideas to find a beneficial solution to their problems. There could be instances at school when teachers can share their experiences to enrich other colleagues' practices and to receive feedback, but they use those times to complain about negative situations that have occurred during classes, such as students' misbehavior or a particular problem with a singular student, instead of looking for ways to improve those situations. It is our duty to take responsibility in this matter and start establishing collaboration as a regular practice among teachers.

Besides what has been stated previously, most Chilean teachers are not part of a network and do not engage in research, because systematic reflection about sharing one's own practice is not part of the formal curriculum in most Chilean teacher-preparation programs (Nogués & Pellerin, 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the benefits of collaborative action research as a practice to foster the inclusion of speaking skills in EFL Chilean classrooms.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, Action Research, Collaborative Action Research, and the importance of speaking will be developed in order to have a clear view on the current state of research in the area and therefore, better understanding of our study.

### 2.1 Action Research

AR is a tradition used in qualitative research especially in the educational field. As defined by Shanks, Miller and Rosendale (2012), "Action research is a form of research where teachers learn to improve their practices while improving the understanding of their practice" (p. 26). Its aim is to improve professional practices and involve school participants – teachers – in research projects. In addition, it allows teachers to study their own abilities, to be able to improve their quality and effectiveness in their teaching, and consequently to enhance their students' learning.

According to Shanks et al. (2012), AR helps teachers to understand and reflect on their practices in order to not only increase their confidence and competence in the classroom, but also to modify their responsibility as teachers. As a matter of fact, Mertler (2009, in Rainey, 2010) states that, "action research is done by the teachers and for the teachers" (p. 33), fostering the reflection of teachers' own practices for their own benefit and also as a contribution to their peers.
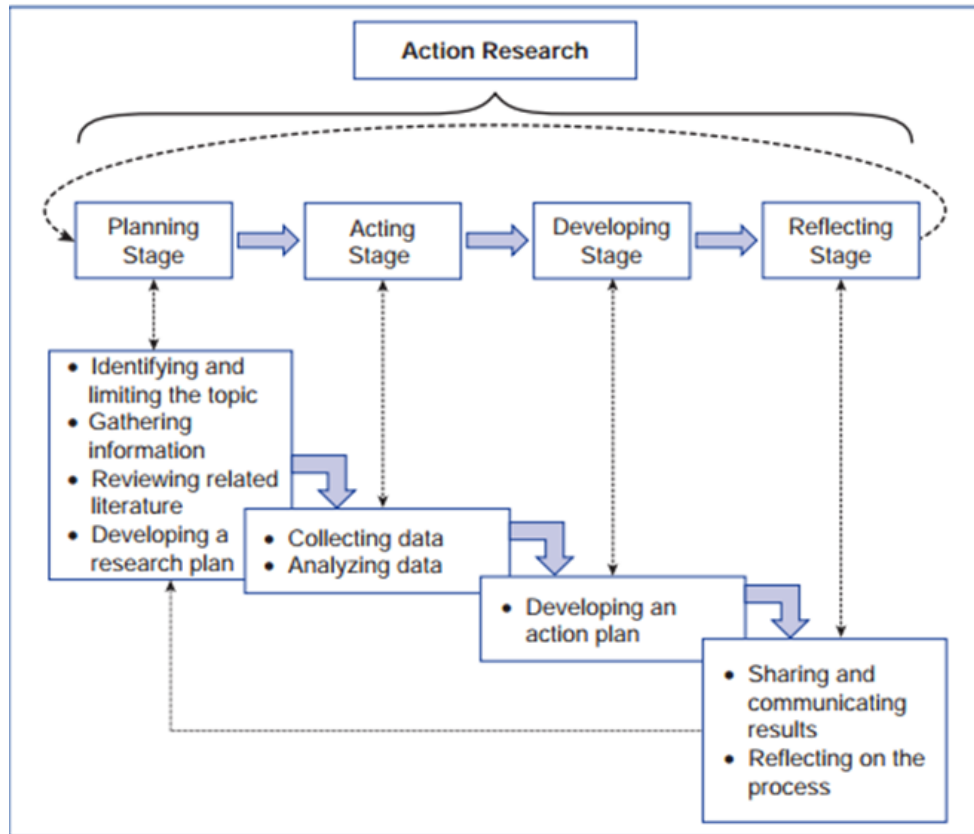
### 2.1.1 Steps to conduct action research.

It is important to examine the specific steps for conducting an AR study because in contrast to traditional qualitative designs, this tradition represents a cyclical process with several steps that strictly belong to educational research. The first step, same as in any research, is to identify the problem in order to decide exactly what to explore and set the limits for the investigation, always remembering that the goal of AR is the desire to make things better (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003, in Mertler, 2012). After identifying and limiting the topic, the next step is gathering information that can be as simple as exchanging information with other teachers in order to obtain feedback for the proposed research problem. Also, it is important to review previous studies about the topic selected for the investigation, such as, articles, websites, research journals, books, etcetera. These sources of information are crucial to have different perspectives and results, thus to enrich our current study.  Then it is time to develop a research plan in which the methodology of the study will be designed and research questions will be stated. The next step in the process of conducting action research is to determine the instruments that will be used in the study, for instance observation, journals and interviews. After collecting all the data, Johnson (2008) suggests, "as you collect your data, analyze them by looking for themes, categories, or patterns that emerge" (p. 43), which will depend on the purpose of your study. An important part of any research study is the reporting or sharing of results with others in the educational community at large. Finally, reflecting is a crucial step in the process, since this is where the teacher-researcher reviews what has been done, and makes decisions about possible revisions for future implementations of the project.

Table 1. Action Research Process (Mertler, 2012)



*Note.* This table displays in detail the steps needed to conduct an AR study.

Retrieved from https://books.google.cl

**2.1.2 Collaborative action research.**

Action research focuses on personal/individual reflection while CAR is more useful because it involves participation from all the members of the educational community, starting with the teacher's own reflection and expanding their knowledge for a bigger cause (Banegas, 2012).

CAR encourages teachers to work in a cooperative way in fact, "The value of having teachers connect, talk about their own classroom experiences, and grow together professionally has gained ground over the last two decades" (Nogués and Pellerin, 2015, p. 49). Therefore, as Güngör (2016) states, teachers should be open-minded to accept other perspectives. Hence, teachers are able to recognize their strengths and improve their weaknesses by sharing experiences with their peers. Therefore, teachers who are willing to collaborate with their colleagues are capable of recognizing their weak aspects of teaching and of finding solutions for improvement.

As Bryant (1995) states,

> CAR is also very democratic in that it encourages a great degree of talk and interaction between colleagues, inviting active collaboration in a joint attempt to improve teaching. All participants in a collaborative action research project are equal partners in the decision making processes affecting both the means and the ends of the research (p. 9).

By saying that CAR is democratic, the above cited author means that it is based on the desires of most teachers, which is to improve their own practices. Therefore, it is important that people can realize that in this type of research they have to be committed and willing to achieve the same goal collectively.

According to Caposey (2013, in Conner, 2015), building confidence among colleagues is essential in the process of collaboration because it gives a feeling of camaraderie in the professional life of teachers. Besides, it is important to mention that an efficient leadership is required to build collaboration among peers.

### 2.1.2.1 The benefits of CAR.

CAR is a process that enables teachers to: a) improve their own practices, b) contribute to their professional development, c) improve students' learning, and d) overcome the isolation commonly experienced by teachers.

Teachers who participate in CAR are able to receive feedback from their peers so that they can improve their weaknesses and strengths, but also teachers who actively participate in research find a significant influence in their teaching strategies. Teachers are capable of modifying their curriculum design and learning how to use different approaches through collaboration with their colleagues (Chow, Chu, Tavares, and Lee, 2015).

CAR contributes to teachers' professional development because it requires critical reflection on their practices, and it facilitates knowledge renewal. Previous studies have revealed that CAR teachers develop professionally as a team, and also in different degrees in a personal aspect in different domains, from changing approaches to teach the language, to how to use technology

(Banegas, 2013). Even though CAR is a time-consuming process, it has a positive effect on teachers. As a consequence of this process, it improves students' learning because teachers reflect and enrich their teaching skills. This is to say that students may feel more motivated since teachers' improved teaching practices.

Another benefit is that CAR may help to overcome the isolation that some teachers experience in their daily practice, since "collaborative projects, the peer group, and mentor relationships clearly enable teachers to grow" (Butt, Townsend and Raymond 1990, in Bryan, 1995, p. 15), and group work gives teachers the opportunity to grow in diverse aspects of the pedagogical area. Through co-work, teachers become active listeners of their peers and at the same time they learn to trust in other teachers in order to receive feedback, to improve one's own practices, and to build a feeling of self-reflection about the performance in the classroom.

### 2.1.2.2 The role of reflection in CAR.

Reflection generally means conscious thinking about the actions we are performing and finding the reasons why we are doing those actions (Farrell, 2015). Most teachers believe that they are reflecting just by thinking about how the lesson went. However, according to Farrell (2015), this is not a real reflective practice because it is vague and not very organized.

> Reflective practice means more than fleeting thoughts
> before, during, or after a lesson; it means examining what
> you do in the classroom and why you do it. Reflective
> practice also means thinking about the beliefs and values

related to English language teaching, and seeing if classroom practices are consistent with these beliefs and values. In order to engage in reflective practice, teachers must systematically collect information about their classroom happenings and then analyze and evaluate this information and compare it to their underlying assumptions and beliefs so they can make changes and improvements in their teaching. (Farrell, 2012, p. 4)

Instead, the author suggests group discussions, classroom observations, and written reflection through journals. Many teachers believe that it is difficult to define reflective practice because it can mean different things to different people. That is the reason why there are three levels of reflection; such as, *descriptive:* it focuses on teachers' abilities; *conceptual:* which is the explanation of practice and finally, *critical:* it is the analysis of socio-political and moral practice (Farrell, 2015). It is relevant to mention that this stage would be more productive and successful if it were done in collaboration with peers, since,

This process is very fruitful when done collaboratively. Through dialogue, group reflection will usually lead towards a future cycle of research with a revised plan. It is through this process that the concern or problem becomes clearer and more focused. (Bryant, 1995, p. 26)

Even though reflection should be a common practice for teachers, since it allows them to analyze carefully their actions in the classroom, and consequently it provides solutions to dilemmas that may appear in their

teaching; unfortunately, not many teachers carry out this exercise. Therefore, reflection must be considered as a practice for every teacher, especially because as Farrell (2012) states, "reflective practice is important because it helps teachers make more informed decisions about their teaching – decisions that are based on concrete evidence systematically collected over a period of time" (p. 5).

### 2.1.2.3 Previous research on CAR.

Learning how to teach is a lifetime process because teachers have to keep up to date with different knowledge and teaching techniques. Therefore, teachers, especially in-service teachers, should have opportunities to continue with this process after they finish college in order to achieve professional development. For instance, a good opportunity to improve their pedagogical skills is CAR, which enables teachers to become active in their learning process. To give an example, last year a study was conducted in Hong Kong, in which the purpose was to explore the impact of the role of teacher-researchers on in-service teachers' participation in AR (Chow, Chu, Tavares, and Lee, 2015). In Hong Kong, English is a necessary and challenging subject and the authors stated that teachers lack training in research skills, and have restricted time to work on something else than their work, just like in our Chilean reality. The researchers applied a survey to teachers and most of them declared having excessive administrative responsibilities. As a matter of fact, teachers indicated that "a teacher worked an average of 9.8 hours on school days and spent about the same amount of time during weekends on school work" (p. 24). Hong Kong's reality is not different from ours because Chilean teachers work forty-five hours weekly inside the classroom without considering the time on planning the

lessons, preparing material and reviewing tests. Despite the difficulties that these teachers faced, the findings of the study revealed that those who participated in AR expressed to be more open to engage in this type of practice, and felt that it was beneficial for the learners as well.

A study conducted in Argentina by a group of English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) teachers (Banegas, Pavese, Velázquez, and Vélez, 2013) at a secondary school, eventually noticed the benefits of CAR. They decided to investigate their own teaching practices through CAR after noticing that when planning individually, their lessons met the demands of students whose level of English was higher than the suggested by the official curriculum, which was wrong because students could not always meet the expected outcomes. In the end, the teachers realized that CAR was an opportunity for them to work towards a common goal and it was motivating to create new experiences and knowledge collaboratively. Moreover, peer observation was emphasized since it helped them to become more reflective teachers due to the fact that their perceptions and self-evaluation mechanisms were confirmed or challenged by their colleagues.

It is also important to observe our reality, which was reflected in a study conducted in Chile, in 2015, about in-service teachers using CAR as a means of improving their pedagogical practices, which is a novelty in our country. According to the Ministry of Education's Marco para la Buena Enseñanza, "systematic reflection about one's own practice is part of a teacher's professional responsibility" (Nogués and Pellerin, 2015, p. 49). However, this tradition is not part of the curriculum nor teaching programs, so unfortunately many teachers face their teaching practices without being introduced to

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systematic reflection. Consequently, interviewed teachers stated that, "AR should be part of the pedagogical curriculum, because it is the only way teachers are encouraged to be active, creative, and reflective actors" (p. 55). Additionally, the findings also showed that there is a lack of collaboration and unwillingness to implement CAR among teachers because they prefer to work in isolation rather than sharing their weaknesses with other colleagues in order to find a solution to their problems, since they do not want to be judged for their mistakes.

Based on the reviews of the previous studies, it is possible to notice that as they are focused on the teacher, there is no explicit reference to the aspect of their teaching that was intended to improve, or if there was an impact on students' learning. Because of this, and as previously tackled in the introduction chapter, this study will address one particular aspect of language learning, which is speaking through the lens of AR.

## 2.2 The Importance of Speaking in the EFL Classrooms

Throughout our experience as pre-service teachers we have seen that the speaking is the least practiced skill in the Chilean EFL classroom, in spite of the fact that it is the most important one to accomplish real-life communication. "Speaking is defined as an interactive process constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information orally using organ of speech" (Usman, 2015, p. 37).

Chilean authorities have done a reconstruction in the national curriculum in order to implement communication as the new way of teaching instead of grammar. However, the speaking skill is not encouraged in EFL classrooms as it

is supposed to be because teachers face several obstacles in the implementation of speaking activities, such as, students' low level of English according to the expected one to produce the language, students' and teachers' excessive use of their mother tongue during classes, schools' focus on training students for standardized tests rather than on actual learning processes, etcetera (Lemos, 2012). Besides, during our teaching practicums we have experienced that students are reluctant to produce the language, perhaps, because they do not feel confident enough to speak English in front of their peers. In this case, the role of the teacher is fundamental because he/she is the one who promotes the use of the target language and motivates students to participate, considering that the Chilean curriculum states that English should be taught communicatively, and it is the teacher the one responsible for making this possible.

### 2.2.1 Theories that support the benefits of speaking.

We selected the area of speaking in our research study because the national curriculum promotes the use of the communicative approach, which implements realistic communicative activities, but during our practicum we have seen that this approach is not applied by teachers in the classrooms. In addition to what the curriculum states, there are theories that support communication as a means to achieve language learning. The theories that we will talk about are the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky), interaction hypothesis (Long), and the output hypothesis (Swain).

### 2.2.1.1 The sociocultural theory.

Vygotsky's theory is a process that helps human beings to learn through social interaction. Vygotsky (1978) states that,

> Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals (p. 57).

Interaction is extremely relevant during the development of cognition; in fact, Vygotsky believes that people learn on two levels, the social and individual level. On the one hand, Vygotsky refers to the social level as the communicative interaction between people. On the other hand, the individual level is integrated into the individual's mind.

Vygotsky refers to Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as an opportunity for peer interaction in which less skillful students can achieve a particular task which is extremely difficult for them to achieve on their own with the help and guidance from a more skillful student (Vygotsky, 1978). In fact, Vygotsky established that learners have two developmental levels: First, the actual developmental level which is determined by actual ability and refers to not receive help from other people. Second, the potential developmental level

refers to the help that learners offer to others (Dongyu, Fanyu, and Wanyi, 2013).

### 2.2.1.2 The interaction hypothesis.

Interaction between learners is a key factor for learning a language. Long stated that participation in conversation with native speakers, which is possible to make through the modification of interaction, is the necessary and sufficient condition for second language acquisition (Thu, 2009). Even though comprehensible output is the major factor for acquiring a second language, Long's theory argues that interaction facilitates acquisition due to the conversational and linguistic modifications that occur in such discourse which provide learners with the input they need. As a matter of fact, students who are able to interact constantly with peers who are more proficient in the target language, perhaps English language learners or native speakers, will easily acquire the second language (Mackey, 1999). Also, the interaction hypothesis enables EFL learners to recognize their weaknesses when they are attempting to negotiate conversations in the target language. This ability, which reveals learners' gaps in their abilities to speak the second language, encourages second language learners to communicate and negotiate meaning in order to realize about the knowledge they lack in the target language (Thu, 2009).

### 2.2.1.3 The output hypothesis.

Just as the other hypotheses, Swain's hypothesis is also related to second language learning, and it is fundamental to acquire a target language. Most language learning researchers agree that output is essential to increase fluency when learning a language. This means that learners must

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practice second language utterances because by producing the target language confidently and routinely, they may learn the interlanguage system (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). The output is the key element that pushes students to process the language by using most of their mental capacity. Students have to create linguistic form and meaning, therefore they will know what they are able or unable to do, especially in speaking and writing activities. Something that learners can notice is the gap from the target language and their interlanguage, consequently, this is the main characteristic of the hypothesis because learners might not be able to express the meaning but they can notice the difference with their first language (Lantolf, 2000). As these hypotheses support the importance of speaking in the acquisition of the language, it is also important to mention different studies based on speaking through AR.

## 2.3 Action Research and Speaking

An AR project conducted in Colombia (Cerón, 2014) tells the impact that reading stories out loud has on the development of children's reading and critical thinking strategies and the improvement of English. The data analyzed revealed that the participants improved their speaking skills by reading and also talking about the stories. In addition to the speaking improvement, the students learned new vocabulary and were able to apply it when speaking, even if their English proficiency was not high yet. Finally, resources and methodologies used by teachers helped the students to develop their critical thinking as well as their reading comprehension ability.

An AR paper, conducted in Spain (Pereira, Sanz-Santamaría, Montero and Gutiérrez, 2012) describes a new application called the Babelium Project Rich Internet Application (RIA), which allows nearly 100 students of ESL at a

Spanish university to practice their speaking skills through a range of video exercise contextualized to real situations. This Babelium application works as the students record their voices and faces by a microphone and a webcam, and their teachers weekly evaluated them according to specific speaking criteria by using a survey. After a whole semester, it was possible to notice that the students were involved in the study and meaningfully increased the number of hours dedicated to speak English on the application. Also, the teacher's role was fundamental in students' motivation for using the software and implementing new technologies while learning English. This innovative Babelium application helped teachers to motivate their students to speak the language. As it is an online resource, students felt more confident to speak and participate whenever they wanted to.

Another AR research study (Manjarres and Romero, 2016) done at a public school in Monteria, Colombia examines the assumptions of creating bilingual scenarios in order to promote English language learning for 384 students of ninth, tenth and eleventh grades. These scenarios were implemented inside the classrooms by setting phrases in English that were needed to use by the students during a class, for example, "could you repeat, please?" Additionally, the scenarios were used in the whole school by students and teachers greeting each other saying hi or hello instead of saying *hola*. They were also used outside the school by going to the cinema and watching movies in English. The findings of this study suggested that all the scenarios facilitated the promotion of English language learning because the students felt that there was no other option than using the target language in the different situations. As these studies revealed, AR is a helpful tool for any educational research; however, there are not enough results in the speaking area, that is the reason

why we want to explore the benefits of working in a collaborative way by putting into practice some speaking skills in the EFL Chilean classrooms.

**2.4 The Current Study**

After reviewing the literature on AR, CAR, Speaking, what has been done in AR in relation to Speaking, and considering the purpose of our study, as stated in the Introduction chapter, (which is to explore the benefits of CAR as a practice to foster the inclusion of speaking skills in EFL Chilean classrooms); this study aims to answer the following research questions:

i)  How effective was reflection through journal writing for the teacher to understand his own practices?

ii)  How helpful was CAR for the teacher to promote the implementation of speaking tasks?

In order to achieve our research purpose and answer our research questions the following methodology and procedures will be used.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodological procedures used in this study considering the research design, the context, the participants, and the instruments that we decided to implement in order to collect the data, accompanied by the data analysis procedures that we followed.

### 3.1 Research Design

We decided to conduct our study by following a qualitative research design because we wanted to understand teachers' professional practices and to explore the benefits of reflection and collaboration among them. This is the reason why we decided to follow AR, which is becoming a commonly used tradition in the educational field. Consequently, we wanted to raise awareness on how important it is to reflect on teaching practices and collaborate with colleagues through CAR. In fact, this type of research can be defined as the key element or agent that made the change in our study.

As the objective in this study is to promote reflection on teachers, there are several methods of accessing reflection of teaching practices, such as classroom observations, teachers recording themselves, but most importantly teachers conducting AR in order to gain a better understanding of the practices that they are teaching (Farrell, 2015). In addition to this, "AR is an extension of a normal reflective practice and it has a specific and immediate outcome which can be directly related to practice in the teacher's own context" (Wallace, 1991, in Farrell, 2015, p. 30). These are the reasons why we, as it was said previously, decided to base our study on AR.

**3.2 Context and Participants**

This study was conducted in a subsidized school from La Granja, Santiago in a 10th grade with forty-seven students specifically. At this school, students from kindergarten to twelfth grade have one pedagogical hour (forty-five minutes) of English every weekday. The institution demands English teachers to incorporate and develop the four skills -- reading, listening, speaking, and writing -- when teaching all the contents settled. Even though the four skills are imposed, speaking is more emphasized than the other three, especially with secondary level pupils, because the school emphasizes the use of English with debates, spelling bee contests, talking points, and public speaking. In addition to this, the students from this school take international tests such as KET in eighth grade and PET in eleventh grade. Consequently, the school prepares the students to express themselves in English as the national curriculum states by implementing the Communicative Approach in the classroom.

The main participant of our study was the T-R who was a student from the English Teacher Training Program in Universidad Nacional Andrés Bello (UNAB). Nevertheless, it is important to mention that for the collaboration process of our study we had the cooperation of thirteen pre-service teachers from the same university and program as the T-R, and the M-T from where the T-R was doing his last practicum. Therefore, we need to examine the instruments used in this study in which these participants provided us with the necessary data.

**3.3 Instruments**

Journals and interviews were used as means for data collection in this study in order to express the perceptions and feelings of the T-R after applying every speaking practice in the classroom.

As Banegas (2012) states, it is important that the T-R carry out journals as a tool for knowledge building and professional development. In addition, the author mentioned that the use of journals in an investigation has three functions, as externalization, as verbalization, and as systematic examination. This process allows the T-R to understand his own practices to express his thoughts and ideas through journal and collaborative work with the M-T, and finally to be able to change the practices and improve not only his teaching but also his students' learning.

Three semi-structured interviews took place during the investigation process. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to have a set of questions and issues to discuss with the interviewee, but it also permits the interviewer to be flexible with the questions depending on how the interview flows. Additionally, this flexibility helps the interviewees to answer the questions more freely, without any limitations (Denscombe, 2007).

Thirteen pre-service teachers were selected to be part of group interviews, whose aim was to obtain successful speaking practices that they had already applied in their practicums and to foster collaboration among them. Considering the number of collaborators in this part of the process, we decided to divide randomly the thirteen pre-service teachers into two groups. We thought that the best way to obtain speaking activities was by doing group interviews, since they resemble a conversation in which future teachers can share practices that they have already implemented at their schools as if they were doing it with

their friends, classmates or colleagues. As Denscombe (2007) states, group interviews are the perfect occasions to explore and share attitudes, perceptions, feelings, and ideas about a topic. In addition, this type of interview allows interaction among the members, which helps the interviewees to interchange ideas, and challenge themselves to respond during the group discussion in order to increase collaboration.

Finally, the third interview was done after finishing applying all the practices. This interview was semi-structured, as the two previous ones, and it was conducted by one of us, who interviewed the M-T and the T-R in order to have an overall view of the implementation of the practices at school. In contemplation, it is important to review all the steps we followed in this study.

## 3.4 Procedures

The first step of our research study was to invite some pre-service teachers from the English Teaching Training Program at UNAB to participate as collaborators in our research by being part of an interview. They were selected purposefully based on their performance in Integración Laboral IV, which is a subject in which the students learn activities to implement at the schools where they are doing their practicums and ways to improve their teaching or avoid problems that may appear in their schools. Each Integración Laboral teacher from UNAB selected the students who had a better performance in their teaching practicums. The students were contacted and invited by the researchers to be part of an interview. After they accepted, all the interviewees signed a consent letter. The importance of these group interviews was to obtain successful speaking practices from these pre-service teachers' experiences at school.

Because the number of pre-service teachers exceeded the expectations for having only one interview, the collaborators were divided into two groups, but the interviews were designed with the same questions.

In the first group interview, we asked eight pre-service teachers eight questions regarding their experience at their respective schools, when successfully implementing speaking activities. The application of this instrument lasted for thirty-three minutes and it took place in a meeting room at UNAB.

In the second group interview, five pre-service teachers answered the same eight questions asked in the first group interview. This instrument lasted for thirty minutes and it took place in a regular classroom at UNAB.

In both group interviews, because we asked the thirteen pre-service teachers to share speaking activities, we collected thirteen speaking practices but we only applied three practices at school. Just due to a matter of time and because in case one practice went incorrectly and another practice successfully, we had a third one to implement as a backup to compare and contrast the results. Additionally, it is important to mention that the T-R applied each practice twice in order to improve any mistake that had emerged in the first one.

The three practices chosen were: a) picture comparison, b) poster creation, and c) interviews.

a) In the first practice, the students had to work in pairs and sit face to face. Each of them was given a picture with an information box, and some other information missing. Each pair had to ask each other questions in order to complete the missing information from their box.

b) In the following task, the students in pairs were supposed to draw something that represented their plan for Halloween and then one of them had to share with the class their plan while explaining the drawing.

c) In the last practice, the students were in groups of four; they had to interview each other about what their plan for the summer vacation was, and then one student of the group had to share with the rest of the class what they had discussed.

Table 2: Implementation of Speaking Practices

GROUP INTERVIEWS

| Class 1 | Class 2 | Class 3 | Class 4 | Class 5 | Class 6 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| PICTURE COMPARISON | PICTURE COMPARISON | POSTER CREATION | POSTER CREATION | INTERVIEWS | INTERVIEWS |
| Journal entry | Journal entry | Journal entry | Journal entry | Journal entry | Journal entry |

FINAL INTERVIEW
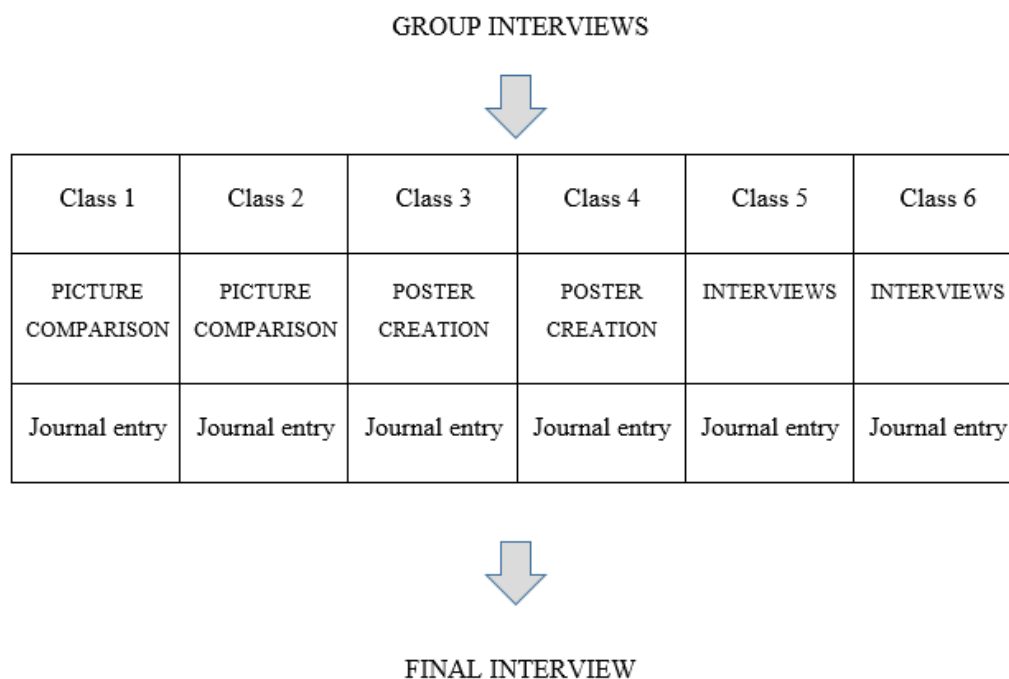
These practices were purposefully selected considering their effectiveness and applicability in the typical Chilean classroom where the T-R applied them. In addition, the students' level of English and the suitability for the content to teach were taken into consideration, but most importantly, the fact that these practices were not common for the students.

After the speaking practices were selected, we planned six lessons to be implemented in the classroom – two lessons weekly. The number of lessons planned was because we did each practice twice in order to reflect on the way the first class went and change the aspects that needed to be improved for the second time applying the practice. It is important to mention that the practices were done during the production stage of each lesson.

The next step was to implement the selected speaking practices in the school after the T-R had made the necessary arrangements with the M-T in order to perform the practices in one of her courses. Each practice took around twenty minutes of the forty-five minutes of the class and after each lesson taught, the T-R wrote a journal entry in which he shared his perceptions and reflections on the implementation of the practices.

After the sixth practice and the sixth journal entry were ready, an interview for the M-T and T-R was done. One of us who interviewed the M-T and the T-R in order to obtain both perceptions regarding the implementation of the speaking practices, the impact of these practices on the students, and the performance of the T-R during the implementation of this interview. The interview had twenty-four questions, it lasted for nineteen minutes, it was audio-recorded, and it was done in the English classroom of secondary level of the subsidized school where the study was conducted.

As the last part of the procedures, we will go through the data analysis by reviewing the procedures in this study and collecting all the data, which is extremely relevant to analyze the information gathered through this process.

### 3.4.2. Data analysis.

In order to begin analyzing the information from the instruments used in this study, it was necessary to have each audio recording transcribed.  The results were obtained by coding the three interviews: the two group interviews and the final interview with the M-T. In the case of the group interviews, these were coded by identifying key concepts or particular ideas that were constantly repeated by the pre-service teachers such as speaking as a fundamental aspect to learn English, and the fact that speaking is not very much emphasized at schools. Regarding the practices, the pre-service teachers mentioned some of the activities they had implemented, from which we selected only three.

 The interview with the M-T was also coded using the same procedure, but this time we focused on the constantly repeated ideas by the interviewee, which were associated to speaking, the students, reflection, and collaboration. The fact that these ideas were alluded repetitively indicated to us that they were important for the M-T, therefore we came up with three themes, which were consequently related to the basis of our study: collaboration as a process to improve practices and reflection as a regular method.

We also coded the journals taking into consideration the most repetitive ideas that the T-R wrote after each class, such as successful speaking practices and obstacles with the school's organization.

After analyzing, coding, and assigning themes to each interview and journal, we were able to obtain relevant results regarding our data collection.

The group interviews were useful because they revealed the pre-service teachers' thoughts, feelings, and most importantly practices regarding speaking production. From the interview with the T-R and the M-T, we got their perceptions and opinions in relation to speaking, collaboration and reflection in the school, the T-R's performance in the classroom, and an overall view of the process of the implementation of the practices. Regarding the journals, we could observe the diverse disadvantages and advantages that the T-R faced when implementing the speaking practices. Therefore, the results gathered from the instruments already mentioned are addressed in depth in the next chapter.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the main findings obtained by the data analysis are divided in three different sections. The data were collected and analyzed in response to the objectives aforementioned in this study. Two specific objectives drove the data collection and analysis, which were developed to find out about the main findings of the group interviews, the effectiveness of reflection through journal writing, and to examine the benefits of peer collaboration in the implementation of speaking tasks.

### 4.1 Main Findings on Group Interviews

During the group interviews, we were looking for particular information to help us elicit and select some successful speaking practices from our classmates, which they could evaluate as effective in their experience. However, we also wanted to know about their teaching experience in their practicums, the difficulties that they might have had when implementing these activities, their perception about speaking activities in the Chilean EFL classroom, and the importance of this skill at their schools.

As a result of the two group interviews, the collaborators mentioned thirteen practices. Even though some of these thirteen practices were used as part of the methodology of the study and therefore the results of this first interview were analyzed long before the rest of the results, they are presented here as a way to justify their selection and other findings related to the importance of speaking in the classroom.

Table 3. Speaking Activities

| INDIVIDUAL | PAIR | GROUP |
|---|---|---|
| Oral reports | Poster | Picture comparison |
| | Spot the Difference | Hypothetical situations |
| | Role play | Discussion |
| | Dialogue | Songs |
| | Discussion | Story telling |
| | Interviews | Riddle |
| | | Chants |

     Some of the practices the collaborators mentioned were the most typically known such as dialogues, role-plays, and discussions; however, some others were very innovative such as poster and picture comparison, which were two of the three practices that we selected for our study. A few pre-service teachers mentioned practices learnt at the university, but we considered that they were not suitable for the school context since they demanded a higher level of English and they had not applied them at school yet such as a riddle in which

the students are supposed to order, guess, and then have a discussion about the main topic.

Another finding revealed that most of the interviewees believed that the practices they were proposing had worked effectively with their students when implemented as part of their practicum duties, and also that these activities encouraged students' participation and interaction during the class. This is revealed by the participants' comments, such as

*"They had to create a poster for the first cell phone…. So they were really creative, they used everything that they had in that moment, even though I only gave them this, like blank, no more than that. And after all, they gave the characteristics, they put them the price, the different colors… everything they presented in front of the class and they were really enthusiastic to know what the other did in the poster"* (Participant 1, June 21st , 2016).

After analyzing the group interviews we realized that the quote from participant 1 clearly supported the theoretical justification of our study. Therefore, choosing poster, interview, and picture comparison demanded student-interaction, which verifies the theoretical bases of our study as it was mentioned in the literature chapter with the Output Hypothesis proposed by

Swain (1985, 1995). Swain (in Lantolf, 2000) states that as one of the objectives of language acquisition, output is essential to increase fluency, which means that the more students produce the language the more confidence they gain in order to notice the differences between the language that they are learning and their mother tongue.

Moreover, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory for language learning defends the idea that languages are learned through interaction and not in isolation. Besides, his statements on the ZPD put it as an instance in which peer interaction enables less skillful students to achieve tasks that they cannot do individually, but that they can accomplish with the help of more skillful students.

From now on, the results presented correspond to what the journals and final interview yielded in the area of collaboration and reflection in the EFL classroom. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, this study has had two pre-set themes, reflection and collaboration; hence, the following sections of this chapter will focus on addressing those two aspects with data that emerged from the journals and the final interview.

## 4.2 The Effectiveness of Reflection

The group interviews and then the implementation of the practices promoted the need for collaboration and interaction in the process. However, we also wanted to know the experience, feelings, and reflection of the T-R after applying each practice, so writing a journal entry after each practice was a key element to inspect the T-R's development during the implementation of the practices. Moreover, by conducting the last interview with the mentor teacher and the T-R present, the latter had also instances to reflect on the process and

look back into the experiences implementing the activities. This means that in order to develop this section about reflection, we considered data from both instruments; the journal entries and the final interview.

There were ten journal entries therefore, we designed a table to summarize each entry focused on the role of reflection from the T-R. The amount of journals does not match the number of practices taught because four of the entries were written even though the T-R could not implement the practices (because of other school activities), and the other six belong to each one of the six sessions taught. The reflection from each journal entry was supported with excerpts from the journals.

The following table portrays each journal written by the T-R during the study.  On the journal's section, each journal was summarized and the most important information is displayed from each one of them. Additionally, on the T-R's thoughts section, an extract from the journal was chosen accordingly to the main idea of the whole journal.

Table 4. Journal Entries

| Journals Reflection | Teacher-Researcher's thoughts |
|---|---|
| **Journal 1 "Successful first time"**<br><br>It was successful since the class, the teacher and the activity were new for the students therefore, and they were more enthusiastic and willing to | *"Therefore, the class went well since it was possible to do all the activities, so that all the stages planned. However, it was difficult to keep some students in silence* |

| | |
|---|---|
| participate. Although the students are used to work on commonly used speaking activities, they reacted better to this kind of activity. However, there were some classroom management problems due to the fact that the teacher was new and young, so some of the students were not respectful as they had been with the mentor teacher. But this was now an impediment to achieve the objective of the practice. | *during the lesson, hence it was necessary to explain to same students, individually, the instructions of the activity on the production stage twice."* |
| **Journal 2 "A stumble is not a fall"** <br><br> The T-R was not able to teach the second class because the math teacher took that class due to the absence of the mentor teacher. Therefore, the school administration did not take the T-R into consideration to be in charge of the class because of the same reason previously stated. Although the T-R was prepared to do the class, the authorities did not allow him to do so, as he was a practicum students and they were not aware of his abilities to perform the class. As a consequence the T-R felt upset and frustrated. | *"I felt really upset because that class was supposed to be mine."* |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Journal 3 "Obstacles don't prevent good learning"**<br><br>One of the obstacles mentioned in the journal is the absence of the mentor teacher; that is why the T-R had to face some difficulties to implement the class, also the misbehavior of some students. Teachers need to be ready to overcome any situation that might arise during the class, which is a fundamental skill for all teachers. In this case the T-R was able to do so due to the skills and abilities that the T-R has. | *"Despite all the obstacles that I had during the class, I think the students learned the new content… and they were able to make questions during the activity in the production stage, which is the most important."* |
| **Journal 4 "A stumble is not a fall"**<br><br>We can infer that the T-R felt frustrated because the mentor teacher did not respect the agreement of doing the practices, also he felt concerned about the delay this situation caused to this study. | *"…she wanted to do this class since she was so behind with 10th grade A in comparison to 10th grade B."* |
| **Journal 5 "Once again…"**<br><br>The T-R felt ignored because while he was doing the class, the mentor teacher interrupted the | *"I felt upset because even though I had asked her if I could do my thesis class, she told the students to do another thing."* |

| | |
|---|---|
| class. This situation would not had happened if the mentor teacher and the T-R had better communication, we can see that collaboration is fundamental between teachers, as our study states. | |
| **Journal 6 "A stumble is not a fall"**<br><br>Another obstacle occurred during the process due to the lack of communication among colleagues. We can conclude that communication is not only important between teachers but also in the school community, to avoid these problems to happen. | *"…all the tenth graders were not at school since they were in a trip."* |
| **Journal 7 "A stumble is not a fall"**<br><br>The T-R was neither able to teach the fourth class nor able to implement the main practice because of an important test. Once again the agreement previously arranged was not respected by the mentor teacher, due to the fact that she did not organize time wisely. | *"I could not do the fourth class because the students were taking a simulation of PET."* |

| **Journal 8 "Feeling satisfied"**<br><br>After two unsuccessful attempts trying to implement the fourth class, the T-R finally could do it. This situation happens as a consequence of the lack of rules that the mentor teacher should have established from the beginning. The lack of respect from the students is more common in current times, that is why is important to set rules in order to avoid this kind of situations. | *"Therefore, despite the pair that did not work, everybody else worked and well, so I felt really glad. I thought that they were not going to remember how to use "be going to" correctly because a long time had passed since I did the third practice but they did remember, so I felt really happy about it."* |
|---|---|
| **Journal 9 "Confusion, the first step to creativity"**<br><br>During the application of this activity, it seemed that the students were confused with the practice for the reason that they did not follow the instructions. We can infer that the T-R's lack of experience with giving instructions and the students' level of English made them do what they were not supposed to do. Therefore, we believe that teachers need to have different methods to check students' understanding on | *"Maybe they did not understand me when I told them to do so or they just did whatever they wanted to do. However, the idea was that the students talked and they did it both when they shared with the whole class and when they were interviewing each other in their own groups, so that I felt really happy."* |

| | |
|---|---|
| instructions. | |
| **Journal 10 "Successful ending"**<br><br>Since the three last practices were continuously applied the students' response was better than in the previous ones. Another reason for this successful ending was the fact that they were more familiar with the T-R and his methodology. | *"In general, like looking in an overall way since I began applying the practices, I think that the students in the last three practices worked better than in the three previous practices."* |

The progressive reflection verbalized the T-R's feelings towards teaching because at the beginning of the implementation of the practices he wrote more concrete things; such as students' misbehavior and participation -- things that were more likely to be seen rather than perceived. Even though there were some difficulties when implementing the three selected activities, the T-R was still able to achieve the objective of the practices. Nevertheless, the T-R wrote the journals as a description rather than as a reflection. Despite the fact that there was not a deeper reflection, the T-R showed a development during the implementation of the practices, interaction with the students, and in his own confidence due to the fact that students and the teacher were more familiar with one another. As it is shown in our literature, Farrell (2012) states that reflective practice goes deeper than just thinking before, during, or after the lesson. Also, it is important to examine all the things that you do in the classroom and why you do it. Thus, after collecting and analyzing all the information about their

classroom happenings, teachers should be able to make changes and improvement when teaching.

Regarding the interview with the M-T, it gave us insight regarding reflection from an in-service teacher's point of view. Although reflection was not a common practice for the M-T, this situation matches what Nogués & Pellerin (2015) stated in their study in which they clarified that in the Chilean Marco para la Buena Enseñanza there is no specification of reflection as a neither systematic nor mandatory practice. Instead it should be part of a teacher's responsibility since this tradition is not part of the curriculum nor teaching programs, so unfortunately many teachers face their teaching practices without being introduced to systematic reflection. Consequently, this should be part of the pedagogical curriculum so the teachers are encouraged to be active and reflective actors upon their own teaching.

Also, The M-T stated that it is important for a teacher to reflect upon their own activities in order to improve them later. Even though the interviewee said that she does not do it formally (writing a journal for instance), she stated,

> *"Of course! You have to, you have to reflect on*
> *what happens with the students every time you*
> *open your mouth, you have to reflect about it"*
> (Mentor Teacher, October 7th, 2016).

This is clearly proven in our literature by Farrell (2012), who claims that "Reflective practice is important because it helps teachers make more informed decisions about their teaching – decisions that are based on concrete evidence systematically collected over a period of time" (p. 5). Reflection is essential in the teaching process, that is the reason why teachers have to reflect about every single thing that they do in the classroom, and with that information they are able to make better decisions in order to improve their teaching skills. Therefore, we can conclude from the journals and the interview with the M-T that reflection after teaching is effective as long as it is consistent and continuous, as argued by Farrell (2015), reflection is not only done by thinking about how the lessons went but by writing journals as an organized practice that every teacher should incorporate as part of their daily or weekly routine.

## 4.3 The Importance of Peer and In-field Collaboration

Collaboration among peers was crucial for the implementation of this process in order to obtain each of the practices because although there are many online resources, books, or theories in which speaking activities appear, they were not really useful for our school context. Thus, having these group interviews and obtaining the practices from our own classmates enabled us to feel more comfortable when planning and applying the activities since they were more related to the school context. In relation to this, Güngör (2016) states, that collaboration gives the possibility to recognize our strengths and improve our weaknesses during the process by receiving and sharing experiences with our peers.

During the interview the M-T talked about the importance of generating instances with colleagues to collaborate among them, and how this process benefited their teaching. This was clearly shown when the interviewee said,

> *"Sometimes it has happened to me that my colleagues say 'I don't know how to do this activity" Okay! Come to my class this day and you are gonna see how it works. You know, it's an internal feedback all the time"* (Mentor Teacher, October 7th, 2016).

Collaboration was one of the aims in our study, thus one of our research questions; therefore it is relevant to mention there were two types of peer collaboration in this study. First, the one we did in our university with pre-service teachers in order to obtain the speaking practices, and secondly, the in-field collaboration that was present in the school in which we conducted the study. As a matter of fact, observation among peers, giving feedback to each other, and sharing experiences in the classroom are helpful ways for teachers to improve their teaching abilities and practices in the classroom. In fact, Chow, Chu, Tavares, & Lee (2015) state that teachers are capable of modifying their curriculum design and learning how to use different approaches through collaboration with their colleagues. These ways mentioned previously are done and are actually fruitful for the M-T and her colleagues since she has two

different meetings weekly, one with the four English teachers of the subject's department and another one with all the teachers of the school,

> *"We have meetings every week, two hours, there we have to reflect about our weekly work we have to share our activities, or give ideas, or if my colleagues have any problem I can solve it"* (Mentor Teacher, October 7th , 2016).

Therefore, both the M-T and the school apparently are aware that collaboration is a fruitful method for their teaching and believe in its effectiveness.

## 4.4 Answers to Research Questions

Research question one was about the effectiveness of journal writing with the aim of understanding the T-R's own practices. After analyzing the results of this study the answer to this question tells us about the importance of making reflection a regular practice, as we could notice that journals were not a key factor for the result of the practices. As Farrell (2015) states, reflection is not just thinking about how the class went because a deeper and more organized reflection is needed such as, group discussions, classroom observations and as occurred in this study writing journals in order to reflect on the practices. Thus, the journal entries were helpful in the sense that they helped him to realize what he had done during the class but not to improve the practices as it was

expected at the beginning of this study. Besides, it was explicitly said by the T-R during the interview with the M-T that journals were effective,

> *"I think it is a good idea to reflect what you do in classes (...) maybe right after the class you don't remember everything, but when you are writing you know everything, every step of the activity, so maybe you organize your mind and you can say 'yeah! I can change this or it was not good as I thought'"* (Teacher-Researcher, October 7th, 2016).

The second question was about how helpful peer-collaboration was for the T-R to promote the speaking practices, and we realized that the two group interviews were key to our study due to the fact that the pre-service teachers were the ones that gave us the speaking practices, so without them and the group interviews the T-R would not have implemented the practices in the school. Hence, as Güngör (2016) states, teachers should be more willing to accept other teachers' perspectives because by sharing experiences they will be able to recognize their strengths and improve their weaknesses. As the M-T stated in the interview, we could notice that peer-collaboration is also present in her school,

> *"… I go to observe classes and then I give feedback to the teacher, and then that teacher goes to another class, not only the boss is going to the classes and looking for the colleagues, but all of us. So, sometimes it has happened to me that my colleague said "I don't know how to do this… this activity", Okay! Come to my class this day and you are gonna see how it works. You know, it's an internal feedback all the time, you know!* (Mentor Teacher, October 7th, 2016).

Moreover, due to the collaboration from the M-T during the implementation of the practices the T-R could improve the way he applied the activities and the classroom management as well. Teachers who participate in CAR are able to receive feedback from their peers so that they can improve their weaknesses and strengths, and also teachers who actively participate in research find a significant influence in their teaching strategies (Chow, Chu, Tavares, and Lee, 2015).

Therefore, building a relationship with peers based on collaboration is a key element in the educational field since it does not only improve teachers' professional development, but as a consequence students benefit from this action by having classes of higher quality with activities that have been proven to be effective and successful for practicing and producing communication.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, implications, limitations and suggestions are presented in order to contribute to teachers' professional development, raise awareness on the arising problems, and encourage teachers to get involved in AR.

### 5.1 How Can We Use this for our Teaching?

At the beginning of this process it was thought that performing speaking activities in the Chilean EFL classroom was close to impossible, considering the teaching experiences we had in our respective practicums, in which there were factors such as the number of students in the classroom, not enough time to give proper feedback on students' performance, and teachers' reluctance to even try to apply a speaking practice but chose to rely on grammar-oriented tasks. However, after applying this study and having the interview with the M-T, it was noticed that speaking practices are possible to apply in the Chilean context. All the factors that made applying speaking practices a huge challenge are a reality for Chilean teachers. Nevertheless, those factors do not create an impossibility to actually make students produce the language. As a matter of fact, the study showed that students are eager to produce and participate during these activities and teachers should take advantage of that by implementing more speaking activities.

In the literature review it was mentioned that in spite of the fact that the speaking skill is currently emphasized by the national curriculum, it is the least practiced skill at schools, according to what we had witnessed in our practicums as pre-service teachers. Nevertheless, the speaking skill in the school in which we conducted the study demonstrates that sometimes teachers underestimate

students' level of English and because of that they are reluctant to practice the aforementioned skill. This study clearly showed that it is possible to implement speaking practices and make the pupils produce the language in an EFL classroom.

After having the group interviews, the interview with the M-T, and collecting all the data information of this study, we realized the importance of collaboration among peers. Working with colleagues can make changes and improvements in teachers' teaching skills and they can also share experiences inside the classroom and prevent other teachers from possible problems. Moreover, as it occurred in this study, having instances where teachers can share their practices, opinions, feelings and thoughts is essential to make them realize about their weaknesses and strengths when teaching, and also encourage them to reflect upon their own skills and performance in the classroom.

It is essential for teachers to reflect about everything that they do in their classes because by reflecting they are able to recognize their mistakes in order to not make the same errors again, and also recognize all the good aspects about their classes in order to repeat the successful activities in the future. However, during this study it was established that reflection is not just thoughts about how the class went, but teachers need a deeper reflection in which they can make advancement when applying and performing their practices in the classroom. That is the reason why journal writing is an excellent opportunity for teachers to reflect upon their practices because by writing after each class they will be able to organize their minds and analyze immediately how the class

went, what problems occurred during the session and with that information make the corresponding changes to show improvement for the next lessons.

## 5.2 Limitations of the Study

Although at the beginning of this study we scheduled some specific dates to apply the study at the school, considering some space for unexpected situations.

We indeed faced some difficulties during the process that made the whole process to be delayed.  It was planned to apply one practice twice each week for instance, the practice was done on Wednesday and then on Friday. So it would take only three weeks to do the six practices. However, the M-T's absence because of medical reasons and extra-curricular activities such as the school anniversary, national day, and school trips – the process of the implementation of the practices took longer – 6 weeks. Another limitation, which is related to the previous one, was that the interview with the M-T was scheduled to be done in the middle of the implementation of the practices (after three activities) in order to receive feedback to improve the teaching practices, but in the end it was not possible to accomplish due to the M-T's schedule. At last, this interview was conducted at the end of the implementation of the practices.

In spite of all the difficulties we were able to complete the study. We could do the two group interviews during the investigation process and obtain speaking practices, and despite the delay we could implement the six practices at school and then do the interview with the M-T.

Furthermore, the limitations would change if we applied this study in different realities. The first one would be the practices selected for the study which will change depending on the level of English of the students for example, the higher level of English the more demanding the activity will be. Also, the number of students will affect the selection of the practice.

Finally, the most important limitation we faced was the reflection process in our journals, which was more descriptive than reflective. In other words, we were expecting deeper reflection from the T-R in his journal entries.

## 5.3 Suggestions for Further Research

We strongly encourage other teachers, not only English teachers, but all the professionals in the pedagogical area, to follow the path of reflection and to conduct AR in their respective schools. It contributes to teachers' professional development, overcome the isolation commonly experienced by teachers, and it can also improve students' learning. Moreover, collaboration can also be fostered among pre-service teachers as we did in our study in order to obtain the speaking practices.

Additionally, we suggest another method to conduct this study with a similar purpose, for example an experimental study with two groups one that reflects and one that does not, in order to obtain results on the effectiveness of reflection. Also, it is suggested that the period of time required to conduct this study should be longer, as a longitudinal study.

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## 7. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: Informed Consent Letter

Santiago, Junio 2016

Estimado/a participante,

Usted ha sido invitado/a a participar del estudio de investigación **"Collaborative Action Research in the EFL Classroom",** a cargo de cuatro estudiantes de último año de la carrera de Pedagogía en Inglés de la Universidad Andrés Bello, y dirigida por la profesora Carol Gómez.

El objetivo de esta investigación es proporcionar oportunidades a futuros profesores de inglés de involucrarse en Action Research de manera colaborativa, para así reflexionar acerca de sus prácticas pedagógicas. Para hacer este estudio posible, solicitamos su participación voluntaria en una entrevista grupal, la cual será grabada (sólo audio). Le rogamos leer la carta de autorización más abajo, y firmar si acepta ser partícipe de esta investigación.

**Autorización de Participantes**

Yo, _____, he sido informado acerca del objetivo del estudio y cualquier pregunta que he realizado ha sido respondida satisfactoriamente. Acepto participar en esta actividad, siendo consciente de mi derecho a retirarme en cualquier momento y por cualquier motivo, sin ningún tipo de perjuicio. También acepto que la información que he entregado sea utilizada para fines investigativos, sólo para este estudio.

Comprendo que toda la información provista será tratada en estricta confidencialidad y no será difundida por los investigadores. La única excepción del principio de confidencialidad se presentará en caso de que una Corte solicite los documentos. Autorizo que el material de investigación recolectado para este estudio sea publicado, siempre y cuando mi nombre y/o cualquier otro tipo de información que pueda identificarme no sea utilizado.

Firma _____ Fecha _____

**APPENDIX II: First Group Interview**

**Date of recording:** June 21st

**Date of transcription:** June 29th

**Length:** 30 min, 23 sec.

**Interviewer 1:** Okay. So, how are you? First of all.

**All:** Fine.

**Maria:** Tired.

**Interviewer 1**: The weather was so weird today, it was very cold in the morning and then it's hot. OK, so I want to know, how has your semester been going so far?

**Laura:** In terms of…

**Interviewer 1:** In general, your semester, with the subjects, you are feeling nervous, stressed?

**Maite:** I can start, for me it has been a good semester due the fact that last semester I had forty-five students and this year I only have twelve per grade, therefore I feel really, really happy with my grades. I have fifth and seventh, it has been really, I mean, comfortable, kind experience with not only with the students but the teachers as well.

**Interviewer 1:** Anybody else?

**Amanda:** I think it has been very tiring, and we all know that students from previous years always tell us the last years are slower and we don't have many things to do, but as you advance in the career everything you have to do more things and you have to spend more time studying and doing for university, and this semester has been exhausting.

**Sara:** Well, I think that it has not been so exhausting. I think that the fourth and fifth semesters are the worst ones, at least for me, were really exhausting but this semester I feel really comfortable I only have four subjects you can do all of them, and my grades are really high. I'm good this semester.

**Interviewer 1:** Good, how do you feel about the fact that we have only one more semester to finish the program?

**Maria:** Happy.

**Interviewer 1:** Happy? You're happy.

**Teresita:** Finally!

**Amanda:** Couldn't be happier about it.

**Interviewer 1:** So, Maria, why do you feel so happy?

**Maria:** Because all I wanna do is end the university, to get my degree and start working and earn my money, be independent. And start being an actual teacher, and stop being this pre-service teacher. That is want I want, at least.

**Interviewer 1:** Laura, do you agree?

**Laura:** Yeah, I think I'm happy but, the thing is that, I think that I need more practice. So I think that once I finish – hopefully this year – I will continue studying, 'cause I don't feel that I'm strong enough to be a good teacher.

**Interviewer 1:** Does anybody else agree with Laura or disagree?

**Amanda:** I agree with the fact that we can always have more practice and we always need more tools and requirements to be a good teacher but I think that, as a pre-service teacher, I hate the idea that I am pre-service teacher. Because I'm submitted to so many rules and so many establishments that I don't feel comfortable with, so I can't do what I want, I don't feel free to do what I want to do. So I really want to be a teacher so I can take the… I can have the shots of what I want to do and how I want to do it.

**Maite:** I don't agree with that, though because this thing is part of life, I have a totally different experience because as you know I studied nursery education before, and I have a lot of experience teaching not only with, I mean 9th or 10th graders, I mean I have experience with elementary a lot. And I think it's part of life to be going through a lot of stages while you're studying and it is part of it, and you have to learn from it as well.

**Amanda:** Oh! Of course!

**Maite:** And it's not like about being, I don't know how to explain it…

**Maria:** I think you can learn on your feet.

**Maite:** Exactly, it's part of.

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**Teresita:** You'll never stop learning, so is a process that is constantly going to happen in your life, and you will never say, "OK, I'm good" enough because there will be always something else that you will have to learn and you will have to practice, and then there is going to be another thing and then you are going to be in that process again, and you will never stop.

**Maria:** Experience is what teaches you how to learn all those things.

**Interviewer 1:** Yes, so now, how was your practicum this semester? Before I asked you about the semester in general, now I'm asking about the practicum specifically.

**Teresita:** In my experience, it's been great because as you know the school that we are is fantastic! I have nothing to say, we have materials enough, we have… we are free to prepare whatever we want, we  don't have someone telling us that we shouldn't do something because we are free to do whatever we want. And also students are helping you all time, if you are going to have an evaluation they are going to tell you, "Okay, Miss we are going to support you, and we are not going to have a mess in the class." It's been great not like the past year, I was in a really terrible school, It was a public school people there didn't want to work, the students didn't have money enough to buy materials, they didn't even have notebooks. I had to bough many notebooks for them, because they didn't have money to buy them, and pencils, rubbers and everything for my students, because they didn't have money to buy them. And it was terrible because if you're expose to that kind of situations and the public school and the private school, you realize that you… even though you have this passion to work in the public schools, it's not suitable because you are not going to spend your whole salary to give your students what they need. And if you

compare both environments, it's better the private one, and you discover that maybe you really want to work in a private schools because you want to have all the resources you will need for you classes for example.

**Interviewer 1:** Jacinta, what about you?

**Jacinta:** I like my school, the experience that I have had, but it's difficult I still have forty-five students, last semester I had almost fifteen students, and it is difficult. I really prefer working with only boys, like I did last semester than a mixed class; it is easier for me to control fifty. Teresita knows all the students were on time, they had excellent grades with me, and now it's difficult because you have girls like, "Miss, what do we have to do?" It is hard for me to work with eighth graders, because I don't like that attitude that they have.

**Laura:** For me it is the opposite, now the school that I'm attending to is only for girls. So only girls! And at the beginning I was scared because it is a private school "La Maisonnette" I don't know how to pronounce it because it's French. And I thought so only girls at the school, but they're actually good girls, and they don't do those stereotypes things that I thought before, they really work and etc. but for me, answering your question, it has been very nice and very… a new experience. Because I don't believe in schools were boys and girls are separated, I think it's good to have mixed schools but it has been good.

**Interviewer 1:** Do you think prepare for the next semester, considering the time that we will have 22 hours at school? Karen maybe…

**Karen:** Yes, I feel prepared 'cause even though you can see how small I am, I have a lot of authority inside the classroom, so from the very beginning I told my students, you know what these are the rules, and I won't allow you to do certain

things so I have my space. So my students know how far they can go with me, so we can have fun and in other times we can be very serious working. So I think… yes I'm prepared for next semester.

**Sara:** I do feel prepared but the only thing that scares me it's how to prepare to many lessons, I know that we have to… not the 22 hours that we will be going to school are for teaching, we have also like be there, I don't know how to call them but I think it's hard to actually use the timing, prepare lessons… I don't know. I'll see how it works but the only thing that scares is that we have to prepare too many lessons.

**Interviewer 1:** Yes… What has been the most difficult or challenging thing to apply in your practicum?

**Maite:** For me was classroom management. It's really hard when I had 45 students I was in subside school and you have mixed classes as well they were really noise. And so I was so young, they thought they I will be, in terms of interacting, like we were at the same level, young we are still young, so I was complicated but I was the hardest part the classroom management. But I did it, I mean, I could handle the situation.

**Amanda:** I think the same as Maite. I think that classroom management is really challenging, for us as pre-service teachers, maybe because sometimes we don't have the authority a teacher can have, they are seeing the subside teacher "you are going to have fun." And they don't take us seriously, and in the schools that I'm now the students are used to be yelling a lot, so I went there with another attitude I'm always kind to them and try to have fun with them. And that has helped me to build a comfortable environment in the class.

**Interviewer 2:** So… regarding all the practicum and all that… what about speaking? What do you think about speaking, because according to our experience we think that speaking is the most difficult skill to apply with high school students, so let's focus in speaking in high school, okay? Why? Because the mentor teacher's permission or that they are too many students inside the classroom and they misbehave a lot during the activities, and grammar oriented classes, and many other factors. Until what extend do you think speaking is promoted in school.

**Teresita:** In my case the speaking is one of the most important of the lesson, with Miss Vera at least, and she is always trying to make the students to speak. For example, we have oral presentations every week, and they should all pass to the front of the class to read something. For example, last week was about a movie, and they all had to speak about the movie, and the class should ask this student about the, "what did you like the most about the movie?" And they had to answer, and I think it's a good method because they are talking about something they like. But also something really important while doing speaking activities is the respect. You have to encourage respect to the environment of your class if you want to do speaking activities, because last year I was in a public school, as I said before, and the speaking was not one of the most important part of the class, it was just grammar based. And when I tried to implement a speaking activity, it was really difficult because as they were used to write only, they were silent while writing, once you told them "you're going to speak now," they don't know how to do it, and they don't know how to take turns, they don't raise their hands to tell you "Miss I want to say something" they just put it away. And it is difficult if you don't implement respect before a speaking activity you're going to get lost, and the class is going to be a mess.

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**Interviewer 2:** Someone else?

**Maite:** When you refer to speaking skills when teaching or in general?

**Interviewer 2:** No, I mean teaching in general, activities… when you try to implement speaking.

**Maite:** Ah, okay. In my subside school they didn't know English at all. My mentor teacher used to speak everything in Spanish, when I got there I was kind of a new thing for them because "why you are talking in English? Miss stop because we don't understand a thing." While I was teaching them I had to speak "Spanglish" sometimes, because they were like… I mean there was a lot of frustration with them, but now I'm in a bilingual school and they understand everything! So it's completely different, and my mentor teacher now explains everything in English, so I think the experience has been really different in terms of the level of English.

**Interviewer 2:** Good. Jacinta?

**Jacinta:** Regarding speaking, last semester I had tenth graders and at the end of the whole semester I took them on September and I start teaching them from September on, until December, so on November we prepared some different sketches so they had to prepare and write the script with the original ideas and to present them. So it worked really good, they all enjoyed it, they all were laughing when the ones were presenting because they were talking difficult situations that you face when you use technology, so they represent everything really good and they enjoyed them. And at the school that I am now, even though they had more hours of English they had like, for example, credit cards and presenting them or asking them for example with third graders, "do you like

"Yes, I do. No, I don't" But all the classes are making them speak at least a sentences, but imagine, I have forty-five students so I can't put everybody speaking at the same time.

**Interviewer 2:** So according to your experience and everything in the practicum, have you ever tried any type of activity -- as we were talking -- to promote speaking in your classes, like with high schools?

**Karen:** Yes, for my last supervision I had a speaking class because in my school they are very book-oriented, but the book is really good, so it's purposeful, so you have everything ready for you and you can teach very well. So I used a 17:22… called … on the Internet so the students were very enthusiastic about the topic, so I was showing pictures about Snapchat or Instagram so they all were speaking. There are only girls in the classroom, so I made them stand up and they did it, and I gave them candies and they were speaking. I think if you could have seen it, you would have been delighted because they speak very well and they actually know a lot of vocabulary, so there are many things that you can do; moving them, trying to make them speak up, looking at pictures.

**Interviewer 3:** So how was the activity? Did you group them?

**Karen:** I divided the class into two groups so there were two lines and they had to compare for example two pictures regarding Snapchat and online dating or something like that, so they had to stand up, go there, and they had to compare the two pictures – because we were using comparatives -- so they were using the pictures and they were laughing, so the group that won they could receive

two candies, so for participating you got one candy and if you won you could get two candies, so they were very motivated.

**Interviewer 4:** So materials, PowerPoint, pictures…

**Karen:** In my school there is only one projector, so you have to ask for it one month earlier. So I got the projector and I bought some candies, I brought some printer papers and that's it, and speakers.

**Interviewer 3:** And it was the first time that you did it?

**Karen:** With them no because in my school I'm in charge of doing the part regarding culture, so I always do speaking classes. So that was it.

**Jacinta:** For example today I did this. They had to create a poster for the first cell phone, so I present them two videos like the advertisement for the first cell phone, and they created this poster and later on they had to present in front of the class and sell me the cellphone and the rest of the class. So they were really creative, they used everything that they had in that moment, even though I only gave them this, like black, no more than that. And after all, they gave the characteristics, they put them the price, the different colors… everything they presented in front of the class and they were really enthusiastic to know what the other did in the poster.

**Interviewer 3:** Was it individual?

**Jacinta:** In pairs.

**Laura:** There is another activity that I did with my twelfth graders. Sometimes I think that it's challenging to create activities for them because they pretty much

want to go to the university so their mentalities are different. So what I did is that I look the Brown's book and there was an activity where they had to find the differences, so I brought two images that were very similar. There was a house so the idea for them was to practice prepositions and the rooms, the kitchen; sometimes you forget those words. So I made pairs and one of the girls had one picture and the other one had the other one, so the idea is they practice also questions. So, "in my room there is a ball. Can you see a ball in the living room?" "No" So they had to mark it. They had to find twenty differences, so they really liked it. Sometimes they like to compete with each other, so I did that. And the other activity that I did is the one that I took from Leo's class, so I brought a riddle. I brought it because they don't work with computers, I bring everything in paper. So I brought it and they had to try to figure out the correct order of the riddle and then we create a discussion because it was about… remember the doctor? It was about jobs and feminism and the importance of the woman.

**Interviewer 3:** How many students do you have?

**Laura:** With my twelfth graders, I have twenty two.

**Interviewer 3:** And you Jacinta?

**Jacinta:** Forty-five.

**Interviewer 2:** Someone else wants to?

**Sara:** Okay, so this semester I have seventh graders and fifth graders, so seventh graders are considered as high school but they don't really know English at all. The fifth graders know a lot because the school changed into a bilingual school, so now all of the subjects are in English until sixth grade, but

the seventh grade was not incorporated in the new aspect. So they don't know anything. They are used to working with the book that is very grammar-oriented. I tried to do speaking activities with them, but they misbehaved really badly when I tried to make them speak. And I remember Masatoshi when he said that you should never give up Communicative Approach, and you should never go back to grammar-oriented, but I sadly ended up writing a lot on the board. It was really frustrating for me. With the fifth graders, I do a lot of speaking activities, but with high school it is really hard because I only see them once a week and they have many English hours but with other teacher that does not encourage them to speak, so when I go they really don't care; they know that I can't do anything about their grades or anything, so they just start speaking in Spanish. That's all what they do.

**Interviewer 3:** Maria, do you have any type of activity?

**Maria:** Yes, I think so, but I can't remember. Most of my classes are… I apply the speaking skills, I mean I try for the students to speak, and most of the time I succeed and they speak a lot. I think it might be… for example with my twelfth grade. Do we have a twelfth grade, right? They are like twenty students so I think that's a positive thing for me to teach these classes with the speaking skill as a protagonist, and I have to teach grammar because they need the basis and they need to do the tests and there's nothing that you can do about it. But I try to have them speaking and talking to the students and figuring out the grammar, but I have to say that that is maybe because of the number of students. But in general, I think I have good experiences.

**Interviewer 4:** Can you give us an example?

**Maria:** An actual activity?

**Laura:** How about the one that you told Felipe yesterday, with the check? I think it was fun.

**Maria:** I always have these spontaneous ideas, I don't know. The other day I came up with an activity that… a teacher has to teach would and could, so I got the idea that the teacher could give them a check with a big sign of money, I mean a lot of money, and they could say, "what would you do with this money if you could?" I mean you could now because you have the money, so they get to talk a lot, and you can have them in groups. I like having them in groups and that works because they can talk more, and then I like them to present and that works too, so that could be an activity. I also have them compete with the other groups and I have them, "come to the front and write the sentences on the board", but first discussing with the groups what they should write and then we correct.

**Interviewer 2:** In groups of… how many people?

**Maria:** For example with this class, which are twenty students… four groups of five.

**Interviewer 4:** Any other practice? I mean experience.

**Maite:** What I like to do the most is when you introduce a topic, you have to make them as much answers as they can, and based on that or on what they answer, they have to make them do role plays or dialogues, for me those are the most important ones encouraging our skills. Not only for high school, I think that for all of them because as you children really like being the protagonists of

something. So I think it would be, for me at least, one of the best strategies to improve that.

**Interviewer 2:** Role plays and dialogues?

**Interviewer 3:** When you do that you let them write it or just do it orally?

**Maite:** They first have to write the dialogues with your classmate who is besides, and then when they're done they going in front of the class and they start acting the dialogue. And the really like that, they start laughing, making jokes. I mean the environment there is really nice. They do not feel embarrassing or shamed while doing that in front of the class. I mean all of them are really connected with each other, I mean the environment is really, really nice. So that would be my experience.

**Interviewer 2:** So thank you for your answers.

**Interviewer 1:** So as a wrap-up question, what recommendations would you give to other pre-service teachers in order to increase the presence of speaking in classrooms? Thinking of high school, of course.

**Maria:** I think that the first thing that pre-service teachers need to think of is that, for example as Sara said, you only have one hour a week with them or maybe two, so when you go there you need to go big, so I think that a good recommendation could be getting to know your students to know what they like. So for example, normally music is a good topic because they can engage easily because they have many things to talk about with that topic. But I think that that's it, to try to think of what they would like to do in class and go from there and start creating activities that have that topic as a protagonist.

**Laura:** I think that from the beginning, the idea is for you to try to create an environment because sometimes students can get very ashamed when they speak, so if you come friendly or you're kind with them and maybe you're kind with the answers, maybe if you explain, "I'm not here just to teach grammar, just communicative, let's talk" I think that that is a good basis that could lead to good communicative activities later on.

**Karen:** Also the rules that we establish because if we want to respect first, we have to establish the rules that the student have to follow, and then everything goes pretty easily; you don't need to be rude.

**Sara:** I think that something that's really important is really narrow to speak Spanish in the classroom as a teacher because many students are used that their mentor teachers speak Spanish as an excuse for them to speak Spanish, and I think that that's very mediocre. I was in a school that the teacher spoke only Spanish and I never spoke Spanish and maybe to warm up but then every student understood every single word that I was saying, so if you want them to produce orally, first you have to give them enough input. And not only to speak English, but also letting them listen to recording or songs and having them with a lot of input. I think that's really important. And then, maybe not being so strict, for example, a student wants to write before speaking or read something because they feel more comfortable, maybe you can allow them to start little by little and not asking so much from them since the beginning. It depends on the level of English they have, so that they don't feel really anxious.

**Teresita:** There is another important thing because you don't have to push your students to do something because at the end they are going to dislike the speaking activities if you tell, "No, you have to do it because this is your job and

you will do or I will give you a one" Isn't it? Because at the end they will see it as a punishment and they are not going to see it as something good as it is, so I think it is important not to push your students.

**Sara:** They all have different rhythms.

**Amanda:** Regarding what the girls said, for example when I get to my school my students in eighth grade didn't even know how to say hello or didn't know how to introduce themselves, they didn't know how to say "I am Francisco", for example. And the teacher started teaching them pronouns, futures, very advance contents for them that they didn't even know the basis, so I went back to the beginning and I started listening from the beginning, like now they can introduce themselves and say hello. They are used to using colloquial English because I have exposed them to that.

**Teresita:** There is another thing that is important, you can't change the background of your students, but you can build their future. As Amanda said, if they don't know something, you don't have to pass to another thing, you have to reinforce what they don't know because if they don't know something so basic as introducing themselves you can't just go to future tenses and everything because that is something that is going to be impossible for them and they are going to start hating English as if it is, as I said before, a punishment. They won't like it and they won't be able to participate in classes because their mental health is going to be affected.

**Interviewer 1:** Okay, so that was it. Thank you for coming and participating.

**APPENDIX III: Second Group Interview**

**Date of recording:** June 22nd

**Date of transcription:** July 4th

**Length:** 31 min, 12 sec.

**Interviewer 1**: Okay, so good afternoon. How are you first of all?

**Everybody**: Fine… better now…

**Interviewer 1**: Fine? You are fine. Okay, so I want you… I want you to tell me how was your semester… how has your semester been so far?

**Jessica**: In terms of…

**Interviewer 1**: In general

**Jessica**: Okay.

**Camila**: I can start. It has been a good semester in general. At the beginning it was really challenging because the context was different. Now, I'm teaching in a private school, in a bilingual one, and it's completely different to what I did last year or the previous semester, so yes in this case is challenging because of the level of the students. So, I think that in my case I have to be always better and with higher proficiency than them and sometimes discovering that they know a little bit more or different things, it's hard so that's why is challenging.

**Interviewer 1**: Yes…

**Jessica**: In my case, it's… it has been a lot difficult because of… eh because of the amount of hours that we need to teach in the school and the amount of hours that we need to plan for the school. So, balancing that amount of work with the academic charge that we have here in the university is pretty

challenging to do so… in the way that you are… ask or supposed to do it, so it should be proficient, but in the both sides in the practicum as a pre-service teacher and hear to get good marks and pass all the courses, it's difficult.

**Interviewer 1**: Yes! Okay, so, how was your practicum this semester?

**Isabel**: Different, I would say because I used to have… in my two previous practicums I had a really good relationship with my mentors and there was like really good rapport and I don't know… we had a good communication and we were able to build like a good like professional relationship and this semester it has been like different in a negative way, so It has been challenging, but I think that in the end you learn too. So, from… my experience in the classroom hasn't been bad so I won't blame it on the children or the students because they have been all really nice to me and I've been able to learn and to see different realities in our context, but yeah… the professional relationship with my mentors has been different and challenging.

**Fernanda**: In my case, it has been… I have had a very good experience at the school I am…I am doing my practicum at now, but it mostly because it used to be the school that I went to when I was younger. So, I know the teachers I'm acquainted with the classrooms, I know how the school works, so it's easier for me to be more participative during the classroom hours because I already know the teachers, I know… I had a good rapport with them already. So, yes it has been benefits in my case.

**Interviewer 1**: Good! Do you feel prepared for next semester? Considering that we have… that we will have twenty two hours that we have to spend at school. So, maybe Aly.

**Aly**: I feel prepared in terms of doing classes and planning lessons, but in my case it's hard for me because my school is really far from here and the

university doesn't support me as they should, so that's the part that is hard for me and the school… the school that I am now feels… and my mentors and everyone from there. So, that's the hard part for me for next semester that we have to attend twenty two hours…

**Interviewer 1**: Jessica?

**Jessica**: The difficult part will be mainly that we are almost be in charge of a course, but also we are going to be sharing the classroom with the head teacher of English in this case. So, the challenging part is to share or get to an agreement with that teacher because he or she is going to be guiding you and providing you, I don't know, maybe advices or some things that you could do, but what if your kind of teaching is different, what if your kind of teaching is even funnier or even… that breaks off the book methods and you are more used to use presentations or videos or songs, what if you need to continue to follow what you are ask to… because a teacher is the one who is going to be in charge his or her class  no matter if you are ask to help him or her. So, that is difficult.

**Isabel**: I agree with Jessica, but I also think that we need to get a whole more preparation from the university as well. The teachers, our mentor teachers are not the only ones supposed to be guiding us during this whole process, I think more participation from our teachers and more, I don't know, classes teaching us how to be at school almost twenty-four hours will be also necessary.

**Interviewer 1**: Okay! So… what has been the most difficult or challenging thing about the… your practicum to apply? I mean, the most difficult or challenging thing to apply in your practicum.

**Isabel**: Maybe this semester the classroom management skills because I think that the classes I've been visiting now are harder to manage, and I think is also related with like the private education that you have from home  the way you

behave in the classroom also reflects the way you behave in public spaces or at home. So, at these students are from a low social economical stage from our country, then you have to deal with that and it is harder, I mean, raising your hand when make them be quiet as maybe in another school or turning the lights on and off does not work either so… I think that is also related to the way teachers greet the students because what I've been able to see is that they are reactive to yelling. So, if one teacher comes and does not yell at them, they don't react because they are used to react only when they are yell at. So, it hard to make a change by going there, I don't know, six to eight hours a week and pretending that if you treat them well and you are nice to them it's going to make a change in their behavior.

**Interviewer 1**: Yes! Camila?

**Camila**: In my case is a little bit different because since I have few fewer students in the classroom in comparison with what Isabel, I mean, yes she has. In that case, classroom management is not that hard for me, but I have had difficulties with applying different types of methods or trying to do the classes in a different way, especially when I try to use technology, for example, the projector and it is because the school does not have the resources for doing so or they are so structure in the way they want to teach that is difficult to apply a new thing. So, it has been difficult now and I think it is going to be even more challenging next semesters since we have to do more teaching hours, in that case.

**Interviewer 2**: So, what about speaking? What do you think about speaking? Because according to our experience, speaking has been the most difficult skill or the most difficult thing to apply inside the classroom especially with high school students. So, let's focus on speaking and high school students. And

why? Because of many factors, there are too many students in the classroom and they misbehave during the activities, or the classes are focus on grammar only, the mentor teachers use a lot of Spanish, right? And the students don't follow the rules because it's difficult for them. So, what do you think about that?

**Jessica**: Okay…

**Interviewer 2**: Sorry, sorry, here it's like the question… until what extent do you think speaking is promoted in your class… in your school?

**Jessica**: Okay. So first of all, we all know by own our experiences that speaking in Spanish is very common in our class, but English production of it is very uncommon and this is mainly because and pointing on teenagers, especially in middle courses, is because they are afraid of speaking in front of the class especially in a different language and because they feel not secure, feel ashamed, and all that kind of things that you suffer at that age. What does my school does for changing that action, I mean attitude… it's mainly nothing, if you think about it speaking is one of the most important skills to develop in a classroom. But, you know teachers get used to that, students do not talk, so they get use to plan according to students what they know to do. So, for example if students are used to write on their notebooks they are going to focus the classes on that and not on the speaking which is the most essential part of the class production.

**Interviewer 2**: Any other opinion? Maybe Aly…

**Aly**: Well, in my school I focus on standardized test, but they don't focus on the speaking part of it because most of classes are grammar oriented, so they can do well in writing and in grammar parts at the same time, but if they practice speaking all the time they will only, well teachers think that they will only do good in the speaking parts of standardized test and it has worked In my school

at least, but students do not know how to speak or do not feel comfortable enough when speaking, but it's because teachers don't take the risk to do speaking activities in the classroom because students… they misbehave. And I think that it's because they are not interested on the tasks when speaking, for example they have to do, I don't know, a speak or pretend that they are in a restaurant, but they… it's not the reality so they are not encourage to speak with that kind of topics. So, the teachers don't think about the students when doing speaking tasks and… so they prefer not to do that.

**Interviewer 2**: Good! So… have you ever try any type of activity or strategy to promote speaking in your practicum?

**Isabel**: With the class that I'm in high school with, which is a tenth grade and it's the advanced group. So, it gives me a little bit more like freedom or space to make them talk and they are used to answer to questions from the teacher and that is the only speaking part that they have normally. But, what I try to do is to make them work in groups, so that they can…hmmm for example, one activity was to write a full review so they wrote the full review, but then I made them present. So, in that way you make them speak by reading a bit what they produce and I think that is the step before making them speak like freely, or maybe going to discussions, or those types of tasks. So, trying to make them speak little by little more in the class, but with things that they have done, not just asking them questions about opinions or have you ever... when you are introducing a topic because in that way they are, you always have the same students participating and then you lose the participation of other students that do not dare or do not want to raise their hands and answer those questions.

**Jessica**: Or just repeat what was already said.

**Isabel**: Yes…

**Interviewer 3**: And what do you mean that they are the advanced group?

**Isabel**: That they separate them in two groups of proficiency at school. So, I have one group because in this school they have A class for women and B class for men, but they make this in English class from tenth grade and I don't know where else, but they have this system. So, they have the most proficient ones in the A group and in the B they have…

**Interviewer 3**: And how they measure that?

**Isabel**: I don't know, maybe they make test or maybe is because of the marks that they had the previous years and they move them. But I have some students that can actually produce orally a lot, but others participate much more in Spanish. But I think that it's a thing that you can work on, if you guide them properly you can make them actually speak.

**Interviewer 3**: And when you did the full review… how did you do it? Like in groups?

**Isabel**: I allow them to work in the groups that they want it to because I know that there are some friends that talk a lot, but they work pretty well too. So, I don't mind if they are a little bit loud and I let them work with the people that they feel comfortable with and they had to write this full review after… as the production stage of the class and then I asked them to present.

**Interviewer 4**: But you gave them the topic to write?

**Isabel**: They had to imagine that they went to a restaurant… but the class was about food review.

**Interviewer 3**: So they had the content to apply it.

**Isabel**: Yes, and the vocabulary.

**Interviewer 4**: Fernanda?

**Fernanda**: Well, in my case I used another kind of strategy because I used to go to this school before, I know some of the students that I'm teaching know and they remember me as well, so… hem they mostly speak Spanish in the class, but they really look up to me, like they, I don't know, they like me being there and teaching them. So, I try to incentivate (encourage) them at the beginning of the classes by saying things like, well, if I could do this and I was at this school as well, hem, you are able to do just as good as I do, and so I try to motivate them by telling them that they can reach a good potential, they can be better by the end, so that's what I do. I try to incentivate (encourage) them through motivating messages.

**Interviewer 4**: You mean that at your school, you are used to talk or? From your experience they are used to talk or the classes are more grammar-oriented?

**Fernanda**: No, it's just that I used to be just as them, I was used to speak all of the time in Spanish during my English classes because I didn't feel secure and confident about my English, so, and I was too scared of the teacher sometimes, because they were not very kind to you when you speak, and make a lot of errors, so I try to tell them that, if they didn't make the effort to talk and to say something in English they will never get to improve and be better by time, like I did, after a long time of practicing.

**Interviewer 3**: And did they change?

**Fernanda**: Yes, they actually started talking more in English when I was in the classes, not when my teacher, because my teacher is there all of the time, but sometimes she sits at the back of the class when I'm giving lessons, and they do all of the class in English. They make a lot of mistakes and… I think is a little bit scary for them as well because not only the teacher corrects them, but also their classmates, like everyone is paying attention, everyone looks at them

when they are saying something in English. But, yes it has worked so far, and I think I have been able to help them and I'm happy with that.

**Interviewer 4**: Any other activity that you might apply?

**Aly**: I worked with songs, so, but with songs that they know. And for example, I take a song to the class with the lyrics and some spaces missing so they can also practice their listening skill. And they have to recite the song and also sing it. and then I also, once I made them do a story from the song, like to imagine a story in groups of four, or three about the song, and as they had to write the story down, they also had to speak while writing it down and when they were reading what they wrote, they also were speaking and practicing speaking because it's hard for them to speak in English all the time, so I tried to look for ways that they are forced to speak in English, even though they don't want to.

**Interviewer 3**: So, let's imagine that it's a lesson, how would you choose the song?

**Aly**: I ask them like…

**Interviewer 3**: But, depending like, we are reviewing: food or.

**Aly**: But there are not songs about.

**Interviewer 3**: So, how would you do it?

**Aly**: But about food?

**Interviewer 3**: About anything, just give me an example.

**Aly**: I used "Wrecking Ball" with present simple because it has a lot of verbs with present simple, and they know they song. I know that they know it, it doesn't matter if they like it or not but they know it, and most of them knew some parts or words of the song, such as the chorus for example, and with that they feel comfortable enough, because they know something. It's not something completely new.

**Interviewer 3**: So you would present the topic first and then introduce the song? Or just the song, like do the presentation part with the vocabulary, what would you do?

**Aly**: No, just present the song, and explain it while I present the song, like why are we choosing that song, and which verbs do they have to look for example, which kind of words exactly they are looking for.

**Interviewer 3**: Great!

**Interviewer 4**: Camila?

**Camila**: Yes, in my case, as I said before, this school it's a little bit different because it's bilingual. So students are used to speaking activities in general. So, I remember once that for the extensive reading they were reading "The Great Gatsby" and I had to conduct the lesson so, I made them… I gave them an envelope with different quotes from the book, from the chapters that we were covering in that moment. And… they had these quotes and they had to discuss, in groups or pairs depending. The main idea of this activity was for them to talk and discuss about what happened in that moment in the book, and try to use their critical thinking skills, because that's what they try to develop in higher grades, in this case it was eleventh grade.

**Interviewer 3**: So, you did that in groups and pairs.

**Camila**: The thing is that since the number of students it's not even, that's why some of them were in pairs and others in groups, and there is one student with Asperger syndrome, so, in that case, he chose to be part of one group or work alone, in some parts of the class.

**Interviewer 2**: Then after they discuss in pairs, they have to share with the other classmates or maybe in front of the class what they discussed?

**Camila**: Yes, I remember that they had like, ten minutes, to discuss about the quote they received, and later they had to present their findings in front of the class. Yes, that's very common there; they have to present everything, every class.

**Interviewer 3**: And that was an activity that you did, so, it was the first time for them?

**Camila**: I think that the type of activity for the extensive reading, in that case it was the first time, yes. But, they had in the case of presentation; they always have to present in front of the class, so it wasn't new.

**Interviewer 2**: So, they have to present more times in front of the class.

**Camila**: Yes, every…

**Interviewer 2**: Present about books also, or different things?

**Camila**: About different things, for example, if they, even if they are doing exercises from the book, the book always have a part which is called: project. So, almost every lesson they do that specific page, so they have to do, I don't know, create a story and after tell the story to the rest of the class, so they are always presenting. They are very good at speaking.

**Interviewer 4**: Is there another? Jessica, that you saw maybe your mentor teacher applying?

**Jessica**: No for speaking. I performed and activity that involved speaking, that was for fourth grade. So, we have had very few classes for "fruits and vegetables", so they had to express their likes and dislikes. So I made them interview their partners, and to stand up and go around and interview their partners and collect their likes and dislikes. So then, they had to write the name and the name of the fruit. The main structure that they knew how to use was: what kinds of fruits and vegetables do you like? So they were talking about it.

**Isabel**: Maybe, it's not completely linked with our practicum, but a really good experience that I had and it's a teacher that I really admired when I went to school. He made us, make oral reports about any topic, so we had to find something interesting, I mean, that we found interesting to talk about and then present it to him, like three minutes, so you had to, and it was only you and the teacher, which was also good because then you didn't have the pressure of your classmates listening to you and then he gave you feedback for it, so it was an activity that was done, like twice a month, so that by the end of the semester you were able to see how much you had improved. It was something that went from little to more and, it was good because it was only for you and in between you and the teacher. I think that it's also important to keep in mind, if you are able to do it, if you have forty students then its hard work, but I think it's a good activity.

**Interviewer 4**: Fernanda?

**Fernanda**: Yes, in my case, what my mentor teacher does with children from the second grade and third grade. It's the creation of routines, so by the beginning of the class they sing different songs, well chants actually, and they repeat it over and over during each class. I think that even though they memorize what they are saying that's also a way of teaching them how to communicate in English in a very basic way, like how to talk about the weather, how to talk about how your day went or things like that, so, I'll be copying that in my next lessons.

**Interviewer 1**: So, as a wrap-up question, what recommendations would you give to other pre- service teachers in order to increase the presence of speaking in the classroom.

**Jessica**: First of all, I think that you need to respect the person who is supporting you, and I mean with this the mentor teacher , but also you need to have a… some sort of conversation based on respect for them to know what is the kind of teacher that you are. So, that they can get to know that you are used to perform, or you have ideas of performing activities that… especially focused on speaking in the classroom because that is your main concern. So, in that way they do not push you to do what they are already doing but maybe you can refresh the education system by doing what you have to do, not following other teachers' steps.

**Aly**: I think that you need to take risks because sometimes teachers are afraid to do different activities, speaking activities because they feel that students will misbehave or they will speak all the time in Spanish, but if you don't try you will never know what happens. So, they just have to do it and it doesn't matter if it didn't work once but maybe next time, it would work or the third time but you have to keep on trying

**Jessica**: Yes, it doesn't mean that it will always be the same.

**Isabel**: Yes, I think that not underestimating the abilities that your students have, it's key. Because maybe they seem that they… it seems to you that they don't know much but it's about scratching a little bit and being persistent and to insist on them to speak and, to create like a safe environment, so if they make mistakes, maybe not just telling them every time they make a mistake or doing that privately, so they feel safe when speaking. It's important because in the end, you will realize that they know much more English that they thought and you thought they knew, and sometimes you will see that students are able to understand everything of what you are saying, so if they are able to understand

what they are listening to, they are more likely to answer in English as well. So, giving them the space and not underestimating them, I think it's key.

**Interviewer 4**: Camila and Fernanda?

**Camila**: I think this is related to what… regarding with underestimating your students that you have to take advantage of what your students already know. So you can improve, you can help them to improve that and I think that it's also useful to take advantage of time, because most of the times we… we give much time to, I don't know, exercises that are based on grammar but, I don't know the practice part, but we don't see how they actually use it. So, sometimes we think that they know but if they don't know how to use it, in speaking in this case, it's because something was missing there and maybe the practice that you were applying was not the best for that specific context, or what you wanted to see, or you wanted them to be able to perform. So, in that case I think that it is good to take advantage as I said from what they know and, about what you have been teaching them, throughout that period. And try to change the ways you do your class because if you were… in one class focusing in trying to develop, I don't know, writing skills, next time you can try to do something different and that's also good.

**Fernanda**: I think that there are already too many activities and too many things to do to make students speak in the class, people have already made a lot of those, but I think they haven't catch… they haven't caught the most important factor in their activities which is to catch the interest of students. They don't make activities that actually interest students and make them participate well in the class, for example, I have seen in a lot of textbooks that they talk about, I don't know, being at a restaurant or being at a music festival, things like that. That students don't really… you know, like care much about. It should be a little

bit more focused on what they like and what they like to talk about, I think that would make a big difference.

**Interviewer 1**: Okay, so that was it. Thank you for coming and participating.

**Jessica**: It was a pleasure.

**APPENDIX IV: Interview with the Mentor Teacher**

**Date of recording:** Oct 14th

**Date of transcription:** Oct 18th

**Length:** 19 min, 37 sec.

**Interviewer:** Good afternoon.

**Interviewee 1:** Good afternoon.

**Interviewer:** First of all, I would like to know your name.

**Interviewee 1:** My name is Michelle Hernández.

**Interviewer:** Nice to meet you

**Interviewee 1:** Nice to meet you, too.

**Interviewer:** So, the first question is, how long have you been working here?

**Interviewee 1:** I've been working here for eleven years.

**Interviewer:** That's a long time

**Interviewee 1:** Long time!

**Interviewer:** Regarding that, how is English taught at this school?

**Interviewee 1:** In this school is a different way of teaching English because we, first of all, we have five hours of English every week since Kindergarten, so the students have 45 min of English every day. So we emphasize a lot of stuff, I

mean, we start working on speaking, then the reading, then listening. We have all the skills involve in the teaching.

**Interviewer:** Good, so according to what you've already said, how much is English emphasized in the classes? Like every day.

**Interviewee 1:** Yeah, I think that one of the best things of having English every day, is that students get involved in the language, and they start understanding a lot, they don't need any translation, and they get used to listen to the English every day. So they get used to speak and listen to English.

**Interviewer:** That's very important, so according to that, how would you emphasize speaking production among students?

**Interviewee 1:** Well, in the real order the first thing you learn is to use the language, and understanding the language, then you start speaking, that's the order. Then start reading and at the end you start writing, that's the correct order of any language. So we take a lot of care of working with the listening and speaking, and we work on speaking activities almost every class. We try to make them produce as much as possible, and they get it, and they get very involved with the activities, and they understand a lot, and they speak it a lot.

**Interviewer:** That's important, but I have a question. This is the English classroom?

**Interviewee 1:** This is the English classroom.

**Interviewer:** That's very important because they feel the environment of English.

**Interviewee 1:** Here in this school we have this special for every subject, so each of us has their own classroom.

**Interviewer:** Okay, have you been able to see Jaime teaching?

**Interviewee 1:** Yes, every class.

**Interviewer:** And all the practices that we have implemented, remember that the idea of this thesis is to this three practices, that was the poster, maybe Jaime can help me.

**Interviewee 2:** The one with the papers the first one that we do.

**Interviewer:** Show and tell, that's the name.

**Interviewee 1:** Oh! The show and tell, right.

**Interviewee 2:** And the last one the interview.

**Interviewer:** Yes, and the interview, that they have to move and do interviews. The idea of these practices were like, the production of speaking in the class, right? So have you been able to see Jaime implanting the practices?

**Interviewee 1:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** And do you think it's a good idea to consider this part of the language that in this case is speaking to be study?

**Interviewee 1:** Yes of course! It's the aim of every language, you have to speak, it's what you have to do with that, so for me it was a good help, I could see my students working in another way, sometimes. And I was able to see how do they react, because when you are given a class you are very frustrated on

everything, you know, but sometimes you miss details, like how they face them, how they react, what they say, the way they move. So while I was watching the Jaime's classes I was able to look at my students, and see how they behave, how they work and it was very interesting.

**Interviewer:** What do you think of the way that Jaime has implemented the practices?

**Interviewee 1:** It was interesting, some activities were very funny. Students like to work in pair or groups, they love it. So, I think it wasn't difficult for him make them speak because they are used to. Maybe in other kind of school you are not gonna have the same results, as the results that you get here, because of the way we teach English, because on the projects we are working on. So they are used to work, they are used to speak, they are used to be ask and answer. They are used to work in role plays.

**Interviewer:** So Jaime, how is your perception on what we were talking about?

**Interviewee 2:** I agree with Miss Michelle because I think that it is easy to implement speaking activities with these students, because they are used to speaking activities. They have even their "coeficiente 2" in speaking.

**Interviewee 1:** This semester is taken in English because it's an interview, it's a personal interview, one teacher and two students, just like the PET or KET, but we start in Kindergarten to take those tests.

**Interviewee 2:** Yes, so they are used to speak, as I said before, and I think that they like speaking because they know that they have to speak for "coeficiente

2," so they try to practice speaking because it is not the same writing that speaking. So that is important to make them speak all the time

**Interviewer:** So now that we have the perception of the class and the students, now I would like to know how Jaime managed the class in these practices?

**Interviewee 1:** He learnt a lot, I have seen Jaime since the beginning when he started studying teaching and he has growing all up during the time, with the experiences, giving classes. He has changed a lot of things, and he is very open to receive everything I can say and he makes changes immediately. And now I can say that we have a good teacher here at this moment, and he wants to be an excellent teacher in the future, I mean in a near future.

**Interviewer:** And maybe with the practices he implemented…

**Interviewee 1:** Oh, yes the practices! He brought the materials, he was very clear on he wanted to do, and that's very important. He knew the objective of every activity, it was very clear, so there wasn't any problem. The students were clear, the instructions were given in a good way, so the students didn't have time to say "What do I have to do?" It was clear and that's very important.

**Interviewer:** Then we have, how do the students react about the practices? Do they get engaged immediately? Do they speak? Do they participate?

**Interviewee 1:** Yes, they participated, they spoke a lot and… in a way… sometimes you have some students that you know that they are going to speak, so having Jaime here, he doesn't know very well the students, he hasn't been here for long years as I am, so he made speak students that I forget in a way,

you know? Because they are forty-five, and sometimes you don't remember who spoke the last class, but Jaime was very clear he could listen other voices.

**Interviewer:** So you're saying that almost every student participated?

**Interviewee 1:** Yes, they have to (laughs).

**Interviewer:** So, Jaime, how do you feel while doing the practices?

**Interviewee 2:** I feel comfortable doing the practices all the time because I know the students from last year because I did my practice last year here too. So, I knew them last year and it was kind of difficult because it was the first time that… that they knew me. So, it was like the new teacher and they don't pay a lot of attention. But now that I know them more, I think that they pay me attention, they… they do what they have to do because if I tell them that they have to work in pairs or in groups they do it, they are not doing another thing. So, I think it was fine I never felt stress doing the practices or upset, no it was fine.

**Interviewee 1:** You know, there is something very interesting here. They are so used to have me giving them classes that every time that I have a replacement because I am ill or something like that, they always complain about the teacher that comes to replace me. But with Jaime, they haven't done that, they always say when I come back from… from hmm… long absence, they always say, *"profe no le entendiamos nada a la otra profe"* and with Jaime it didn't happen, never! None of them has asked me or told me "why don't you do the classes? Why is he doing it? We don't understand" Nothing! They don't complain, that means that they understand him a lot and maybe his English, I don't know what, the way he… he works with them, I don't know.

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**Interviewer:** That means that he is doing a great job… Good! So, after the practices and all that, did you know that Jaime writes a journal after every class?

**Interviewee 1:** I didn't know that.

**Interviewer:** He used to write a journal, a reflective journal, about the practices. So, in this journal he has to write his feelings, emotions, how the activities work, everything in the journal. It's a reflection time, it's very good. So, do you think it's a good idea to reflect on the practices? Why?

**Interviewee 1:** Of course! You have to, you have to reflect on what… what happened with the students every time you open your mouth, you have to reflect about it. You… maybe when you are older and you get into school you do it in the planning, you do the same, but in the planning because you plan one year you try the activities and then next year you have to give the same content, you review your planning and you say, "no, these activities were not good because something happen, I have to change it" It's the reflection you have to do every year, with every class, with every different level. So, it's good for you to be used to write how every activity works, okay, then when the time passes, it's gonna be easier, you remember the activity and you say, "no, it doesn't work or yes! It was a good activity" Okay…

**Interviewer:** So, writing these journals is better for your improvement.

**Interviewee 1:** Yes, of course. Absolutely!

**Interviewer:** Ok, good. Jaime, how do you feel about writing the journals?

**Interviewee 2:** hmm, I think it is a good idea to reflect what you did in classes because of the same reason Miss Michelle said… hmm, to see if the activities… I mean, you write how the activity was and you may in the future improve it because you have more knowledge or experience. So, you can know how to add something or how to change it. According to the feelings, I think it is really necessary, for example, at the end of the class Miss Michelle ask… asked me, "how did the class go?" And I say, "yes, it was fine" But maybe, maybe, it's not the situation, that I arrive my home and I start writing the journal and I start remember the class and maybe in that moment I say, "no, it was something wrong". So, maybe right after the class you don't remember everything, but when you are writing, you know, everything, every step of the activity, so maybe you organize your mind and you can say, "yeah! I can change this or it was not good as I thought".

**Interviewer:** It's easier to organize your ideas, right?

**Interviewee 2:** Yes!

**Interviewer:** Good! Miss, regarding the journals, the reflection journals, have you ever done this?

**Interviewee 1:** No, never… never, but I can compare them with my planning.

**Interviewer:** Maybe not writing, but mentally.

**Interviewee 1:** Mentally, yes!

**Interviewer:** I would like to know, how many mentees have you had?

**Interviewee 1:** This year or in my life? (Laughs)

**Interviewer:** In your life, in your career.

**Interviewee 1:** A lot! I can't count them because almost every year I have two or three and this is the first year I have only one, Jaime, but last year we have three, I think, I really can't say a specific number.

**Interviewer:** Okay… but, do you like having mentees?

**Interviewer 1:** Of course! Because if I have a lot of work I can say to the students "you know, help me with this". If I feel bad and I have a lot of…hmm, if I trust my students I can leave the class with my students and go out, you know.

**Interviewer:** It's good to work with someone. So according to that, do you think there should be more communication between colleagues of the same subject in order to reflect together?

**Interviewee 1:** Absolutely, here we have "departamento de inglés", the English department, we have meetings every week. I am the boss (laughs), my colleagues told me the boss and we have meetings every week, two hours, there we have to reflect about our weekly work we have to share our activities, or give ideas, or if my colleagues have any problem I can solve it. So, it's not important, it's very important. It's so important for the development of the classes and everything.

**Interviewer:** So, you have that instances that you have a meeting and then you reflect and tell stories about the classroom. It's very important. Do you think that you all, all the teachers involved in that meeting, improve together?

**Interviewee 1:** Of course! And we have a way… I go to observe classes and then I gave a feedback to the teacher, and them that teacher goes to another

class, not only the boss is going to the classes and looking to the colleagues, but all of us. So, sometimes it has happened to me that my colleague said "I don't know how to do this… this activity" Okay! Come to my class this day and you are gonna see how it works. You know, it's an internal feedback all the time, you know…

**Interviewer:** Excellent! So, do you all have instances to reflect together? Altogether, right? In which way? Apart from the meeting that you already said.

**Interviewee 1:** No, I think our weekly meeting is the only moment when we reflect about it, but if you speak about school in general, we have one week meeting too, all the teacher together to say if we have problems with any class or… girls, please! (shouting)… thank you! Hmm we all reflect about how we are working, what things we are missing and something like that.

**Interviewer:** Okay, Miss. Well, that's it, that's all the interview, thank you very much for your time and thank you for your answers, they were really good answers for us, so thank you very much.

**Interviewee:** Okay, Thank you!

**APPENDIX V: Reflection Journals**

**Journal 1**

Wednesday, August 24, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10th grade A

12:30-1:10 pm

      After greeting the students, I walked around the classroom in order to predict the future of some of them by reading their hands. When I did this I felt happy because all the students were paying attention to what I was doing, and they also laughed when I predicted some futures, such as, "you will become millionaire since you will be a famous Hollywood actress." When I finished predicting, I asked the students to tell me what the form that I used for predicting the future was (will/be going to) and what occupations they know except the ones that I already mentioned (dentist, teacher, actress, and football player) while predicting the future. This part was a little bit slow because the students did not know a lot of occupations, so I had to say most of them. I explained to the students what the forms mean, the difference between them, when to use them, and how to use them by writing on the whiteboard the positive and negative usage of both forms. However, before doing that, I asked the students if they knew something about the two forms and most of the students knew what they mean, some of them helped me to write the positive and negative forms, but none of them knew what the difference between both forms was. Next, in order to check if the students actually understood the content just taught, I

asked them to say a person who they know that is studying a program at university and predict his/her future when he/she is a professional by using will or be going to. This part did not work as I wanted because some students were speaking while I was giving the instructions, so when I walked around the classroom to help the students many of them asked me to explain them the instructions again. And when I asked them to share what they did, only a few students did it. Later, to make the students produce their knowledge, I asked three students to hand in each student a piece of paper, which contained three characteristics of a profession, and then I asked them to work in pairs, face to face. One of the students had to say the characteristics that are on the paper and his/her partner had to guess the occupation, and then in the other way around. When I was walking around in order to see how the students were working, most of them had finished doing the activity right, others did it by telling the four people in the group (the students are sat in groups of four) the characteristics that he/she had and asking all of them to guess the occupation, and the rest was still working. Only three students asked me to help them with some words that they had in their papers. Hence, I was glad because of how this activity worked because even though some students did not do it in pairs but in their groups, everybody worked well. Once the students finished guessing, I asked the students which profession from the ones that were written on the board they had, and at that moment I realized that everybody guessed the correct occupations. Finally, the teacher asked the students to look at the pictures that were projected (ten famous people), say their occupation, and predict their future. I had only two minutes to do this activity, so I was going to show only two or three pictures. The bell rang and nobody stood up to go so asked the students if they wanted to continue guessing famous people's future

or just leave the class until there and everybody, enthusiastically, shouted that wanted to continue. Honestly, I think that that activity was the one that worked the best since every single student was excited doing it – everybody participated.

Therefore, the class went well since it was possible to do all the activities, so that all the stages planned. However, it was difficult to keep some students in silence during the lesson, hence it was necessary to explain to same students, individually, the instructions of the activity on the production stage twice.

**Journal 2**

Friday, August 26, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10th grade A

12:30-1:10 pm

      I could not do the second class because the students went to the math classroom to have classes. This happened because my mentor teacher did not go to school that day due to the fact that she was sick, so the coordinator in charge of organizing the teachers when one is missing had told the math teacher and the students in advance that they would not have English classes (she did not know that I was going to assist to school that day). I knew this because I ran into one student and he told me, so I went to the math classroom, I asked the math teacher if I could do the class and he told me that he was sorry because he had already started his class. I felt really upset because that class was supposed to be mine.

**Journal 3**

Wednesday, August 31, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10th grade A

12:30-1:10 pm

I started the class five minutes later with half of the students because most of them were downstairs. They asked me if they could go downstairs to practice the national dance that they have to do in two more weeks, but I explained them that I really needed to do the classes. Three minutes after I started the class most of the students arrived and they told me that they were downstairs since they thought they would not have classes due to the fact that my mentor teacher was not at school. When the students were sat and in silence, I started the class again by asking them to say what they saw the last class with me, and most of the students remembered everything (the positive and negative forms of will and be going to). After that, I asked some of the students, "what will you do when you leave school?" And I wrote the questions on the whiteboard. All of the students that I asked said that they will go to university, even though some of them did not know what to study. Next, I asked the students to look at the questions written on the board and say the interrogative form of will and be going to. I was really glad about this because without telling them anything they were able to do the interrogative form correctly by looking at the example. Once everything was clear about the interrogative form, I gave each student a piece of paper in which there was one prediction. Even though I said the instructions of that activity, I gave them one

example, and all the students looked sure that they had understood how to do the activity, when I was walking around most of the students asked to explain to them what they were supposed to do again. I noticed some students a little bit complicated doing this activity but I helped them until they could do it right. After asking some students randomly to share the questions that they created, I gave each student a piece of paper in which there was a profession written. When I gave the instructions I said that they should not show the profession that they had but when I was walking around I realized that everybody had shown their pieces of paper to their groups, so I told the students to think of questions that they could ask their classmates even though they had already seen their partners' profession. I noticed that it worked anyway since the students imagined that they had not seen their partner's pieces of paper. Due to the fact that I had to start the class after the time established, I looked at the time when I was going to do the wrap-up activity and I had only two minutes left and I did not have a computer to project the pictures because I always project things by my mentor teacher's laptop but she was absent and I did not know it until I arrived at school. Although I had only two minutes and not a laptop to project the pictures, I showed the students the pictures on my cell phone, but I only could do half of the pictures (three). I think that the last activity did not work properly because the students were in a hurry since they knew the bell was about to ring, so they were not paying attention and they were not focused on the activity as they were supposed to be. Additionally, I could not do the activity as it was planned. Since the lack of time I could not ask the students to ask their classmates questions, but I made the questions in order to do it faster. Despite all the obstacles that I had during the class, I think the students learned the new content (interrogative form of will/be going to) and they were able to do

questions during the activity in the production stage, which is the most important.

**Journal 4**

Friday, September 2, 2016
Colegio Claudio Matte
10th grade A
12:30-1:10 pm


     I could not do the third class because my mentor teacher told me that she wanted to do this class since she was so behind with 10th grade A in comparison to 10th grade B.

**Journal 5**

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10<sup>th</sup> grade A

12:30-1:10 pm


     After the students got in the classroom and I greeted to them the students told me that my mentor teacher had told them that that day was the last day for them to finish their work of the book that they read. I told them that I really needed to do the class because it was about my thesis. I felt bad at that moment because my mentor teacher had told me before that I could do my class but I could not ask her in the class because she was not there. Due to the fact that it was ten minutes later, I decided to skip the warm-up activity so I gave each student a piece of paper for them to do the poster. I explained to them what they had to do, I walked around the class to see how they were working, I reminded the students to do the poster and not the work of the book and suddenly my mentor teacher arrived. She asked what they were doing, I said it was a poster for my thesis class and she told me that since she was so behind with them she needed the students to finish the work of the book that day because they would not have another day for that and she left. I felt upset because even though I had asked her if I could do my thesis class, she told the students to do another thing. So I walked around the class and I told every student to do both tasks at the same time (they both were in pairs so I asked one student to do one thing and the other student the other thing). Before the class ended, I asked one student per pair to stand up, show the poster and say

where they would go using will or going to. Despite all the difficulties, the students did it great because they did amazing drawings. Although most of them were really focused on finishing the work of the book, they did my poster, so that is the reason way I felt happy at the end – I really appreciated it. I could not do all of the activities planned, but I did the main activity which worked well despite everything.

**Journal 6**

Friday, September 9, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10th grade A

12:30-1:10 pm

I could not do the fourth class because my mentor teacher told me that all the tenth graders were not at school since they were in a trip.

**Journal 7**

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10th grade A

12:30-1:10 pm


I could not do the fourth class because the students were taking a simulation of PET.

**Journal 8**

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

Colegio Claudio Matte

10th grade A

12:30-1:10 pm

In this class, the students, in pairs, did a poster in which they had to draw something that represents their plan for Halloween. This activity took twenty minutes of the forty minutes of the class (the class started five minutes later). I think they took so long to draw their plan because they talked more than drew. I hurried them up because I told them that I need to do another activity with them, so I was walking around the class, going to each group and asking them to tell me what their plan was so I could give them feedback or help them to improve it. I felt a little bit upset because they were so slow to just draw something on a piece of paper, so that is why I hurried them up. After about ten minutes, even though not all of them had finished drawing, I asked the students to share with the class their plans – they had to show their drawings and tell what they would do on Halloween. One student per pair shared their plan but one student did not do it because neither he nor his partner drew anything, and I did not say anything about it because although I insisted that they had to draw something when I was helping them, they did not do it – one of them even got angry with me. This student and his girlfriend sit in different groups which are next to each other. When I was walking around to help them they were talking so I told them to separate and work with their respective pairs. After about three minutes I came back and they were still talking and I asked each of them to turn around

and work, and they did it. After a few minutes I came back and they were talking again, so I got bored and upset and I told them that they had to work, so I held the man's wrist in order to turn him around, he looked at me and said that I did not need to touch him and not even hold his wrist in order to turn him around. I felt really upset because they both never work; they are always talking and even hugging when they are supposed to be working, so after what he said I just told them both to work. Despite that pair, everybody participated and everybody used "be going to" properly when they were saying their plans aloud. Therefore, despite the pair that did not work, everybody else worked and well, so I felt really glad. I thought that they were not going to remember how to use "be going to" correctly because a long time had passed since I did the third practice but did remember, so I felt really happy about it.

**Journal 9**

Wednesday, October 5, 2016
Colegio Claudio Matte
10<sup>th</sup> grade A
12:30-1:10 pm

In this class I applied the last practice, which consisted in the students working in groups of four and interviewing each other about what their plans for Christmas were. This activity was done after the fourth practice, so I had fifteen minutes, which was fine because it was exactly the time that I had thought for this activity. I told them that they had three minutes to interview each other, which was around seven minutes in the end. When I was walking around the class to see how the groups were working I realized that two groups of the eleven were drawing so I told them that they were supposed to talk only and then share with the class, and some other groups were talking about other things so I started the interview with asking one of the students "what are you going to do at Christmas?" for the students to start working and know how to do it properly. I felt a little bit upset since some students were not doing what I asked them to do because after explaining the instructions I always ask if it is clear, everybody says yes, but apparently it is not true. At least nobody asked "what do I have to do?" I looked at my cell phone and I noticed that I was fine with the time so I went to all the groups and asked every students in every group to tell me what they were going to do at Christmas, and when the four students of each group finished telling me I asked them all what the common plan for that day in that group was and then I told them that one of them had to

say that when they were supposed to share with the whole class. When I finished doing this, I went to each group fast to ask them whether they were ready or not and they all said yes, so I stood in front of the class and asked one student of each group to share with the class what they were going to do. When they were sharing their plans I noticed that the representatives of the groups said what he/she was going to do at Christmas, not the common plan of the whole group for that day. I honestly do not know why the representatives of the groups did not do what I told them to do, which was to say the common plan of the group. Maybe they did not understand me when I told them to do so or they just did whatever they wanted to do. However, the idea was that the students talked and they did it both when they shared with the whole class and when they were interviewing each other in their own groups, so that I felt really happy.

**Journal 10**

Friday, October 7, 2016
Colegio Claudio Matte
10<sup>th</sup> grade A
12:30-1:10 pm


I did the last practice this day which was the same as the fifth practice – working in groups of four and interview each other, but this time about what they were going to do for summer vacation. Except the change of the topic, there was another difference from the fifth practice because when I greeted them, before asking them to sit down, I asked them to change seats, so they did not interview the same classmates that they had done before. Since they had already interviewed each other they knew how to do it, so when I was walking around the classroom in order to check how they were working I did not see the students doing another thing but interviewing each other, so I felt really happy. The bad thing was that they did not start doing what they had to do right at the beginning because when I began walking around I noticed that some students were studying for chemistry. At first, I told them to put their chemistry notebooks aside and do what they had to do, but then I realized that they were still studying for their test, so I told them to interview each other in groups and then, when they had finished, they would have time to study for their test, so that they started working. After about ten minutes I asked one students per group to share with the class his/her plan for summer vacation. In spite of the fact that I changed seats, they worked very well, so I was very glad. The bad thing of when they were sharing the class was that they were not sharing with the class

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but with me only because when the representatives of the groups were talking aloud everybody else was talking. I obviously asked them to be in silence all the time, but they used to talk anyway. Due to the fact that it was the last practicum I just wanted to finish so at the end I just let the talkative students to talk and just the other students listened. The important thing was me listening the representatives in order to see if what they were sharing was fine or not, and it was fine, so I was really glad. Nevertheless, only two students said only the action and omitted "be going to" at the beginning of the sentence, so I said the sentence how it was supposed to be – "be going to" and then the action that the student said – and the students repeated what I had said with a face expression that said that they knew that they had to say "be going to" but they just omitted maybe because it was obvious for them.

In general, like looking in an overall way since I began applying the practices, I think that the students in the last three practices worked better than in the three previous practices. I do not know why this happened, but I was really cheerful anyway.

**APPENDIX VI: Lesson Plans**

**LESSON PLAN 1 - Thesis**
**Grade: 10th grade**
**Date: August 24th**
**Lesson: 45 minutes.**
**Number of students: 46**

Content: Will/Be going to.
Main Objective: by the end of the class, the students will be able to make

predictions.

| | Stages | What the teacher does | Interaction | Timing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Warm-up | The teacher greets the students and writes the objective on the board. The teacher walks around the classroom and reads some students' hands aloud in order to predict their future occupation. The teacher writes the occupations on the board and asks students for more examples of occupations. | W/C | 5 minutes. |
| | Presentation | The teacher asks the students to tell him what the form he used during the warm-up was (future in affirmative). The students answer, and the teacher writes it on the board. The teacher writes the negative form as well, and then he explains how to use both forms. | W/C | 10 minutes. |
| | Practice | The teacher asks the students to open their books and do an activity which consists in asking a classmate what | S/SS W/C | 10 minutes. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | they will study when they leave school.  While the students are working the teacher writes more professions on the board in case they need them. After five minutes, the teacher asks some students to share with the class what their partners said about their future. | | |
| | Production | The students work in pairs. The teacher gives every student a piece of paper with three characteristics of any occupation. One student reads the characteristics and the other student has to guess what profession is, and then in the other way around. Finally, the teacher asks some students to share with the whole class the profession they guessed and say at least one characteristic that helped them guess it. | S/SS W/C | 15 minutes. |
| | Wrap-up | The teacher shows different pictures of famous people, and the students have to make predictions about their future. | W/C | 5 minutes. |

**LESSON PLAN 2 - Thesis**
**Grade: 10th grade**
**Date: August 31st**
**Lesson: 45 minutes**
**Number of students: 46**

Content: Will/Be going to.
Main Objective: by the end of the class, the students will be able to make predictions.

|  | Stages | What the teacher does | Interaction | Materials-Timing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Warm-up | The teacher greets the students and writes the objective on the board. The teacher asks the students "What will you do when you leave school?" | W/C | 5 minutes. |
|  | Presentation | The teacher asks the students to tell him what they saw the last class, so he makes a quick review of the affirmative and negative forms of the future. Then, the teacher asks what the form he used during the warm-up was (interrogative), the students answer, the teacher writes it on the board, and he explains how to use it. | W/C | 10 minutes. |
|  | Practice | The teacher gives each student a piece of paper in which there is a prediction written on one side, and he asks the students to write on the other side one or two questions that are fit for | S/SS W/C | 10 minutes. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | the prediction. For example, "I will go to university" -> What will you do when you leave school? Finally, the teacher asks some students to share their questions and the rest of the class agrees or disagrees. | | |
| Activate/production | The students work in pairs. The teacher gives every student a piece of paper which has an occupation on it, and asks them not to show it to anybody. The students ask their partners questions in future tense in order to guess the occupation on the piece of paper. Finally, the students share the professions that they guessed. | S/SS W/C | 15 minutes. |
| Wrap-up | The teacher projects five pictures of children and the students have to make predictions about their professional future. One student has to ask one student a question about the children's future and the student has to answer in either positive or negative. The latter has to ask one question to another student, and so on until seeing six pictures. | S/SS W/C | 5 minutes. |

**LESSON PLAN 3 - Thesis**
**Grade: 10th grade**
**Date: September 7th**
**Lesson: 45 minutes.**
**Number of students: 46**

Content: Be going to.
Main Objective: by the end of the class, the students will be able to make future plans.

| | Stages | What the teacher does | Interaction | Timing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Production | The students work in pairs, and the teacher gives each pair a piece of paper. The teacher tells the students that they have to do a poster, in which there should be a drawing that represents their plan for the national holiday (September 18th). Finally, one student per each pair shares with the whole class their plan. | S/SS W/C | 35 minutes. |

**LESSON PLAN 4 - Thesis**
**Grade: 10ᵗʰ grade**
**Date: October 5ᵗʰ**
**Lesson: 45 minutes.**
**Number of students: 46**

Content: Be going to.
Main Objective: by the end of the class, the students will be able to make future plans.

| | Stages | What the teacher does | Interaction | Timing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Production | The students work in pairs, and the teacher gives each pair a piece of paper. The teacher tells the students that they have to do a poster, in which there should be a drawing that represents their plan for Halloween. Finally, one student per each pair shares with the whole class their plan. | S/SS W/C | 20 minutes. |

**LESSON PLAN 5 - Thesis**
**Grade: 10th grade**
**Date: October 5th**
**Lesson: 45 minutes.**
**Number of students: 46**

Content: Be going to.
Main Objective: by the end of the class, the students will be able to make future plans.

| | Stages | What the teacher does | Interaction | Timing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Production | The students work in groups of four. The teacher asks the students to interview each other about what they are going to do at Christmas. Finally, the teacher asks one student per group to share with the rest of the class their plans. | S/SS W/C | 15 minutes. |

**LESSON PLAN 6 - Thesis**
**Grade: 10<sup>th</sup> grade**
**Date: October 7<sup>th</sup>**
**Lesson: 45 minutes.**
**Number of students: 46**

Content: Be going to.
Main Objective: by the end of the class, the students will be able to make future plans.

| | Stages | What the teacher does | Interaction | Timing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Production | The students work in groups of four. The teacher asks the students to interview each other about what they are going to do on summer vacation. Finally, the teacher asks one student per group to share with the rest of the class their plans. | S/SS W/C | 45 minutes. |