A Topic-Based-Functional Syllabus Proposal to Promote Students' Conversation Through Outdoor Games

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A TOPIC-BASED-FUNCTIONAL SYLLABUS PROPOSAL TO PROMOTE STUDENTS' CONVERSATION THROUGH OUTDOOR GAMES

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Abstract

When it comes to designing a syllabus, English teachers endeavour to seek for the most suitable strategies, techniques and approaches that help to meet students' needs and make language learning a relevant experience to their learners. Games, for instance, are a clear sample of that search since a great number of studies has shown how games may act as a trigger to promote interaction and language practice in EFL. On the other hand, conversation activities are necessary by many teachers and students in the English classes; however, lessons planned on grammar and vocabulary prevail more often than activities in which students hold conversations. In view of this, the present study aimed to propose a topic-based-functional syllabus using outdoor games to promote students' conversation established in the CEFR (2018), companion volume. To conduct this study, a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and observations were selected to gather the data. After analyzing the information gathered, we determined and explained in depth the aspects needed to design a topic-based-functional syllabus for promoting learners' conversations in 8th grade.

Keywords: *Topic-Based-Functional Syllabus, Outdoor Games and Game-Based Learning, Conversation.*

Resumen

Cuando se trata de diseñar un syllabus, los maestros de inglés se esfuerzan por buscar las estrategias, técnicas y enfoques más adecuados que ayuden a satisfacer las necesidades de los estudiantes y hacer del aprendizaje de idiomas una experiencia relevante para sus alumnos. Los juegos, por ejemplo, son una muestra clara de esa búsqueda, ya que una gran cantidad de estudios han demostrado cómo los juegos pueden actuar como un desencadenante para promover la interacción y la práctica del lenguaje. Por otro lado, muchos profesores y estudiantes consideran que las actividades de conversación son necesarias en las clases de inglés, sin embargo, hay más clases planeadas en gramática y vocabulario que en actividades en donde los estudiantes mantengan conversaciones. En vista de esto, el presente estudio tuvo como objetivo proponer un topic-based-functional syllabus utilizando juegos al aire libre para promover las actividades de conversación en los estudiantes como se establece en el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia, (2018), tomo complementario. Para realizar este estudio, se seleccionó un cuestionario, entrevistas semiestructuradas y observaciones para recolectar los datos. Después de analizar la información recopilada, determinamos y explicamos en profundidad los aspectos necesarios para diseñar un topic-based-functional syllabus para fomentar la conversación de los alumnos en el grado octavo.

Conceptos clave: *Topic-Based-Functional Syllabus, Juegos al Aire Libre, Aprendizaje basado en Juegos*, *Conversación.*

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. Introduction

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) has always been a challenge for teachers who are constantly looking for innovative alternatives that facilitate this process. In that sense, syllabus design has played an important role in the creation of either a course or a subject area. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the design of a syllabus comes from a "necessity" or emerges from the notion of a need of the learner, which means that every syllabus is unique since it addresses distinct necessities of a specific group of people.

Nonetheless, thanks to the diverse approaches to syllabus design, it is possible to combine them or adapt them depending on the context and as long as they manage to meet students' necessities. Moreover, designing a syllabus requires selecting a specific approach or approaches that enable teachers to teach the contents planned for carrying out the English classes. Among these approaches is Game-Based Learning, that is founded on the use of games in which the learners have to achieve certain learning outcomes. Thus, the present study embraces outdoor games as the proposed games to be implemented in this syllabus proposal since through outdoor games, students learn to work in groups and experience the English language interacting with each other (Neuman, 2004).

Some studies founded on the design of a functional syllabus and a topic-based syllabus, along with studies concerning games and outdoor games, have demonstrated positive results for second language learning. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to explore how significant the combination of a topic-based and a functional syllabus would be to promote conversation activities through outdoor games.

Previous observations and interviews to an English teacher and 8th grade students along with revisions to the school curriculum at a public school in Monteria, revealed that EFL classes are mainly planned based on grammar topics and vocabulary in lieu of including more tasks that may promote 8ᵗʰ graders' conversations in the spoken interaction activity as posed in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), companion volume. Although some activities are carried out to involve students in conversations planned in advance, these are not real conversation scenarios to achieve the goal proposed by the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) included in the suggested curriculum of Colombia for the English classes. Moreover, it was observed that the majority of the learners in this grade still have a lack of basic vocabulary, trouble with simple grammar rules and even more they present difficulties when holding a simple conversation in the spoken interaction activity. Besides, it was observed and some students uttered that they were interested in topics related to their own culture, such as customs and traditions.

Bearing all this in mind, it could be said that there is a necessity for designing a school syllabus that may serve as a guidance to teachers on how to design lessons that promote students' conversation in the spoken interaction activity. In that fashion, a topic-based functional syllabus based on outdoor games might be an interesting response to learners' wants and needs. The former should be addressed in terms of planning and implementing funnier lessons, as it was expressed by some of the students: *"Me gustaría que implementáramos actividades didácticas como juegos… actividades así, pa' que...para que ajá uno se divierta y aprenda a la vez".* And the latter should be tackled from the cultural perspective, strengthening the sense of belonging towards cultural elements of the Caribbean coast that are passed down from generation to generation.

Thence, this study attempted to propose a topic-based-functional syllabus, based on outdoor games, to promote 8th grade students' conversation in the spoken interaction activity during EFL classes. Along the same lines, this study intended to answer the following question; What features need to be considered for designing a topic-based-functional syllabus based on outdoor games to promote 8th grade students' conversation in the spoken interaction activity?

This study shed light on suggesting English teachers to consider a syllabus based on outdoor games as a guidance when planning tasks, since games might act as a trigger to foster learners' conversations in the spoken interaction activity and they may create a congenial environment in which participants interact each other, experience the language and learn social skills (Wright, et al., 2006, Byrne,1998, as cited in Deesri, 2002). Moreover, this study might show possibly the usefulness of outdoor games in promoting students' conversations and the possibility to reinforce through games outdoors cultural elements that nowadays due to the internet and technological advances have been left a little aside, and thus, to get the most out of games in EFL classes.

For this syllabus we considered outdoor games since these games may offer a new environment where the learners may get to interact and practice the language while doing physical activity. Thus, it would be interesting to explore how the combination of physical exercise and a different setting would help teachers to engage learners in the classes and promote conversation activities, interaction and the development of social skills.

In the subsequent pages we describe chapter 2, Theoretical Framework, that contains the main concepts of this study as well as the literature review in which some researchers had developed similar studies. Chapter 3, Methodology, which describes the

type of research that this inquiry follows and explains the data collection procedures, the

context and participants and the data analysis that was carried out in this research. Chapter

4, Findings, that depicts the results found to answer the research question. Chapter 5,

Discussion, which explains the significance of the findings, and finally Chapter 6,

Conclusions, that reports the implications, limitations and suggestions for further research.

2. Theoretical Framework

The upcoming chapter explores the following concepts: Topic-Based-Functional syllabus, Outdoor Games and Game-Based Learning, and Conversation in the Spoken Interaction. It also describes some national and international studies that tackle some content-based and functional syllabus designs as well as studies addressing outdoor games for ELT.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 Topic-Based-Functional Syllabus

Before defining the type of syllabus on which this study was based, it is important to know what the word syllabus entails as such. According to Nunan (1988) a syllabus is a description of content that serves as the base for preparing in advance different types of courses and the role of the syllabus designer is to choose and evaluate the above-mentioned content. In this sense, a syllabus involves deciding what content must be taught, how it may be taught and why this will be taught, which in turn, implies first knowing students' wants, lacks and needs; in other words, conducting a needs analysis to the target population. Among the language teaching syllabi are Functional syllabus and Topic-based syllabus, the former is usually combined with the Notional syllabus; however, as the main purpose of this study was to make a syllabus proposal based on promoting students' conversation in the spoken interaction, the Notional syllabus may not fit this purpose since it focuses more on the teaching of concepts, terms and notions related to the language leaving aside communicative competencies.

The Functional syllabus has to do with one whose course content is based on a variety of language functions; to put it simply, students are the ones who give the target language a specific purpose and they decide when and why to use it. As was stated by Ek and Trim (1998, p. 27) *Threshold Level (1990)*, language functions are "what people do by means of language" and are classified into six wide-ranging categories comprising impart and seek factual information, express and find out attitudes, get things done, socialize, structure discourse and communication repair. Hence, people make use of the target language to perform different communicative functions such as requests, approvals, complaints, compliments and so forth. Moreover, Ek and Trim (1998) state that language functions can be fulfilled either directly or indirectly, and the indirect fulfillment of language functions may differ in relation to the context where the communication is taking place. Thus, depending on the situation, learners use an array of expressions that serves them to fulfill different language functions and at the same time may accomplish the same function in an implicit manner. That means, those learners who perform the language functions non directly can use the target language spontaneously.

As for the topic-based syllabus, better-known as content-based, this is concerned with teaching of themes or specific contents that are derived from another subject area or matter using the language that pupils need to learn. According to Nunan (1988), it is the topic that provides the starting point for this type of syllabus; thus, the language functions, vocabularies and activities or tasks will be determined depending on the topic selected. Furthermore, Krahnke (1987) utters that one of the greatest benefits of applying a topic-based syllabus is founded on its motivational factor; this implies that students get encouraged to learn the target language when a content that is of their interest is presented

in a foreign language class. Hence, in this syllabus, pupils get to learn themes that they consider relevant and riveting while practicing the language. In addition, Afshin and Ghaderi (2015) point out that the main purpose of using a topic-based syllabus is not to provide learners all the information related to the topic chosen but to give students the opportunity to explore information regarding the topic while associating it with the target language. In that fashion, learners may get familiarized with certain topics through the language. With all this in mind, the topic-based syllabus is centred on language use being subject to a specific content but, along with the functional syllabus, involves learners in using the language to express what they want and fulfill different functions while learning a particular theme.

On the other hand, each type of syllabus has its strong points as well as its shortcomings. The main drawbacks of the topic-based syllabus may be made up for the strength points of the functional syllabus and vice versa. In view of this, these two types of syllabi can complement each other to create a well-structured syllabus that might help enhance students' conversation in the spoken interaction.

2.1.2 Outdoor Games and Game-Based Learning

To understand better what outdoor games and game-based learning are, it is important firstly to fathom out the concept of game. Thus, games are ludic activities that comprise a set of rules involving participants in meaningful experiences linked to learning and to sociocultural contexts where learners learn rules and social behaviors. Games build up a congenial learning environment where pupils interact, communicate and construct rapport with others (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006). Additionally, because of its fun

factor, games avoid the classes to become tedious and dull (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016, p. 127). When students are involved in games, they are taken out of ordinary and monotonous lessons which in turn increase students' interest and motivation towards learning. Likewise, students' participation might be more active, thus, shy pupils could gain self-confidence when giving ideas and expressing their feelings (Mei & Yu-Jing, 2000, as cited in Gozcu, et al., 2016). Along these lines, games are a worthwhile tool that can be used within the teaching-learning process since they entail emotions which make children's experiences remarkable, resulting in the enrichment of social abilities such as cooperation, empathy, respect, and so forth. What is more, games are fitting sources for motivation that nudge students to take risks, generating a meaningful atmosphere where learners use the target language in an authentic context.

On the other hand, games can be used in several fields with different purposes; for that reason, there is no unique classification for them. For instance, there are educational games, video games, board games, sports games, etc., however, in this syllabus proposal outdoor games were chosen because they are the most suitable games in response to students' claims for funnier lessons outside the classroom. This type of game serves kids as a good way to strengthen their bones and muscles as well as decrease the risks of suffering heart diseases, diabetes, obesity, etc., during their growth process (Neuman, J., 2004). Along these lines, it is pertinent to highlight that outdoor games, in fact, form a crucial part in what is recognize, in the educational field as "Outdoor Activities" which, in turn, may lead to what is known as "Outdoor Learning". This practice entails "positive memories and lasting benefits impact academic achievement, new skills learning, personal and social development, care for the environment, career and professional development, wellbeing

and mental health" (Institute of Outdoor Learning [IOL], 2018). Hence, those people who learn in the open air exposed to a different setting instead of being seated in a classroom for hours, they do gain beneficial and never-ending outcomes that might make learning a unique and meaningful experience, boosting their personal and professional growth.

In his book "*Education and Learning Through Outdoor Activities"*, Neuman (2004) stated that any activity carried out outdoors aid to the growth of children's self-confidence, tolerance and the development of their abilities as well as a strong sense of fair play among them while they learn to work in teams and communicate with each other. Additionally, teachers have many reasons for using outdoor games for learning, including the pursuit of theoretical knowledge through experience-based learning, stimulating feelings for nature, exploring real objects with multiple senses, and promoting collaboration (Braund & Reiss, 2006; Jordet, 2007, as cited in Wilhelmsson, 2012, p.10). According to Wilhelmsson (2012), although outdoor learning may be compared to non-formal learning in the school context, this practice is characterized by being more flexible than formal learning. In other words, despite the fact that outdoor learning can be considered informal, it may be carried out in a school setting and be adjustable for the learners' needs. With all this in mind, it is undeniable that learning through games outdoors comprises a set of advantages since these turn the way students acquire knowledge into a whole new process of learning filled with experiences that cannot be gained inside the classroom.

Over time, many researchers and experts in the educational field have been exploring and looking for new strategies and methods to facilitate and enhance the teaching-learning process. In this search, games have become the focus of what is known nowadays as game-based learning (GBL). This approach is considered an effective tool to

engage and let students acquire knowledge in a funny and interesting way by playing games with clearly stated learning goals, (Pho, A., & Dinscore, A., 2015). In that fashion, Caponeto, Earp, and Ott (2014) present Game-Based Learning as "the adoption of games for educational purposes". That is to say, any type of game whose purpose is only for entertainment can be used to teach a topic and thus, achieve an educational objective. GBL, due to its flexibility, the rules of the games can be modified and contextualized to teach what the teacher wants, because aiming the goals proposed while students play and learn, is what matters.

Game-based learning is not just about carrying out games, it is also crucial to understand the array of benefits it may offer and the role played by the individuals involved. Thus, in GBL, teachers' role has to do with designing the learning objectives for the lessons, assessing and guiding the students through their process. In other words, the teacher monitors students' learning while they play, experience, and interact with one another. Students' role, on the other hand, is entirely active, in which the learners themselves participate in their learning, get autonomy, develop creativity, critical thinking, improve their comprehension, practice social skills, group work skills, and so forth, (Institute of play, [IoP], 2007). With all this in mind, it could be said that this type of learning does not have boundaries because it let pupils dive into friendly competitions, challenges, risk-taking, and participation in many other actions during the games, which in turn lead to a more meaningful learning and more prepared students.

2.1.3 Conversation

Before getting into the concepts of conversation and spoken interaction, it is relevant to explain first, where these concepts come from. In the CEFR, companion volume, released in 2018, is stated that listening, speaking, reading and writing were replaced because they do not reflect the "complex reality of communication" as such (CEFR, companion volume, 2018, p.30). In other words, real life communication involves more than the four skills established in the CEFR in 2018. For that reason, it was proposed four modes of communication (reception, production, interaction and mediation) that would somehow depict "real-life language use", based on the premise that interaction is where "meaning is co-constructed".

Interaction, according to the CEFR (2018), is part of the communicative language activities and at the same time is broken into spoken interaction activity, written interaction activity and online interaction activity. The spoken interaction activity is organized by three macro-functions comprising interpersonal, transactional, and evaluative. Within the interpersonal we can find the scale for conversation that take place in the spoken interaction activity.

Spoken interaction is defined as the action in which students and instructors produce the language, particularly by talking and shifting the role of the interlocutors. Hence, during communication the speaker (who expresses ideas) becomes the listener and the listener (who listens to prepare an answer) becomes the speaker and vice versa. Thus, interaction implies communicating using the language with a purpose while interlocutors take turns within the communication (CEFR, 2001). Spoken Interaction in EFL (English as

a Foreign Language) classes is evident when teachers and students intervene to exchange information and discuss about common topics or issues that are being tackled inside the classroom. Interaction also happens when students work in groups because they have to talk to each other to achieve the goal of the activity (Oliver, R., et al., 2014).

On the other hand, spoken interaction is a wide concept which may not be stated in simple words since there are several factors that might influence people's spoken interaction. However, the CEFR (2018), stated a scale for spoken interaction that is broken down into a series of aspects which in turn contain a set of descriptors for each common reference level (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). According to CEFR (2018), spoken interaction comprises the following components: overall spoken interaction, understanding a native speaker interlocutor, conversation, informal discussion, formal discussion and meetings, goal-oriented cooperation, transactions to obtain goods and services, information exchange and interviewing and being interviewed. Bearing this in mind, the present study aimed at the conversation activity since we observed that there were few activities in which the students practice the language in conversations during English classes. For that reason, the conversation scale was taken as a key point for this study since we needed it as a reference to get the students to the conversational level we propose to achieve throughout this syllabus proposal. This scale entails three aspects; setting, topic and language functions that each conversation must have to be called a conversation as such. In other words, holding a conversation is determined by a particular context, a common content and the purpose people use the language for.

Conversation is the act in which two or more interlocutors share information orally with one another. Similarly, conversation could be described as the exchange of ideas,

thoughts or data by talking (Dobson, J. M., 1981). Thus, real life conversation occurs naturally and the information go back and forth verbally. According to the CEFR (2018), conversation, is closely related to a "social function", that is to say, the term "social" refers to people's interaction and the way people use the language to communicate while interacting refers to the function.

2.2 Literature Review

Over time, the pursuit of new strategies for enhancing the teaching-learning process has led researchers to design different syllabuses that help students learn and acquire the language easily. Likewise, teaching approaches, for instance game-based learning, have been developed looking for alternatives which involve learners in a meaningful and successful language learning. In that fashion, the following studies that dealt with the design of syllabi and the use of outdoor games in EFL classes were a benchmark to design a syllabus proposal aiming to the findings in the needs analysis.

A thesis dissertation by Elvia Inés Curipallo Lizano (2019) was developed in a high school in Ambato-Ecuador so as to determine a functional-notional approach as a communicative strategy for the English speaking skill. This research sought to propose interactive and interesting activities that enabled speaking communication through a syllabus focused on speaking productive skill and sub-skills such as fluency and interaction. Furthermore, this quasi-experimental study managed a dependent variable (speaking) and an independent one (functional-notional approach). Besides, a survey, pre-test, post-test, and an assessment rubric as the data collection procedures were applied, and the results revealed that activities based on the Functional-Notional approach highly

influenced the development of students' speaking skill. In this regard, this functional approach was a reference for us to keep in mind the factors she considered to promote language production under a functional syllabus and to identify the usefulness of the functional approach in our study, and thus, increase the feasibility to carry out our syllabus proposal in the future successfully.

Another study by Cem Alptekin, Gülcan Ercetin and Yasemin Bayyurt (2013) in Istanbul, Turkey was conducted to examine the effectiveness of a theme-based syllabus in comparison to a grammatical syllabus for 10-year-old learners of English in primary school. In this research, the authors pointed out that there are few studies in which are shown the benefits of a theme-based syllabus in primary school despite the fact that this approach has been applied in other contexts with excellent results. In view of this, the study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a theme-based syllabus, better known as topic-based instruction, compared to a structural syllabus. Moreover, the researchers used a control group and an experimental group and each of them was assigned one of these types of syllabus, receiving instruction for two years. Throughout this longitudinal study, a Cambridge YLE test was used three times and some semi-structured interviews were applied to students selected randomly. The findings revealed that after implementing the syllabi, the theme-based syllabus showed a relevant development on students' language proficiency rather than the students who worked with the grammatical syllabus. With all this in mind, this research attests that a theme-based syllabus undoubtedly helped students in their learning process by including topics of their interest. This finding endorses our syllabus proposal because it may demonstrate a positive effect in students' language learning for possible implementations of this topic-based-functional syllabus proposal.

In 2011, Sulistyowati carried out a study on encouraging EFL students to interact: the playing outdoor games at the Muria Kudus University. This research tackled the issue that many Indonesian students face since they learn the English language using books that entailed several tasks which gave emphasis to linguistics components such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and so forth. This study sought to share the value of using outdoor games in teaching and learning English in terms of developing the students' character in social situation. This research used questionnaires applied to fourth semester students of the English department at the Muria Kudus University; its results revealed that outdoor games remind the students their childhood when being happy and actively playing. The findings also showed that students were aware of implied values of games such as trust, activeness, speed, decision making, cooperation, courage and concentration as well as the advantages and disadvantages that outdoor games bring forth within their program. On this respect, this study may act as an underpinning to our study because it deals with the use of outdoor games to promote the development of interaction among EFL learners. In view of this, Sulistyowati's study addressed key concepts that acted as a point of departure to develop essential ideas to our research study; however, the author focused on analyzing interaction not as a communicative skill but as a social skill that needs to be developed in a real setting when learning a second language.

A similar study conducted by Hanny (2013) in Indonesia in a primary school, made an analysis of EFL outdoor activities at SD Sekolah Alam Insan Mulia Surabaya (SAIMS). This study identified that children at school face many problems when learning English due to the great differences this language has with their mother tongue and the limited time for the English classes. For that reason, teachers of English had to use some teaching methods

to boost students' learning within the EFL classes. Owing to this, the study sought to explore how the English teacher implemented outdoor activities in EFL teaching. Thence, the purpose of this study was to explain the use of EFL teaching through outdoor activities which were posed in three times, pre-outdoor activity, while-outdoor activity, and post-outdoor activity. Besides, the author carried out this research under a qualitative research design and the main participant was an EFL teacher of first and second grade at SD Sekolah Alam Insan Mulia Surabaya (SAIMS). The data was gathered by self-recording observations, interviews, and field notes; then, the information was analyzed using: data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification. Thus, with the previous elicitation procedures, the findings revealed that through outdoor activities the teacher gave students the opportunity to learn by experiencing the language in a real environment, using real objects, and taking advantage of the concrete experience of the students; likewise, it suggested that the activities should be well-planned and according to the level of the learners. In light of these results, this research conducted in a primary school tackled some interesting points regarding games that may be a substantial support to our study since it emphasized on the multiple benefits that outdoor activities bring forth within the EFL classes.

In 2010, Urrutia & Vega conducted a study on encouraging teenagers to improve their speaking skills through games in a Colombian Public School. This research explored the issues that 10-grade students faced in the classroom when they got involved in oral participation since they felt frightened of making mistakes owing to criticism. The study used different types of games as a strategy to increase motivation and students' oral production within the English lesson. This action research study used video recordings,

questionnaires, and journals revealing that students had a more positive attitude towards English when using games. Results also showed that learners felt motivated playing in a comfortable environment without any pressure. The research also showed that students engaged more performing different games which increased participation. Finally, students' fear to speak in English decreased considerably, so they were able to communicate orally showing more self-confidence. Hence, Urrutia and Vega's study was a benchmark for this research study, since demotivation and students' fears towards English are also issues entailed when using games.

All in all, the studies above depicted the benefits of applying either a topic-based syllabus to catch students' interest through topics they find riveting and a functional one to fulfill different language functions that they might use in a real context. Besides, the previous studies showed the positive effect of outdoor games and outdoor activities in the development of, on one hand, social skills such as interaction and character building, and on the other hand language skills such as speaking, vocabulary to learn the target language. In view of this, the present study intended to design a topic-based-functional syllabus based on outdoor games as a proposal to promote 8th grade students' conversation in the spoken interaction from a public school in Monteria, Cordoba.

3. Methodology

In the forthcoming chapter are described the research approach, methods, context questions, and data collection procedures used in this study.

 3.1 Type of Study

This study followed a descriptive qualitative approach whose purpose was to explore what features need to be considered for designing a topic-based-functional syllabus based on outdoor games to promote 8th graders' conversation when taking part in the spoken interaction activity. In this sense, the qualitative approach tries to describe, understand and interpret the phenomena that occurs in a society or community and that usually are reflected in the experiences of the people involved. (Hernández, R., Fernandez, C. & Baptista, P., 2014). "Qualitative research, thus, refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things". (Lune, H. & Berg, B., 2017, p. 12). In other words, qualitative research focuses on describing and analyzing characteristics, relevant aspects, behaviors, etc. within a group of people that lived a problem.

This approach allowed us to understand first-hand the phenomenon and why it was taking place within the EFL classes. Thus, with a complete view of the necessities of the individuals involved, we could determine that a topic-based-functional syllabus was the most appropriate to address the problem. Additionally, it might allow us to show that a topic-based-functional syllabus based on game-based learning approach, might promote communicative skills regarding conversation, particularly, in a different setting (outside the classroom) and thus break the mold of traditional classes.

This research proposal intended to seek the answer for the following question: What features need to be considered for designing a Topic-Based-Functional syllabus based on outdoor games to promote 8th graders' conversation when taking part in the spoken interaction activity?

3.2 Context and Participants

This study was carried out at a public school located in the northwest of Monteria, Cordoba (Colombia). Escuela Normal Superior de Monteria has all the levels required by the Colombian government (preschool, primary, and secondary) as well as the cycle of complementary education comprised by two more years after the 11. grade to get a teacher-training certificate qualification to teach in primary school. Furthermore, this school has approximately 2.300 students enrolled, and it is estimated that there are around 44 students per classrooms that belong to the socioeconomic strata 1 and 2. Nevertheless, for this study the teacher of English of 8th grade and a sample of 19 students from 8th grade between the ages 11 and 13 years old was selected, to carry out questionnaires and semi-structured interviews for the need analysis to decide the approach and the type of syllabus that best fitted the needs, wants and lacks of the students.

3.3 Data collection Procedures

In order to gather the information in this study, some data collection techniques were implemented. First, observations which imply going beyond of what is seen, that is to say, observing is not only watching with our eyes, it entails interpreting situations, taking into account details and behaviors of the participants involved. (Hernández, et al.,2014). Hence, "observations are not simply looking at something ("sitting down to see the world,

taking notes"); it implies going in depth into social situations and maintaining an active role, as well as permanent reflection. Being attentive to details, events, and interactions" (Hernández, et al.,2014, p.399). In other words, observing means scrutinizing any situation or event that might not be overlooked because the more detailed the observations are, the more reliable the results will be. Observations, done through the teaching practicum process of one of the researchers at school contributed to this study to follow students' process and realize that the majority of learners do not meet the level they are supposed to get by 8th grade in terms of the communicate competences as it was proposed in the suggested curriculum of Colombia. Besides, students' behavior during classes evidenced boredom and demotivation when working on some receptive and productive skills inside the classroom. Furthermore, these observations were a key point to determine the topics for the syllabus since student manifested a significant interest towards the cultural component of their region; for instance, they sometimes asked for how to say in English traditional symbols, common sayings and typical food of the Caribbean coast.

Second, semi-structured interviews were required to understand from the participant's perspectives their opinions, ideas, and experiences about the English class in the school (Kvale, S., 2007). In that fashion, "semi-structured interviews are simply conversations in which you know what you want to find out about- and so have a set of questions to ask … but the conversation is free to vary and is likely to change between participants" (Miles, J., & Gilbert, P., 2005, p.182) In this line of thoughts, semi-structured interviews are those questions that the researcher has prepared in advance to start the interview; however, the interviewer can make more questions if there are points that perhaps were coming up during the interview. With all this in mind, semi-structured

interviews (via WhatsApp) together with the questionnaires applied, provided good pieces of information to identify students' desire for funnier lessons and the need for classes promoting and emphasizing on communicative language activities and aspects of their own culture to achieve the A2 level proposed in the suggested curriculum of Colombia.

Last but not least, questionnaires applied through Google Forms to the students and the teacher, gave us; the learners' wants, lacks, and needs, for the need analysis of the syllabus which helped us understand the situation of the students regarding the English language learning at school; for that reason, we got to the conclusion to integrate a topic-based with a functional syllabus and to select a game-based approach based on outdoor games to promote students' conversation when taking part in spoken interaction activities during the games.

3.4 Data Analysis

The information gathered in the needs analysis was analyzed using the triangulation method. "Triangulation" in research is concerned with the implementation of two or more data collection procedures that are compared to response to a research question. Through this method the results tend to be more reliable and it depicts the findings objectively (Heale, R. & Forbes, D., 2003). In that fashion, the data analyzed offers a more understandable view of the results Similarly, Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) define "Triangulation" as a verification process that endorses the legitimacy of a study by contrasting different points of view with various data collection methods. Therefore, this method strengthens the reliability of what was found in different elicitation procedures and allows the researchers to corroborate whether there is enough consistency in the findings or not.

4. Findings

In this chapter it is described in depth the results found through the data collection procedures that attempted to answer the main question in this research. Hence, this section depicts the aspects to be considered for designing a topic-based-functional syllabus to promote students' conversation.

The research question was posed to identify each of the aspects required in the design of this syllabus proposal. The findings respond to the question by stating and explaining every aspect included in the syllabus for its design and its feasible implementation to foster and possibly enhance students' conversation through outdoor games.

4.1 Needs Analysis

To conduct our needs analysis, the subsequence steps according to Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987) were followed; target situation analysis, present situation analysis and learning situation analysis. Nevertheless, before delving into the first step, it is important to contextualize our needs analysis. Thus, the target population consisted of 19 students who are between 11 and 13 years old in 8th grade at school Normal Superior de Monteria. This educational institution is located in the northwest of Monteria, Cordoba (Colombia), exactly in Juan XXIII neighborhood. Moreover, the students' socioeconomic strata are 1 and 2 and they receive six hours per week of English classes since the school has been one of the pioneers of promoting Bilingualism. The classes are delivered in ordinary classrooms but some physical elements such as desks and chairs in poor condition along with the lack of technological resources are constantly affecting the classes in a negative way.

This needs analysis included, three semi-structured interviews with five open-ended questions and one questionnaire with 10 close-ended questions. The first two interviews were designed for a focus group conformed by 19 students, but one was face-to-face whereas the other, together with the last interview designed for the teacher in charge of the group, was via WhatsApp. These instruments were carried out in order to gather information regarding the context and learning needs of the students.

4.1.1 Target Situation Analysis

The population was composed of 10 females and 9 males between the age of 11 and 13 at 8th grade of a public institution. The frequency of meeting of the English lessons are 6 hours per week in secondary, and classes are taught 60% in English while the 40% left is in the mother tongue, just to give instructions, clarify doubts and questions. Although the school authorities understand that all the receptive and productive skills are important, the main focuses are given to writing and reading. It is expected that students will acquire an A2 English level proficiency since the school is involved in Monteria bilingual with a higher hourly intensity than other public schools in the city.

After the interviews and the questionnaire, we unveiled that firstly, the majority of the students need to learn English because it may increase their opportunities to get a job or a scholarship in another country, which means that involving students in more conversational activities may help them to practice the target language and open up a world of opportunities for them in the future. Figure 1, showed students' answer to the question: Why do you need to learn the English language?

Figure 1

*Question 3. Google forms students' questionnaire*

Likewise, in the interviews, some students conveyed a similar answer in which they said that the situations where they may need the English language have to do with future opportunities such as the previously mentioned. This was evidenced by one of the students' answer to the question: In what situations do you think you may need the English language? *"En el futuro creo que será muy importante el inglés, para mí, eh::: para resolver entrevistas de trabajo, viajes, para ganar una beca, y para todo esto saber inglés sería una gran ventaja".*

Secondly, we evidenced the need of the students for more dynamic and interactive strategies or resources to facilitate the way they learn. Through the questionnaire 63,2 % of the students manifested they learned better by playing games and 57,9 % said that watching videos, movies, TV programs etc. Figure 2. showed students' response to the question: How do you learn better the English language?

Figure 2

Question 1. Google forms students' questionnaire
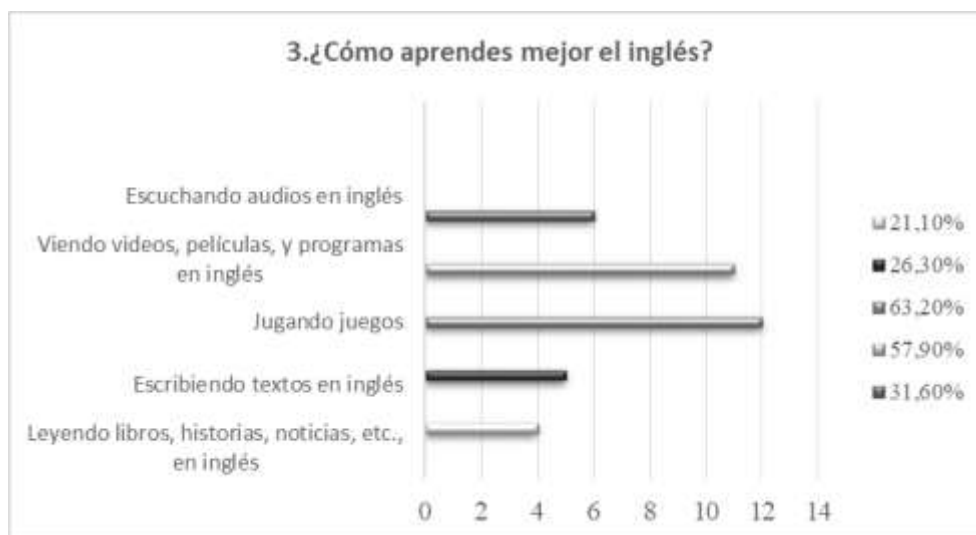
The previous graphic demonstrated that for this syllabus we considered how pupils

learned better so as to adapt the activities that facilitate their English learning process.

Hence, through games students' learning would be more meaningful since it is part of their

learning style. In that fashion, the question: What activities do you think would help you to

learn the English language easily? pointed out to confirm that ludic activities such as games

may enhance students' chance to practice, improve and learn the English language, as one

of the interviewed students expressed: "*Las actividades que creo que me podrían ayudar a*

aprender inglés con más facilidad son las actividades lúdicas, y que sen:::y que se empleen

más actividades en las que tengamos que mantener una conversación en inglés".

4.1.2 Present Situation Analysis

The majority of the students that are enrolled in 8th grade in this school and have a

background since 6th grade is assumed to have gained a wide variety of vocabulary and

basic reading and writing skills whereby their strength has to do with grammatical

structures, as said clearly by the teacher after the question: What do you think is the skill

students develop the most during the English classes? *"La escritura, eh::: acá se trabaja*

mucho la parte escrita y en segundo lugar la lectura". Thus, the present analysis situation

revealed; first, students' weaknesses lay mainly in speaking, since they do not feel

confident enough to hold a conversation owing to the fact that they are shy or they are

afraid of making mistakes. This is seen in figure 4. where they were asked: How much

capable do you feel to hold a simple conversation?

Figure 4

Question 8. Google forms students' questionnaire

This graphic reflected in a wide range students' shyness towards having a short

conversation, which led us to think in a better way to keep students learning and

participating in conversations while they get self-confidence and feel secure in a

comfortable scenario. Similarly, one of the students supported the previous information
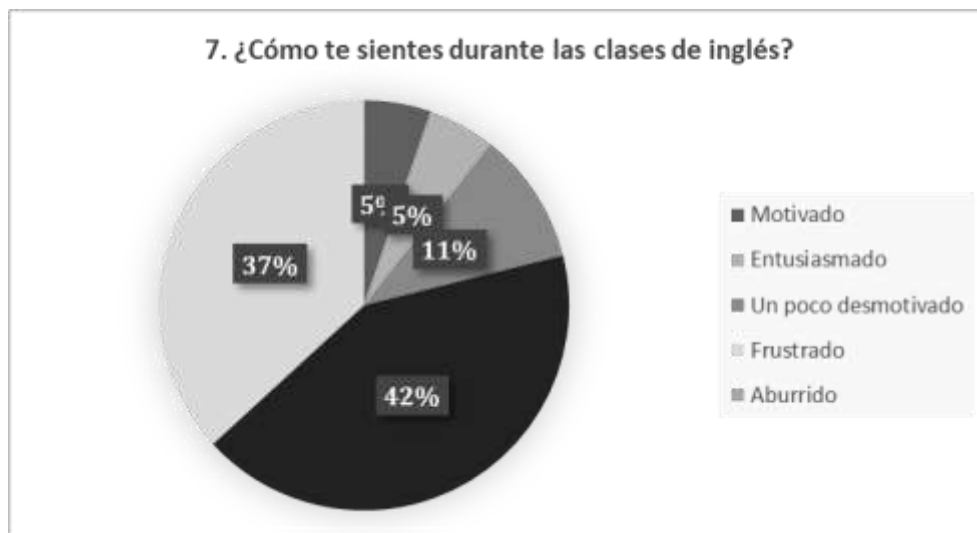
when she was asked in the interview about related information; to what she said: *"No, aún no me siento capaz porque::: pues, hay palabras que aún no las sé pronunciar muy bien, que::: siento que necesito más práctica en el vocabulario porque si me hace falta para para mantener una conversación en inglés me hace falta ma, soltarme más"*.

Likewise, the teacher supported the fact that some learners are reluctant to participate because they do not want to make mistakes or perhaps their partners may laugh at them, as the teacher expressed: *"Ellos son muy reacios a participar en inglés, de pronto por el miedo a equivocarse, porque los compañeros se van a burlar de ellos, porque eh::: por la frustración de pronto de que de que le vayan a decir, xxx"*. However, although there are approximately more than half of the learners who are not able to have a conversation, a few of them can do it because they are enrolled in extracurricular courses of English where they are exposed to the target language.

Second, a great number of students got bored and frustrated during the English classes since lessons are developed in ordinary classrooms demonstrating through this answer that classes need a fun and recreational component to create opportunities for the students to enjoy, interact and practice real conversations. Thus, Figure 5. gave us an idea about students' feelings towards the English classes at school.

Figure 5

Question 7. Google forms students' questionnaire.

7. ¿Cómo te sientes durante las clases de inglés?

- Motivado
- Entusiasmado
- Un poco desmotivado
- Frustrado
- Aburrido

The ideas mentioned before are also confirmed by one of the students in the online interview; as he said: *"Lo que no me gusta de las clases de inglés digamos que es por ejemplo::: he::: la dinámica, o sea es porque yo me aburro muy fácilmente en las clases de inglés, para mí es un poco aburrido".*

Thirdly, the analysis showed that to get a better level, students also needed good materials. Nevertheless, what students usually use to learn English are their own resources such as applications (Apps) and online games. As presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Question 2. Google forms students' questionnaire

3.¿Qué recursos utilizas para aprender inglés?

- Libros en inglés
- Aplicaciones (Apps) en inglés
- Canciones en inglés
- Series y películas en inglés
- Juegos onlline

☐ 63,20%
■ 36,80%
☐ 26,30%2
☐ 57,90%
■ 15,80%

Students' answers to the question: What resources do you use to learn English? gave us data to infer that the school does not have appropriate equipment such as computers, English laboratory, speakers, and so forth, to carry out more communicative activities, particularly, conversations in which teachers could use technological tools that help them to engage students in the English classes. For that reason, some learners make use of their own gadgets to learn English at home, not to mention those students who do not have the opportunity to get a computer or a smartphone to do so. In addition, Teacher's interview revealed that the materials provided by government are not enough to develop English classes effectively; as it was expressed in teacher's words: *"Estoy segura que los recursos que el gobierno eh::: da para los, las diferentes instituciones públicas del país no son suficientes para el desarrollo de las clases de inglés…no contamos con sufís:: suficientes computadores…el speaker también cada profesor tiene su propio speaker, o sea nos toca comprarlo con nuestro propio dinero, hay un solo video beam*

para:::, para::: inglés...no hay ni siquiera un una buena conexión a internet en la institución…entonces los, los recursos no son buenos…no contamos con un aula de eh de inglés con un laboratorio, con, con televisor con nada".

The present situation of the school evidenced the lack of materials for all the students, apart from the slow internet connection and the non-availability of Wi-fi to some students and teachers, which causes that students do not take advantage of many of the websites, applications, platform that would be useful in the acquisition of the language within the English classes. Bearing all this in mind, the students needed a practical strategy regarding materials to be used in the English classes. Thence, a game approach could be a good alternative to minimize the difficulties the school presents since outdoor games can be played and adapted to use simple and accessible materials or not.

4.1.3 Learning Situation Analysis

In this section, we first found that in the English classes the skill that most 8th graders want to develop is speaking to be able to hold conversations; thus, students would rather do activities that involve talking to their partners and practicing conversation activities rather than receptive activities, as it is shown in the next graphic.

Figure 6

Question 4. Google forms students' questionnaire.
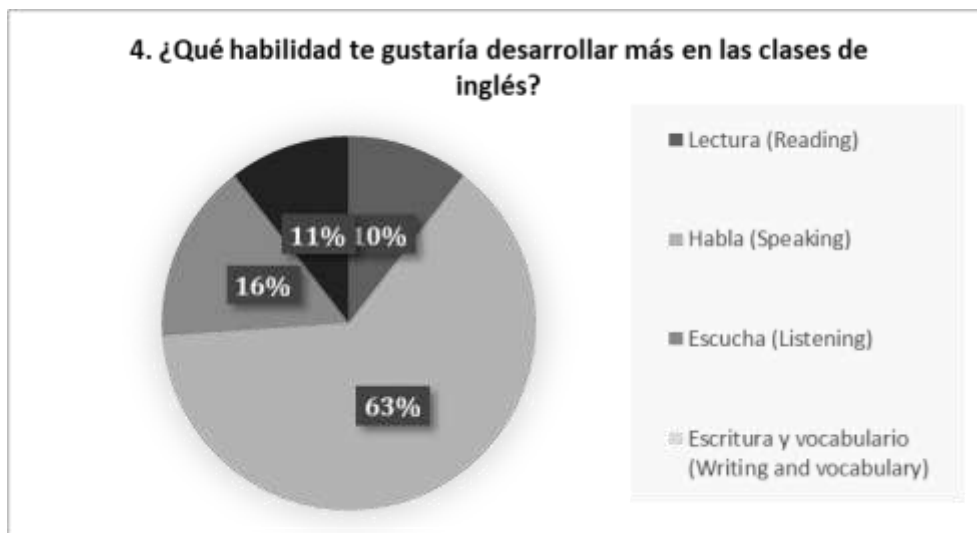
Similarly, in an interview, the learners' claim was also alike, as was posed by one student, *"la habilidad que me gustaría desarrollar más en inglés es el hablar de forma más fluida para llegar a entablar conversaciones en inglés ya sea con profesores o personas bilingües"*. Moreover, in the face-to-face interview, all the students were asked which skill they considered to be the most important giving a reason. We found that each of them gave a very similar response and one of their reasons stated was *"para poder entablar y sostener una conversación con otras personas"*.

Second, the graphic below revealed that the preferred topic to be learnt in English classes was the theme of culture, chosen by 12 out of 19 students, and sports being the second one chosen by 10 of the learners.

Figure 7

Question 5. Google forms questionnaire.

Likewise, in the interview conducted via WhatsApp, the students were asked what subject matter they would like to be taught in the English classes and their reasons. The majority of the learners claimed that they were interested in learning about culture, the topic most chosen in the questionnaire, and their reasons were similar. As a sample, one female student said *"me gustaría aprender cosas que vemos en nuestra sociedad, nuestro entorno, etc… ya que me parece que es de mucha utilidad aprender ese tipo de cosas"*. The previous statement is supported by another female learner's answer: *"La cultura porque es un tema que me llama mucho la atención y quisiera aprender"*. In this sense, we found that 8th graders are keen on knowing more about their own culture, because they are perhaps not used to studying this topic in the English classes, and they could use it to share things from their own context with people from different countries. However, it is worth noting that this particular learners' interest was found out for the first time by one of the researchers when doing her teaching practicum.

And third, the following graphic (Figure 8) showed that games, along with dynamics inside and outside the classroom, was the preferred activity to be carried out in the English class.

Figure 8

Question 6. Google forms students' questionnaire.

This students' claim is supported by the question: How would they like to practice the skills that are less developed in class? to what one of the learners said, "*me gustaría que implementáramos actividades didácticas como juegos, actividades así, pa' que::: para que ajá uno se divierta y aprenda a la vez*". In light of this, we concluded that the students felt inclined towards recreational activities where they can take part actively during lessons, instead of working on grammatical exercises on copies all the time. Moreover, it is important to mention that through games, the students' desire for talking and interacting orally in class may be achieved, since these games can foster an environment where the

learners may feel secure and want to participate while having fun and learning the target language.

Collectively, all the data gathered appears consistent with the fact that 8th grade students at Normal Superior de Monteria school are aware of the benefits of developing further speaking to hold conversations in English. Nonetheless, it was noticed that students have difficulties in interacting orally with their partners and understanding what the teacher says in English. The reason behind it may be that DBAs and standards stated by the suggested curriculum are, as was expressed by the teacher, a little far from being in accordance with the current English level of the learners.

As for wants, not only should the content be close to 8th graders' interest in learning the theme of culture, but also the English classes must be addressed taking into account the students' desire for attending classes in which they can talk and practice the language in conversations, which will be used for future opportunities. Moreover, we could find that the learners are keen on learning English through games, which means that classes should be delivered using a game-based learning approach to meet students' preferences.

Taking into consideration the data gathered, we concluded that 8th grade students are in need of a syllabus that helps them to manage short conversations with their peers. In addition, this syllabus attempts to teach all the content (features and things from their own culture or context) the learners claimed they would like to acquire in the English classes highlighting the use of games to do so.

4.2 Approach to Syllabus Design

In light of the data collected and analyzed from the needs analysis, we drew to the conclusion that a combination of a topic-based syllabus and a functional one could response to what was obtained in the needs analysis. The former may answer students' wants for a change in the topics studied in class along with their interest for learning about culture, since one of the greatest advantages of applying this topic-based syllabus is that teachers can create opportunities to practice the language on a specific topic that is of interest to the students (Krahnke, K., 1987). Whereas, the latter responses to the communicative need of the learners since the pupils, in this syllabus, are given the chance to use "real-world language". Likewise, this experience may lead students to be autonomous in deciding how to use the language and for what purposes (Ash-Shammari, T. & Al-Sibai, D., 2005).

4.3 Methodology of the Syllabus

Within the methodology of this syllabus proposal, we took into consideration the subsequent aspects; teachers' role, students' role and teaching approach which, according to Jordan (1997), are the components to be considered in terms of the methodology of a syllabus.

4.3.1 Teacher's Role

As the methodology of this syllabus follows a game-based learning approach, the teacher should act as a guide showing the students how to play the outdoor games, and as a facilitator providing materials and preparation so that the learners can have a better performance in the games planned. Furthermore, the teacher should play the role of an

assessor to give feedback to the students at the end of each game, and must be an evaluator to examine the students' performance when holding conversations during the games as well as to check how well the learners achieved the objectives proposed in the syllabus at the end of the units (Archana, S. & Rani, K. U., 2017). It is worth noting that as games are flexible and adaptable, the teacher will exercise his or her full autonomy to make the necessary decisions in every aspect required to achieve the goal proposed in the syllabus and thus meet students' necessities.

4.3.2 Student's Role

In this syllabus, the learners need to be active participants when holding conversations during the games. Furthermore, they should learn to work and play the outdoor games in groups and respect their partners' opinions as well as the icons of their own culture. Additionally, the students should perform an autonomous role characterized by a strong sense of accountability of its own learning process. Besides, learners should play a risk-taker role in which they are able to face issues and challenges by themselves gaining self-confidence and reinforcing their personal integrity. Finally, the learner also has to be a knowledge seeker, being able to fulfill their own necessities regarding language while holding short conversations with their peers during the games.

4.3.3 Teaching Approach

The lessons are planned under a game-based learning approach since this would respond to the students' wants. As the basis of this teaching approach are games, it must be taken into consideration the following items to create or adapt them.

First, before playing the games, that is, when planning, the teacher needs to consider the students' age and English level as well as the context and the theme to be taught. The games with educational purposes must have a clear objective and include variations to avoid students to get bored; in other words, the teacher always should have a plan B (Wright, A., Betteridge, D., & Buckby, M., 2006), (Byrne & Rixon, 1979). Besides, games should be planned with a certain level of challenge which must be neither too easy nor too difficult, that means, they should be balanced and in turn lead to a "friendly competition" (Tyson, R., 1998) that does not cause the students who lose to be mistreated by their peers.

Second, when playing the games, both the instructions and the rules should be crystal clear so the teacher must not allow students to get confused and in turn discouraged because it may lead to the failure of the game planned as such. In that sense, it is necessary to avoid giving extensive instructions and the teacher is in charge of providing a demonstration of the game so as to ensure that all the students have understood how they should play it. Furthermore, games under no circumstances must be interrupted to correct mistakes in terms of the language use because that must be done at the end of the game as a part of the assessment.

Third, after playing the games, the teacher should provide a feedback about students' performance, highlighting positive aspects and giving constructive comments. Besides, the teacher should check whether the objectives set in the game were achieved or not, how the students felt when playing and what must be improved to take it into account in future planning.

As for games outdoors, the teacher should particularly bear in mind that the physical activity has to be in accordance with students' physical condition, since in this syllabus we propose recreational games for educational purposes to promote conversation activities in English classes; in simple terms, these games must include physical exercises that should be proportional to the students' physical ability. It is suggested that the teacher should start planning games with little physical effort and increase it gradually until the most appropriate level of physical demand for the students is found.

On the other hand, the teacher must be careful when choosing the space(s) where games are going to be developed and the materials to be used, that is, he or she must be sure that there will not be dangerous elements that may put in risk students' lives.

To apply this syllabus, we propose some outdoor games designed and adapted as a sample of the planning, bearing in mind the aspects mentioned previously (see appendix D).

4.4 Implementation of the Syllabus

As for the implementation of the syllabus, we proposed that these two units should be carried out in a 4 months-period, that is, two unit plans per each unit of the syllabus. Each unit plan would tackle two topics that would be developed in four weeks, and each session counts on a two-hour lesson based on game-based learning approach, see Table 1. This syllabus will be structured over a variety of outdoor games that are the main component of the lessons planned in this syllabus. The games would be chosen and adapted by the teacher.

Table 1

Syllabus Schedule Explained in Months, Weeks, and Hours

Syllabus Unit 1	Unit plan 1	Topic 1	Week 1	4 Hours
			Week 2	4 Hours
		Topic 2	Week 3	4 Hours
			Week 4	4 Hours
	Unit plan 2	Topic 3	Week 5	4 Hours
			Week 6	4 Hours
		Topic 4	Week 7	4 Hours
			Week 8	4 Hours
Syllabus Unit 2	Unit plan 3	Topic 5	Week 9	4 Hours
			Week 10	4 Hours
		Topic 6	Week 11	4 Hours
			Week 12	4 Hours
	Unit plan 4	Topic 7	Week 13	4 Hours
			Week 14	4 Hours
		Topic 8	Week 15	4 Hours
			Week 16	4 Hours

4.5 The Structure of the Syllabus

It is relevant to highlight that when designing the syllabus, its structure was based and adapted from the suggested curriculum to not let aside the guidelines stated by the *Ministerio de Educacion* of Colombia regarding the English subject. Moreover, some aspects of the CEFR, companion volume were considered. Thus, to design this syllabus, the following sections were included in each unit: a goal, a set of learning objectives, language contents, topics, performance indicators, language functions, activities, DBA's, materials, standards and assessment. First, as any other project, this syllabus set a goal that points out to the achievement of a higher conversational level in the English language based on outdoor games and game-based learning. Furthermore, when it comes to second language learning, it is essential to develop communicative competences which, after all, are the ones

that let people use and put into practice real language communication (CEFR, 2018). Second, the learning objectives, will serve as a reference for teachers to know what the students will be able to do by the end of each unit.

Third, we set the language content that has to do with the grammar tenses that the teacher should reinforce and review with the students acting as a complement to the learners' performance in the conversation activity. Fourth, the topics this syllabus comprised were selected keeping in mind the questionnaire in which the pupils suggested their topics of interest. Regarding the performance indicators, they present what students do to reach the goal set for each unit (Suggested Curriculum Structure, 2016). Besides, for this syllabus we took into consideration the development of competences, which according to Serie Guias Nº22 (2006), a competence entails a set of knowing, knowledge, skills and individual characteristics that allow someone to take action in a specific context. Thus, for this syllabus proposal the students are expected to develop a communicative competence comprising linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic, during the units of the syllabus.

As for the language functions, these addressed to the functional part of the present syllabus, which deals with how the students are going to use the language in their context. The functions were adapted from the descriptors of the conversation scale established by the CEFR (2018), companion volume. Additionally, the activities to be considered for this topic-based-functional syllabus, were basically outdoor games through which it is expected to promote interaction and generate spaces where learners may talk and hold conversations with their partners. While playing these games, students may also gain self-confidence and other social skills to practice the English language in classes. The next section we took into consideration was the DBA's that involve "fundamental elements of the communicative

competence in English" (Basic Learning Rights, 2016), this syllabus states certain DBA's, together with a set of standards, to guarantee a minimum knowledge to the learners as established in the Serie Guias Nº22 (2006). The materials required to carry out the syllabus were considered as well; however, these ones depend on the games planned by the teacher. Furthermore, some of the most commonly used materials in games outdoors are suggested in the syllabus. Besides, we strongly recommend teachers to work with what they have at hand or use alternative materials such as recyclable ones, exploiting their creativity to get the most out of them. Last but not least, the assessment section is concerned with a formative assessment conducted weekly through a teacher's reflection and a summative assessment carried out using a rubric based on the descriptors proposed in the CEFR for the scale of conversation.

4.6 The CEFR and the Bilingualism Programs

The design of this syllabus led us to align the descriptors of the conversation activity scale in the CEFR to the reality that is lived in the 8th graders' classroom, that is to say, this syllabus can act as a means for teachers to narrow the level proposed by the CEFR to the learners' real English level in relation to the conversation activity in spoken interaction. Likewise, nowadays there are different bilingualism programs in Colombia, such as *"Colombia Bilingüe"* and *"Bilingualism for Peace"*, that seek to help students get a B1 level in English, however, the fact that the government of Colombia does not provide enough funds to support this type of programs becomes an obstacle to achieve the objectives proposed by these projects. For this reason, we proposed a syllabus that was

somehow economical, accessible, adaptable and flexible so that the teachers may achieve what these programs have intended to fulfill over time.

4.7 Assessment

Considering the needs analysis, specially students' responses through the questionnaire and the online interviews about their capability to hold a conversation, we could identify that most of the 8th grade students are in a pre-A1 level, in which they excel on writing and vocabulary more than speaking. This was also evidenced by the teacher' observations and her work with this grade during her teaching practicum. Therefore, one of the purposes of this topic-based-functional syllabus is to take the learners to an A2.2 level in the conversation activity, responding to the level proposed in the suggested curriculum for 8th grade.

It is worth noting that to take students to the level proposed in this syllabus, learners should be under a continuous process of assessment in which the teacher undertakes a detailed tracking of the students' progress regarding conversations. For this syllabus two types of assessment, formative and summative assessment, must be conducted. The former is carried out through a weekly teacher's reflection in which they describe relevant aspects of the students' performance while playing the outdoor games. Afterward, the teacher analyzes the data and determines those factors that are making it difficult to fulfill the objectives set for the games and thus need to be changed or adapted. The latter should be conducted after each unit plan using a rubric (see appendix C) that comprises a set of descriptors based on the A2 level conversation scale of the CEFR, companion volume. This scale will be the reference to design the rubric in order to check if the students are

achieving the goal proposed which is to get students to an A2.2 level in the conversation activity as established in the suggested curriculum for 8th grade. It should be noted that those descriptors can be contextualized to each topic of the units and graded according to the scoring system set by the school that goes from 1.0 to 5.0.

Table 2. Topic-Based- Functional Syllabus

Syllabus Goal	Promote 8th graders' conversations in the spoken interaction activity as posed in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) the companion volume.

UNIT 1	Goal	Learning Objectives	Language Content	Topics	Language Functions	Activities (Outdoor Games)	Materials (Suggested)	Assessment
Living in the Caribbean region	Take part in small conversations talking to others about typical topics or issues that take place along the Caribbean coast.	*Students will be able to answer and ask for information about typical dishes or traditional food in the Caribbean region. *Students will be able to express things they normally do at home and in leisure time. *Students will be able to manage a simple conversation about invitations to touristic places.	**Tenses** -Simple present -Present progressive -Simple past -Past progressive -Verb to be -Common verbs -Parts of speech. **Structures** -Wh questions Demonstratives -Yes/no questions -Prepositions of places -Adjectives **Lexical** *Vocabulary* -Daily routines -Habits -Hobbies	Typical dishes or traditional food on the Caribbean coast. A typical weekday at a Caribbean coast home. Pastimes in the Caribbean region. Touristic places along the Caribbean coast.	*Chats in simple language with peers, colleagues or members of a host family, asking questions and understanding the answers related to his/her favorite typical dishes or traditional food on the Caribbean coast. *Participates in short conversations in routine contexts on typical weekdays on the Caribbean coast without undue effort.	-Words into pictures. -Spin the bottle -Running for the bell (See samples, appendix D)	-Images -Balls -Boxes -Cardboard -Cones -Balloons - Colors - Ropes -Bell -Costumes -Chalks Handkerchiefs -Envelopes -Hula-hoops -Chronometer -Folders	Teacher's reflections Rubric adapted from CEFR for assessing students' information exchange in the spoken interaction scale.

			-Sports (games) -Likes and dislikes -Typical food		*Expresses what he/she does in his/her leisure time and at home in simple terms. *Makes and responds to invitations to go to touristic places on the Caribbean coast.			
		COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE Acknowledge the contributions of their classmates when identifying and using simple expressions to talk about their own cultural and social context in a short conversation.	**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** **KNOWING:** Recognize straightforward expressions to convey messages in regard to his/her culture and folks. **DOING:** Hold small conversations regarding the social and cultural features of his/her context. **BEING:** Value opinions given by the	**DBAs** Requests and provides information about experiences and plans in a clear and brief manner. Exchanges information about academic and general interest topics, through simple conversations and dialogues.	**STANDARDS** 1)Linguistic 2)Pragmatic 3)Sociolinguistic I talk to my partners about past experiences and future plans. {1, 2} I risk participating in a conversation with my colleagues and my teacher. {2, 3}			

			partners and his/hers as well.					

UNIT 2	Goal	Learning Objectives	Language Content	Topics	Language Functions	Activities (Outdoor games)	Materials (Suggested)	Assessment
Sharing my traditions, beliefs and customs	Conveys simple ideas about everyday life situations interacting with others and taking part in conversations on familiar topics related to his/her culture.	*Students will be able to identify and convey simple and truthful data related to traditional festivals of the Caribbean coast. *Students will be able to chat about facts related to their beliefs (myths and legends) *Students will be able to talk about favorite music and dances from the Caribbean coast using a simple language.	**Tenses** -Simple present -Present progressive -Present perfect -Simple past -Past Progressive-Verb to be -Common verbs. **Structures** -Wh questions -Demonstratives -Yes/no questions -Prepositions of places -Adjectives **Lexical** *Vocabulary* -Commands -Daily routines -Habits -Hobbies -Sports (games)	Festivals in the Caribbean region of Colombia. Myths and legends of the Caribbean region. Common sayings. Typical dances and music of the Caribbean coast.	* Handles very short social exchanges regarding most popular festivals of the Caribbean coast. *Chats in simple language with peers, colleagues or members of a host family, asking questions and understanding the answers relating to myths, legends and common sayings of the region. *Says in a simple conversation what he/she likes and dislikes about	**Outdoor games** -Piecing together the "La Moana" -Crabs race -Hugged Baseball -Finding the treasure (See samples, appendix D)	-Images -Balls -Boxes -Cardboard -Cones -Balloons - Colors - Ropes -Bell -Costumes -Chalks -Handkerchief -Envelopes -Hula-hoops -Chronometer -Folders	Elicitation instruments Teacher's reflection Rubric adapted from CEFR for assessing students' information exchange in spoken interaction.

			-Likes and dislikes -Traditions -Common sayings -Myths and legends		their favorite dances and music from the Caribbean coast.		
	COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE Give and ask for information of his/her context recognizing and respecting cultural and typical icons when taking part in simple conversations.	**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** **KNOWING:** Acknowledge cultural elements typical of the region **DOING:** Get involved in small conversations related to features of his/her own culture. **BEING:** Respect and understand his/her own culture.	**DBAs** Recognizes specific information in short oral and written texts on topics of general interest. Briefly narrates current facts, daily situations or personal experiences orally and in written form	**STANDARDS** I interact with my partners and teachers to make decisions about specific topics that I know. I participate in conversations in which I express opinions and exchange information on personal or daily life issues.			

Adapted from Suggested Curriculum Structure of Colombia (2016) and Krahnke. Karl (1987), Approaches to Design for Foreign Language Teaching: Theory and Practice

5. Discussion

The findings in the present study showed a set of different aspects to be considered for designing a topic-based-functional syllabus that intended to address the necessity of 8th-grade students regarding the difficulties in the conversation activity under a game-based learning approach. Hence, the subsequent section discusses the results presented in the previous chapter.

Through the data collection procedures, we found that in the needs analysis the students considered speaking to be the most useful skill in their life for two main reasons. First, this skill allows them to hold conversations with others and second, it gives them more opportunities to get a scholarship or a job abroad in the future. However, even if the learners think that speaking is the most important skill of all, we evidenced that English classes were mainly focused on writing and reading. For that reason, the approach selected to design this syllabus was a mix between a functional approach and a topic-based one. The former addresses the small number of conversation activities that are planned to the English classes since implementing this approach allows the learners to use the target language significantly as Hutchinson (1987) mentions, "The attraction of the functional syllabus is that it appears to be based on language in use".

On the other hand, the topic-based approach was oriented to meet students' interest for learning the theme of culture, as one student phrased it, *"me gustaría aprender cosas que vemos en nuestra sociedad, nuestro entorno"* since they claimed that they would like different topics from the ones they are used to studying at school. Hence, if students are given a content that is of their interest, along with suitable activities and materials, the

learners may have more spaces for interaction and a meaningful learning when working in groups. (Hudelson, 1991, as cited in Becerra, L. & McNulty, M., 2010). With all this in mind, the present study attempted to propose a more communicative syllabus that could respond to not only students' necessities found in the needs analysis but also the objectives proposed by the suggested curriculum of Colombia.

Another finding revealed that the learners got bored in class and felt frustrated because the methodology used in the English classes gave a strong emphasis to writing, reading and vocabulary which turned the lessons into traditional classes. This is clearly stated by one of the interviewed students. *"Lo que no me gusta de las clases de inglés digamos que es por ejemplo::: he::: la dinámica, o sea es porque yo me aburro muy fácilmente en las clases de inglés, para mí es un poco aburrido"*. In view of this, learners claimed for funnier activities where they could practice the language while playing and having fun, as one student said: "*me gustaría que implementáramos actividades didácticas como juegos, actividades así, pa' que::: para que ajá uno se divierta y aprenda a la vez"*. Taking into account the evidence, we decided for the methodology of this syllabus to implement a game-based learning approach in which the teacher prepares outdoor games where the students experience and practice the target language in conversations, which in turn facilitate interaction among learners while having fun, bearing in mind that interaction, according to the CEFR (2018) companion volume, is the basis of language use and communication.

In this syllabus, the teacher needs to perform different roles; a facilitator, an assessor, an evaluator and by playing these ones the teacher becomes a guide. That is, the teacher should be the person that provides students all the tools to help them grow in their

learning process (Archana, S., & Rani, K. U. 2017). Whereas, learners' role has to do with being an active participant who values group work and partners' opinions and they also should be encouraged to take responsibility for part of their own learning being autonomous, risk-taker and knowledge seeker.

Taking advantage of the class hours per week at school, this syllabus attempted to provide students with an organized schedule that allowed them to be more exposed to the target language and in turn help the teacher to carry out the lessons based on this syllabus. Another aspect we found important, was to design the structure of the syllabus similar to that of the suggested curriculum in order not to overlook the guidelines proposed by the MEN. Thus, each unit of this syllabus included sections such as learning objectives, language contents, topics, performance indicators, language functions, activities, DBA's, materials, standards and assessment that were mainly based on the criteria posed by the suggested curriculum, the CEFR, Finocchiaro, M., & Brumfit, C. (1983) and Krahnke, K. (1987).

One more aspect we considered was the CEFR and the bilingualism programs in Colombia to set a goal for each unit of the syllabus, since we should not turn a blind eye to what they propose in foreign language learning. Hence, the CEFR acted as a benchmark for stating how the students should use the language or perform different language functions. In this sense, students are expected to develop these functions gradually, through this topic-based-functional syllabus that was adapted to their real level so that they reach the A2.2 posed in the suggested curriculum.

Regarding the assessment instruments that were taken for this syllabus proposal, these were determined by the findings in the needs analysis. According to Lambert and

Lines (2000) assessment is part of teachers' daily basis and thus an inherent part of their profession. Hence, we decided to implement a formative assessment writing a weekly reflection in which the teacher reflects upon their observations and experiences while carrying out the games. Thus, critical reflection is about evaluating the decisions made and actions taken which results in a significant enhancement of both teaching and pupils' experiences (Pedrosa-De-Jesus et. al, 2017). The teacher's reflections will help to review what is working or not, and thus, the teacher can seek for more suitable strategies to enhance the application of the syllabus. Moreover, to check the students' progress regarding the conversation activity, it is necessary to conduct a summative assessment that evidences whether the learners are achieving the objectives set in this syllabus or not. In view of this, we proposed the design of a rubric whose reference is the descriptors of the A2 level for conversation in spoken interaction.

In conclusion, all the aspects included to design this topic-based-functional syllabus revealed the importance of knowing in depth the target population before making decisions that attempted to intervene the reality of the students in the English classes, and thus reduce the gap between the real English level of the students and the level proposed by the suggested curriculum. In that sense, one of the greatest benefits of this syllabus proposal is that it aimed to set more attainable objectives to what students need, want and lack in terms of conversation activity in spoken interaction.

6. Conclusions

This research study sought to state the aspects we considered for designing a topic-based-functional syllabus to promote 8th graders' conversation. In light of the features we took into account for designing this syllabus, it can be said that those aspects were a key point to create a syllabus that meets the requirements to help the students achieve an A2.2 level in conversation activity.

The application of this topic-based-functional syllabus may deal with certain implications. First, it does not need any technological gadget to be carried out, thus, the teachers should be resourceful to work with the materials they have at hand. It is worth noting that games can be designed either with materials or not because of their flexibility and adaptability. Second, the teachers can explore their creativity when planning lessons, games and materials, which in turn may be a good way to innovate in the teaching field demonstrating how outdoor games might be a powerful strategy to students' language learning and language acquisition. Third, using a non-traditional methodology could be a significant experience for teachers who would somehow enrich their professional growth. And fourth, this syllabus proposal would act as a means for teachers to strengthen social and cultural values in students.

As for the limitations of this study, they were mostly concerned with the design, adaptation and implementation of the games. Planning games may be both demanding and time-consuming because first, they need to be adapted to learners' age and the objectives proposed in each game and second, they should be well-prepared and include variations to keep students engaged in classes. Furthermore, applying this syllabus may require teachers to use a variety of classroom management strategies or techniques to be able to cope with overpopulated classes and all the situations that may arise. Besides, games outdoors

demand physical activity for which the students and the teacher need to be prepared physically.

For future implementations of this syllabus some suggestions should be considered. First of all, it would be interesting to continue doing research on syllabus design that address not only conversation but also the other spoken interaction activities proposed by the CEFR, companion volume. Secondly, we suggest that those teachers who are keen on applying this syllabus proposal adapt it to their teaching and learning context. Last, we strongly recommend teachers to use recyclable resources that can contribute to a healthy environment. Moreover, learners can take part in the development and elaboration of the materials to turn learning into a more meaningful experience.

Considering all the features involved in the design of this topic-based-functional syllabus, we highlight that this syllabus proposal may be a guidance for designing class plans under a game-based approach that could act as a trigger to foster learners' conversations by those teachers who are committed to teaching and interested in students' second language learning.

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8. Appendixes

Appendix A

Online interview #1

These are the questions answered by the students through WhatsApp voice messages

1. ¿Qué tan importante es el inglés en tu vida y por qué?

2. ¿Qué tipo de actividades crees que podrían ayudarte a aprender inglés más fácilmente? Y ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Qué cosas no te gustan de las clases de inglés en tu colegio?

4. ¿En qué situaciones crees que necesitarías del inglés en el futuro?

5. ¿Qué temas te gustaría que te enseñaran en las clases de inglés? ¿Por qué?

Online interview #2

The following questions were answered by the teacher in charge of 8th grade via WhatsApp voice messages.

1. ¿Cree usted que los recursos, estrategias y demás que ofrece el gobierno para los estudiantes y docentes son suficientes para desarrollar adecuadamente las clases de inglés en el colegio?

2. ¿Cree usted que el currículo sugerido para el área de inglés ayuda a cumplir los objetivos propuestos por el gobierno en cuanto a las competencias comunicativas o cree que se deben hacer cambios en este? Sí, No ¿Por qué?

3. ¿Considera usted que la mayoría de los estudiantes son capaces de mantener una conversación simple en inglés?

4. ¿Qué estrategias pedagógicas usted utiliza para motivar a los estudiantes a participar oralmente durante las clases de inglés?

5. ¿Cree usted que el currículo sugerido para el área de inglés ayuda a cumplir los objetivos propuestos por el gobierno en cuanto a las competencias comunicativas o cree que se deben hacer cambios en este?

Face-to-face semi-structured interview # 3

The subsequent questions were asked to a group of 8ᵗʰ grade students face-to-face.

1. ¿Cómo te parecen las clases de inglés?

2. ¿Cuál crees que son las habilidades que más se desarrollan durante las clases de inglés?

3. ¿Cómo te gustaría que las habilidades que menos se desarrollan, dentro de la clase de inglés se desarrollarán? ¿Qué tipo de actividades te gustaría que implementaran?

4. ¿Cuál de las cuatro habilidades que se desarrollan en inglés consideras que es la más importante y por qué?

5. ¿Te sientes capaz de mantener una conversación simple o sencilla en inglés con el nivel que tienes?

6. ¿Qué habilidad te gustaría desarrollar más en inglés?

7. ¿Cuál crees que son las ventajas de interactuar oralmente en inglés?

Transcription online interview #1

1	R1	Primera pregunta ¿Qué tan importante es el inglés en tu vida y por qué?
2	ST1	El inglés en mi vida es muy importante ya que para mí el aprender otro idioma es fundamental para tener un buen futuro (3.) y me gustaría viajar y aprender inglés puedo resolver problemas y con más facilidad (3.) no solo por esto sino, porque a mí también me gusta me, gusta mucho el inglés.
3	R1	Segunda pregunta ¿Qué tipo de actividades crees que podrían ayudarte a aprender inglés más fácilmente? Y ¿Por qué?
4	ST1	Las actividades que creo que me podrían ayudar::: a aprender inglés con más facilidad son las actividades lúdicas y que se (3.) y que se empleen más actividad en la que tengamos que mantener una conversación en inglés.
5	R1	Tercera pregunta ¿Qué cosas no te gustan de las clases de inglés en tu colegio? ¿Por qué?
6	ST1	El inglés en mi colegio es muy importante y es una de las materias que más se dan y se ponen en práctica, pero pienso (3.) que en el colegio deberían tocar tem, más temas porque todos los años (3.) cas dan casi lo mismo::: y hablar sobre temas interesantes y debatir en inglés.
7	R1	cuarta pregunta ¿En qué situaciones crees que necesitarías del inglés en el futuro?
8	ST1	En el futuro creo que será muy importante en inglés (3.) para mí he::: para resolver entrevista de trabajo::: viajes para ganar una beca, y para todo esto saber inglés sería una gran ventaja.
9	R1	Quinta pregunta ¿Qué temas te gustaría que te enseñaran en las clases de inglés? ¿Por qué?
10	ST1	me gustaría aprender::: cosas que vemos en nuestra sociedad, nuestro entorno, etc. Porque::: me gustaría aprender ese tipo de cosas, ya que me parece es de mucha utilidad aprender ese tipo de cosas.

Transcription online interview #2

1	R2	Pregunta uno ¿Qué tan importante es el inglés en tu vida y por qué?
2	ST2	El inglés en mi vida es::: algo digamos que no lo más importante, pero sí algo muy importante porque::: osea, si nosotros estamos en una situación donde necesitamos (3.) eh::: del inglés, ya:::con lo que damos en la clase o lo que ya sepamos, podamos usar (3.) las palabras y::: todo correcto para::: hablar con las demás personas, entender algo en un libro o::: en una película o::: un juego o en lo que lo necesites.
3	R2	Pregunta dos¿Qué tipo de actividades crees que podrían ayudarte a aprender inglés más fácilmente? Y ¿Por qué?
4	ST2	Bueno::: he::: los tipos de actividades que me podrían ayudar a::: aprender inglés más fácilmente son::: por ejemplo (3.) eh::: los juegos, o sea yo::: he aprendido muchas cosas de los juegos, porque::: o sea los juegos que yo juego, los juegos que puedo jugar en el colegio, o sea me divierto mientras que aprendo y::: y bueno, si hay un material o algo que esté en inglés yo (3.) fácilmente lo memorizo y así ya xxx.
5	R2	Pregunta tres ¿Qué cosas no te gustan de las clases de inglés en tu colegio?
6	ST2	Bueno, he::: lo que no me gusta de las clases de inglés, digamos que es por ejemplo::: eh::: la dinámica, o sea, es porque::: yo me aburro muy fácilmente en las clases de inglés, para mí es un poco aburrido, pero es necesario, así que::: bueno, es necesario.
7	R2	Pregunta cuatro ¿En qué situaciones crees que necesitarías del inglés en el futuro?
8	ST2	A::: muy fácil lo podemos usar en el trabajo, si vamos a hablar con alguien con un amigo, con un extranjero, o::: en algo así que es muy importante.
9	R2	Pregunta cinco ¿Qué temas te gustaría que te enseñaran en las clases de inglés? ¿Por qué?
10	ST2	La cultura porque::: es un tema que me llama mucho la atención y::: quisiera aprender.

Transcription semi-structure interview # 1

1	R1	Hola, gracias de antemano por colaborarnos con esta pequeña entrevista.
2	ST3	Vale, (sonríe)
3	R1	Primera pregunta ¿Cómo te parecen las clases de inglés?
4	ST3	A mí me parecen buenas las clases de inglés porque (3.) porque nosotros aprendemos más sobre otro idioma::: y:::ajá
5	R1	He:::¿Cuál crees que son las habilidades que más se desarrollan durante las clases de inglés?
6	ST3	He::: las habilidades que más se desarrollan son la escritura (3.) writing, ya que::: nosotros manejamos mucho el vocabulario de las palabras.
7	R1	Em:::¿Cómo te gustaría que las habilidades que menos se desarrollan, dentro de la clase de inglés se desarrollarán? ¿Qué tipo de actividades te gustarían que implementaran?
8	ST3	Me gustaría que implementáramos ma::: actividades::: didácticas como juegos::: actividades así pa' que::: para que ajá uno se divierta y aprenda a la vez.
9	R1	O.k. ¿Cuál de las cuatro habilidades que se desarrollan en inglés consideras que es la más importante y por qué?
10	ST3	Considero que::: em::: la más importante son el habla ya que::: uno puede manejar una conversación con alguien y aprender otro idioma también es muy importante
11	R1	¿Te sientes capaz de mantener una conversación simple o sencilla en inglés con el nivel que::: que tu tienes? Con lo que sabes.
12	ST3	No, aún no me siento capaz porque::: pues, hay palabras que aún no las sé pronunciar muy bien, que::: siento que necesito más práctica en el vocabulario porque si me hace falta para::: para mantener una conversación en inglés me hace falta ma, soltarme más.
13	R1	O.k. ¿Qué habilidad te gustaría manejar más en inglés? Desarrollar más en inglés.
14	ST3	Em::: creo que::: la habilidad que me gustaría desarrollar más en inglés (3.) es el hablar eh::: de forma más fluida, para llegar a entablar conversaciones en inglés, ya sea con profesores o::: personas bilingües.
15	R1	Finalmente ¿Cuál crees que son las ventajas de interactuar oralmente en inglés?
16	ST3	Em::: creo que es muy ventajoso manejar otro idioma ade::: además del de nosotros el español ya que::: El inglés es muy importante, porque::: me podría ayudar en un futuro como profesional ya que la mayoría de los trabajos dependen de un segundo idioma.

Transcription semi-structured interview to the teacher in charge

1	R1	Buenos días profe. Mi compañera y yo queremos agradecerle por aceptar, muy amablemente, colaborarnos con nuestro proyecto investigativo.
2	T	Con gusto. Estamos para eso.
3	R1	Bueno::: la primera pregunta es, ¿cree usted que los recursos, estrategias y demás que ofrece el gobierno para los estudiantes y docentes son suficientes para desarrollar adecuadamente las clases de inglés en el colegio?
4	T	Estoy segura que los recursos que el gobierno eh::: da para los, las diferentes instituciones públicas del país no son suficientes para el desarrollo de las clases de inglés eh::: por ejemplo acá en nuestra institución eh::: este año no:: no nos dieron libros. El año pasado, pues creo que tampoco, si mal no estoy, no dieron libros. Trabajamos con (.3) unos que habían sobrado del año antepasado, del 2018 y este año también tomamos, por, por lo menos yo tome eh::: unos workbooks que quedaron de Way to go, que esos workbooks fueron entregados hace dos años. O sea el último año que, que nos donaron, por ejemplo que nos dotaron de material de textos fue hace dos años eh::: el año pasado, en el 2018, perdón, el colegio también recibió material eh::: didáctico eh::: recibió diccionarios, recibimos textos literarios, pero, gracias a que el colegio hizo parte de:: de un proyecto llamado aliados diez. De lo contrario, pues no hubiéramos recibido absolutamente nada eh::: no contamos con sufis::: suficientes computadores, o sea, los computadores que::: que tenemos son los de cada profesor, o sea cada profesor maneja su computador personal eh::: el speaker también cada profesor tiene su propio speaker, o sea nos toca comprarlo con nuestro propio dinero. Hay un solo vídeo beam para, para::: inglés como quien dice. Hay dos video beams para el núcleo y el núcleo tiene eh::: 15, 16 docentes, o sea que no es::: no son suficientes. No hay ni siquiera una buena conexión a Internet en la institución, ni siquiera para trabajar los docentes, o sea cuando queremos trabajar en el colegio, que se supone que tenemos horas libre y podemos trabajar en la plataforma para subir nota o entrar a internet a buscar información o cualquier cosa, no podemos porque no hay conexión a internet y cuando la hay, no es buena. Entonces los recursos no son buenos, no contamos con un aula de inglés, con un laboratorio, con televisor, con nada y nosotros somos, de las instituciones, pues qué más tenemos de las, de las más afortunadas, imagínense.
5	R2	Es, muy, muy triste escuchar eso, profe. Definitivamente, falta más apoyo por parte del gobierno hacia las instituciones públicas. Bueno::: la siguiente

pregunta es, ¿cuál cree usted que es la habilidad que los estudiantes más desarrollan durante las clases de inglés?

6 T Bueno pues, la escritura, eh::: acá se trabaja mucho la parte escrita y en segundo lugar la lectura.

7 R1 R1 ¿Cuál es la razón de ello?

8 T Pues, primero por la cantidad de estudiantes que tenemos, hay que eh::: no nos queda tan fácil trabajar mucho la parte comunicativa, pues de manera individual por lo que no alcanzamos a trabajar con todos los estudiantes. Entonces, lo que más se trabaja es la parte de escritura y de lectura.

9 R1 Listo. Bueno, teniendo en cuenta su respuesta anterior eh::: la tercera pregunta va encaminada a la parte comunicativa. ¿Considera usted que la mayoría de los estudiantes son capaces de mantener una conversación simple en inglés?

10 T Bueno, yo diría que:: de los estudiantes que tengo actualmente eh::: un 30% es capaz de mantener una conversación simple en inglés eh::: pues yo con ellos apenas vengo este año apenas los estaba empezando a conocer y trabajar con ellos. Son un grupo bastante bueno, alguno con muchísimas más habilidades que otros, pues son eh::: bastante heterogéneo, un grupo bastante heterogéneo, entonces si como te digo eh::: un 30% de los estudiantes es capaz de mantener una conversación en inglés eh::: una conversación simple. Hay algunos estudiantes que todavía les falta trabajar mucho vocabulario y algunos que son bastante tímidos, entonces eso también influye a la hora de, de expresarse eh::: algunos, pues son más eh::: les gusta más escribir, o sea se defiende o lo hacen mejor en la parte escrita, entonces esto también, pues se tiene en cuenta, influye en esa parte.

11 R2 Okay, profe. La cuarta pregunta es ¿Qué estrategias pedagógicas usted utiliza para motivar a los estudiantes a participar oralmente durante las clases de inglés?

12 T Bueno, una estrategia que yo utilizo son, el premio, o sea de premiar a los chicos de alguna manera pues, porque ellos son muy reacios a participar en inglés, de pronto por el miedo a equivocarse, porque los compañeros se van a burlar de ellos, porque eh::: por la frustración de pronto de que de que le vayan a decir que así xxx, entonces:: pues yo siempre los estoy como eh::: compensando o animando, de pronto con un well done, go ahead, you can do it, do it again, it doesn't matter, entonces, eso para mì es importante estarlos siempre animando a que no importa que se equivoquen, decirles que lo pueden hacer otra vez; y el premio sea con una happy face o un dulce, y ya me he dado cuenta que eso los motiva muchísimo, darles un premio o un reward, ya sea un dulcecito, una carita feliz, un punto o una nota, eso a ellos los anima a participar más aunque se equivoquen.

13	R1	Así es, profe. Tiene toda la razón. Los estudiantes necesitan ser motivados con cosas de su interés. Finalmente, nos gustaría saber cuál es su opinión con respecto al currículo sugerido para el área de inglés, o sea ¿cree usted que el currículo sugerido para el área de inglés ayuda a cumplir los objetivos propuestos por el gobierno en cuanto a las competencias comunicativas o cree que se deben hacer cambios en este?
14	T	Bueno::: yo considero que el currículo sugerido, pues sí ayuda, es una guía, es una base, es un punto de partida para los docentes en cuanto hacia dónde debemos, debemos encaminarnos, cuáles son los objetivos. Creo que sí está bien estructurados y sí ayudan, si bien no son eh::: no son el todo eh::: porque pues nosotros como te digo solo nos estamos guiando de ellos. Algunas veces, pues no los tomamos todos tal cual como están ahí, porque eh::: digamos que hay algunos, en algunos grados que están eh::: los vemos de pronto que, que son muchísimo más eh::: exigentes, pues los estándares son más altos, más complejo, pero sí, sí son de bastante ayuda como les digo son de bastante ayuda sobre todo para los profes de transición y primaria que en su mayoría no manejan eh::: el idioma inglés.
15	R2	Listo, profe. Una vez más, le damos las gracias por, por habernos colaborado con nuestra investigación.

Appendix B

Questionnaire Google Forms

Learning Needs Questionnaire

OBJETIVO: Reunir información relacionada a las necesidades del aprendizaje del idioma inglés e información acerca de las clases de inglés en el grado 8° grupo 3 del colegio Escuela Normal Superior de Montería.

Nombre *

Texto de respuesta breve

1. ¿Cómo aprendes mejor el inglés? (Marque máximo dos opciones) *

☐ Escuchando audios en inglés

☐ Viendo videos, películas y programas en inglés

☐ Jugando juegos

☐ Escribiendo textos en inglés

☐ Leyendo libros, historias, noticias, etc., en inglés

2. ¿Qué recursos utilizas para aprender inglés? (Marque máximo 2 opciones) *

☐ Libros en inglés

☐ Aplicaciones (apps) en inglés

☐ Canciones en inglés

☐ Series y películas en inglés

☐ Juegos online

3. ¿Por qué necesitas aprender inglés? (Marque máximo dos opciones) *

☐ Porque quiero trabajar en el extranjero

☐ Porque quiero viajar al extranjero

☐ Porque es un requisito para ganar el año escolar

☐ Porque tendría más posibilidades de ganar una beca entre otros países

☐ Porque me gusta aprender otros idiomas

4. ¿Qué habilidad te gustaría desarrollar más en las clases de inglés? *

○ Lectura (Reading)

○ Habla (Speaking)

○ Escucha (Listening)

○ Escritura y Vocabulario (Writing and Vocabulary)

---

5. ¿Qué temas te gustaría aprender durante las clases de inglés? (Marque máximo 2 opciones) *

☐ Tecnología: computadores, dispositivos tecnológicos, paginas Web, aplicaciones (Apps)...

☐ Cultura: dichos de tu región, platos típicos, festivales, música de tu región...

☐ Entretenimiento: películas, series, programas de TV, shows...

☐ Política: derechos, problemas sociales, deberes...

☐ Deportes: equipos, jugadores, tipos de juegos, ejercicios...

☐ Ciencia: experimentos, teorías, científicos...

---

6. ¿Qué actividad te gustaría que se realizara más en las clases de ingles? *

○ Actividades con imágenes o flashcards

○ Actividades con videos

○ Actividades lúdicas como juegos o dinámicas dentro o fuera del salón de clases

○ Actividades con copias

○ Actividades con textos, libros o cuentos

---

7. ¿Cómo te sientes durante las clases de inglés? *

○ Motivado

○ Entusiasmado

○ Un poco desmotivado

○ Frustrado

○ Aburrido

8. ¿Qué tan capaz te sientes de mantener una conversación simple en inglés? *

◯ No me siento capaz porque soy tímido

◯ Poco capaz porque me da miedo equivocarme

◯ Muy capaz porque tengo confianza en mi mismo

9. ¿Qué se te hace difícil cuando tienes la oportunidad de hablar inglés con alguien? *

◯ Se me hace difícil pronunciar bien las palabras

◯ Se me hace difícil entender lo que dice la otra persona

◯ Se me hace difícil intercambiar información con el/ella

Appendix C

Sample rubric for spoken interaction activity (based on the conversation scale – CEFR, Companion volume, 2018)

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	Max. points	Earned points	COMMENTS
ROLE EXCHANGE	Can generally understand clear, standard speech on familiar matters directed at him/her, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.	**5**		
	Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions and apologies.	**5**		
	Can chat in simple language with peers, colleagues or members of a host family, asking questions and understanding the answers relating to most routine matters.	**5**		
SPEAKER ROLE	Can express how he/she is feeling using very basic stock expressions.	**5**		
	Can say what he/she likes and dislikes.	**5**		
INTERACTION	Can establish social contact: greetings and farewells; introductions; giving thanks.	**5**		
	Can participate in short conversations in routine contexts on topics of interest.	**5**		

Appendix D

Suggested outdoor games for possible implementations.

Outdoor Game 1 : Piecing Together "La Moana"
Instructions: **1.**Students are divided into 2 groups: group A and group B are given different masks. **2.**In the middle of the court two parallel lines are drawn 3 meters away, like a river. Inside the river will be the members of the group B. The participants of group A are placed on the right side of the river and on the opposite (left) side there is the legend of "La Moana" divided into 5 parts, all the chunks of this legend are spread all over the left part of the court. In order to read a part of the story, each member of group A will have to run to the other side without being caught by any member of the group B. **3.**Once the participants of group A return to the right side, each of them must tell what part of the story he/she read, giving as many details as they recall and discussing what could be the right order of the story as well as making up an ending for it. **4.**The groups will change their roles. That means, group A will be group B and group B will become group A. To see which of the groups retells the story in the right order giving details as quickly as possible.

5. Once the teacher gives the instructions, he/she starts taking the time with a chronometer for each group. The group that manages to tell the legend in the right order adding a creative ending in the shortest amount of time will be the winner of the game.

Place: Outdoors

 Rules:

* Students are asked to speak in English as much as possible. If one of the two groups breaks this rule, the teacher will add 20 seconds to the overall time spent by that group.

* The group that has to be placed in the river cannot cross the lines drawn.

* Each participant of both groups is allowed to run to the left side to read one part of the story just once during the game.

Materials:

*Chunks of the legend of "La Moana"

*Masks

*A chronometer

*Chalks to draw the lines for making the river

Outdoor Game 2: "Words into pictures"

Instructions:

1. Students are divided into 5 pairs.

2. Each pair of students discusses who is going to be the be the messenger and who will be the painter.

3. The messenger will be placed in one side of the court and the painter on the other side. In the middle of the court, there will be a line that will divide the place into two and neither the messenger nor the painter can trespass it (in this line the two participants will meet). Besides, some obstacles will be spread all over the space such as, balls, cones, hula-hoops, etc.

4. The messenger will be given an image of a typical dish or a traditional food of the Caribbean region in a folder. He/she is the only one who can see this image and it cannot be moved from the start point. Once the director of the game gives the sign (it could be a sound or to count till 3), the messenger has to keep in mind as many details of the image as he/she can. Then, he/she has to run, overcomes the obstacles and meets his/her partner (the painter) in the middle line. Each messenger has to describe what he/she remembers of the image giving as many details as possible to his/her respective painter.

5. The painter on the other side has to run and overcome the obstacles till he/she meets his/her partner (the messenger) in the middle of the court, that is the middle line. Once they meet, the messenger describes and gives the details of the image, and also the

painter asks questions to clarify his/her doubts regarding the picture described by his/her partner. Both students come back to the initial point. The painter has to draw and paint what the messenger says about the image.

6.Once the time is up and the 5 pairs of students have played the game, the made paintings will be compared and the one that has more details or looks like the original image will win.

Place: Outdoors

 Rules

*Students must talk in Spanish as much as possible.

*Students cannot touch or walk over the middle line.

*The messenger cannot trespass the painter's space and vice versa.

Materials Required:

*Folders

*balls, cones, hula-hoops, etc.

*A plastic bottle and pieces of paper

Outdoor Game 3: "Running for The Bell"

Instructions:

1. The students are divided into groups of 5 people.

2. Each group is shown an image of a popular festival in the Caribbean region of

Colombia.

3. Students are given 1 minute to discuss about the image.

4. When the time is finished. The groups must choose a participant who is going to run on

behalf of his/her group.

6. A bell is placed in the middle of the groups.

5. Once the director gives the sign (it could be a sound or he/she can count till 3), one

participant from each group has to run and ring the bell.

6. The first participant that rings the bell has to say what his/her group has discussed

about the image. That is, their interpretation. If they are right, they will get one point.

7. The group that gets more points will be the winner.

Place: Outdoors

Rules:

* Students must talk in English. If they do not do so, they can be taken points out.

* The same student cannot participate or run two successive occasions.

Materials:

*Images of different festivals celebrated in the Caribbean region.

*A bell.