THE USE OF STORYTELLING FOR ENGLISH TEACHING AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

IN SEVEN (7) TO NINE (9) YEARS OLD CHILDREN.

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Applied Project

Presented to the Program

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by

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DEDICATION

To God who is the only master in our lives. As Albert Einstein declared: "God does not play dice with the universe". I would add, neither with our existence.

To my father who gave me his blessing in this life-project and I am completely sure he will be looking after me forever.

To my mother who was my first English teacher in my early years.

To my brother who has always been supporting me in any conceivable way.

To my couple, Rafael, because he saw me when I was invisible and he always inspires me to be a better human being.

SPECIALIZED ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

Title	The use of storytelling for English teaching as a foreign language in seven (7) to nine (9) years old children
Author(s)	Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate
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Keywords	Storytelling, tales, teaching-learning English, narrative, stories.
Description	Applied Project
Sources	Journal article: 21 Book: 8 Newspaper article: 1 Website: 11
Contents	El aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera en niños de siete (7) a nueve (9) años requiere de diferentes estrategias para que el estudiante pueda emplearla como una herramienta de comunicación dentro y fuera del aula. La estrategia que se presenta a continuación es el empleo de historias infantiles en el aula para que el estudiante: a) pueda asociar las estructuras gramaticales que se presentan en los textos y las emplee en diferentes ambientes, b) el estudiante produzca creaciones literarias propias con los elementos trabajados en clase.

Research Line	The theme of this applied project was chosen because the use of storytelling may shed a light in teaching-learning English procedures in line with the urgency to innovate the way students perceive the language. In consequence, stories in the classroom underline the usage of English as a foreign language as a communicative tool in children. This paper is included in the Research Line of *Pedagogía, Didáctica y Currículo* from Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia, because this line advocates for alternative ways to develop teaching process in Colombian traditional classrooms.
Conclusions	Storytelling promotes the facilitator role to teachers because they will give the guidelines to stimulate students in their learning process in foreign language acquisition. At the same time, children can place in real contexts the grammar structures and vocabulary that they learned previously through tales in different formats.
Advisor	Mangely Londoño Gutiérrez

ABSTRACT

Ladino S, *The use of storytelling for English teaching as a foreign language in seven (7) to nine (9) years old children.* Licenciatura en inglés como lengua extranjera, April, 2020, Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia.

Teaching-learning English in Colombian elementary schools is mandatory to establish a continuity in higher education. However, "learner's general perception states that the real English learning process takes place in higher education, private schools or language institutes" (Porras, 2010). In addition, "many Colombian educators and researchers in EFL consider that reading activities are limited to learner's capabilities in primary and secondary levels" (Molina, 2013, p. 150). To solve those challenges in elementary classrooms, designing different strategies for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) will benefit pupils' perception of their English learning process.

In line with the Colombia Ministry of Education (MEN) policies, this proposal prompts storytelling activities in English classes to promote alternative learning strategies for foreign language. Dujmović (2006) establishes "Childhood literature offers a natural medium for EFL learning because it has different attractive topics for children. Besides, this type of writing presents repetitive patterns that reinforce vocabulary and grammar structures" (p. 77).

The main aim of this project is to describe the impact of storytelling in teaching EFL in a specific group of students. The findings of this research are practical to develop educational proposals which include storytelling activities to increase the English level in elementary

education, but on the whole, the following tasks may be adjusted according to the population

learning needs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This research study expects to shed light on the use of storytelling in classrooms as an alternative way to teach English through vocabulary and grammar patterns in different contexts provided by tales. In the shadow of traditional teaching, children do not feel engaged with their learning process and teachers remain in the dark with long lists of vocabulary and reinforcing basic grammar using Spanish to make clear their classes (Porras, 2010). In other words, students are learning English with Spanish classes where they don't have practical situations to rehearse what they learn.

This study was carried out to identify the strengths of tales in English classes because they provide the opportunity to perceive the language in action as a whole entity full of meanings adapted to several conditions by the author. In this document, firstly the reader will find the general aspects of the importance and the scope of this paper, secondly a complete theoretical framework offers a general perspective about the impact of storytelling in the teaching-learning English process and its impact in Colombian education.

Thirdly, in the methodology section, the reader can identify the key elements in the research procedures, fourthly, the section of results and discussion extends the findings of the study in line with the proposed objectives and finally in the chapter of conclusions and recommendations, the reader will identify key elements to adapt the use of storytelling in the classroom to improve the teaching-learning process.

Ultimately, this study includes the basics to consider the advantages of storytelling in the classroom as a valuable tool for children, because they feel attracted to stories while they see the

language as a vehicle to express ideas and feelings. As a result of this, social learning takes place due to the constant interaction among them. Concurrently, teachers may take most of the endless source of topics to work on with tales in the classroom.

Significance of the Study

The Colombian government has developed different initiatives to encourage teaching English in private and public schools to improve children's skills in the foreign language, since the Colombian Framework for English Project (COFE Project), in 1990 that was based on the Grammar-Translation method for secondary students, until one of the most recent projects in current programs called Bilingual Colombia, its main goal is "fostering students' communicative skills in EFL as an opportunity to get better professional and personal alternatives" (Ministry of National Education [MEN], 2016, p. 128).

Despite this last project was addressed for secondary students', primary learners have an important role here: they should reach enough basis in the foreign language communicative skills to reinforce them in higher education. English education should be innovative, creative and meaningful to help the students to reach the required level in line with their capabilities and government requirements. This responsibility as teacher's tasks in teaching EFL moves to present the following document that proposes an alternative vision to improve learning- teaching through storytelling in the English as a target language, as a local impact as any other educational environment.

To a greater extent, primary school teachers are facing different challenges in teaching English, such as lack of content to involve students in the foreign language, there are large size

classes, there is not enough time per week to cover the required contents or students have a lack of motivation to learn English (Correa & González, 2016). However, educative institutions in conjunction with the whole educative community need to tackle those issues with different learning strategies to transform quality education in the English language at elementary levels, despite of their historical resistance to changes in their curricula or traditional education arguing that their educational process have been working along the history (Fisher, 2017).

The presented proposal is relevant according to the need of a communicative approach in teaching-learning EFL. This scheme allows students to identify different uses of grammar patterns, vocabulary and verb tenses in several sceneries through storytelling in the classroom with an aim of children can conduct their literary creations with the tools seen in class. "Although telling stories requires careful planning, it is fun for both the listeners and the teller; it is a relief of routine. In this friendly atmosphere, social and emotional abilities are developed, and children are highly motivated to participate" (Aguilar & Alcántara, 2017, p. 5090)

Statement of the Problem

The education in Colombia has passed through different strategies to learn a foreign language, demonstrating a genuine interest to align syllabi with other countries that are carrying the banner for improving bilingual programs. However, it also reflects a lack of connection between the reality in the classrooms and the ambitions of educational policies. Such disconnection forces general educative community to advocate for flexibility in those principles, due to the fact to there are inequality conditions in the countryside and the big cities to access high-quality education.

Nonetheless, there is a real urgency in the educative field on the whole: to conduct a pedagogical strategy in the classroom to leverage students' communicative skills in English, especially in the elementary levels where the teachers are setting the basics for next challenges in higher education. That practice should offer an answer to children's needs when they are learning English and should provide teachers new tools in which they can shape different environments for a suitable class.

Unfortunately, the director of *Luna Lunera School*, located in Tintal, Kennedy has identified several improvement opportunities in the English area, in fourth-grade students. There is low performance in English exams, where only 40% of the population can barely pass the evaluations (C. Lopera, personal communication, February 15, 2020). Hence, this present project developed a strategy based on storytelling activities in different formats, such as songs, videos, tales and images to involve students in proper conditions where they can image other sceneries and they would be able to express their feelings and thoughts in a foreign language according to the elements seen in the classes over those stories.

From there arises the research question: What is the impact of storytelling in English classes with 7-9-year-old children? Consequently, the actions of this research study headed to describe children's experiences with storytelling classes, because students' opinions are pivotal in designing material and content for sessions. Secondly, this paper aimed to call the progress in children's academic performance during classes with storytelling activities, considering stories are wealth in vocabulary and grammar structures for children's learning needs.

Definitely, teachers' and students' roles may be strengthened in the classroom when stories take place in the class. On the one hand, learners' become participants of their learning

16

process, because they can imagine and build their creations based on the stories using the target language. And on the other hand, teachers turn into mediators between knowledge and pupils' performance as long as they are presenting different stories full of grammar and vocabulary content to arouse learner's critical thinking.

Objectives

General Objective

To describe the impact of storytelling activities in teaching English as a foreign language in children from seven (7) to nine (9) years old.

Specific Objectives

To promote the use of storytelling activities in different formats: songs, physical books or images.

To lead the students in their own literary productions in a foreign language by means of workshops.

To recognize sociocultural differences in society through stories which represent cultural wealthy.

CHAPTER II

Literature review

Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language in Colombia.

English is considered as the bridge to connect with other cultures. Globalization brings the necessity to learn this language to understand other people's perspectives and accede to new trends in terms of science, business, education, culture, and other noteworthy issues that involve global communication and job opportunities. In addition to this, it is a valuable opportunity to challenge oneself in exploring other knowledge fields.

The General Education Law (1994) states that students "should acquire conversation and reading elements at least in one foreign language" (Law 115, Art. 21). Actually, in the recent governmental project, Bilingual Colombia, The Ministry of National Education (MEN, 2016) declares:

It is expected that students reach an A2 English level, according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in elementary levels. It means they will be able to a) understand basic, short and illustrated texts about common or literary topics, b) participate in conversations using short statements with predictable structures (para. 1).

However, do those previous expectations in Colombian students take into account the history of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) in Colombia? Since its independence, the Colombian government has highlighted the importance of teaching a foreign language, such as Latin, Greek, French, English, and one indigenous language. Nevertheless, "at the edge of the Second World War, the English language played crucial roles in school, because of foreign people migration" (Gómez, 2017, p. 141). At that stage, the MEN established trending

18

methods to teach English based on international studies, but it was never developed a complete

research study about the population's needs and interest in the English language

There is a sole set study by Professor Gabriel Gómez Delgado published in 1971, that

illustrated a general framework of the importance of bilingualism in Colombia since 1820. That

research accounted for several topics in teaching English in this country, for instance, the

difference between teaching English in rural and urban areas, the transformation in Colombian

mass media when English customs were a trend or how MEN had been changing bilingual

policies according to foreign trades (Bastidas, 2017).

Despite the noticeable interest to teach a foreign language, Colombia succeeded in

developing a rough policy about bilingualism in the country until 2005 aligned with the concept

of *plurilingualism*, defined as an "approach that emphasizes the fact that as an individual

person's experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home

to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples" (Council of Europe, 2001,

p. 4). However, since that first attempt to design a meaningful bilingual plan until 2019, MEN

has articulated four different policies addressed to guide students in public schools to reach a B2

level:

1. National Plan of Bilingualism (2004 - 2009)

2. Program for Strengthening the Development Competences in Foreign Languages (2010- 2014)

3. English National Plan: Colombia Very Well! (2015 - 2025)

4. Bilingual Colombia (2014 - 2018)

One of the most questioned and recurring aspects of those policies, it is the adoption of

foreign models. According to González (2017), Usma (2009) and de Mejía (2011), (as cited in Gómez, 2017), the adaptation of CEFR in Colombia has included a complete change in teaching methodologies in public schools, in fact, European models and methodologies have been developing regardless of different educational communities' needs. This issue impacts adversely not only the public sector but private by far because there is not a baseline to compare cultures that are completely different in their population, economy, educational background or their policies.

There are two main aspects to place emphasize on the policy aspect. Firstly, educational authorities still have too much territory to explore in terms of the bilingual view, such as including teachers' voices, involving the importance of personal development in learning English not just as a profitable business, stating steady policies through time. Secondly, teachers should explore alternatives to teach English including children's needs and learning styles. At this stage, the educational community is in charge of dealing with the current challenges in terms of teaching-learning English process despite the children's special needs and the unrealistic goals proposed in government policies.

Didactics of English

A general definition of didactics is a set of organized procedures which are supported by proper materials to lead students to reach learning goals (Bastidas, 2017), in terms of foreign language acquisition, those aims are addressed to flourish skills in English, according to students' needs and learning styles. This route map should be in line with national policies and instructional approaches to innovate didactics in English.

Along with history, Colombia has been promoting a standardized method according to international patterns: Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), defined by Richards and Rodgers (2003) as a spotlight on written words and their meaning using memorizing process, leaving aside the other skills in English, such as speaking or reading. This approach involves classes in Spanish, long explanations about grammatical shapes, little attention in contents but the full concentration in bunches of words with their meaning in students' mother tongue (Bastidas, 2017). Despite its monotony, it is still a prevailing method, but not all learning styles fit into its characteristics.

In consequence, MEN has been supported by international and national institutions specialized in teaching-learning English as foreign language procedures, such as Fullbright, Colombian Association of English Teachers (ASOCOPI) or British Council. Those institutions promote and provide other alternatives to teach English in consonance with learners' needs, contexts or interests as well as teachers' training. Nonetheless, are those institutions proposing real sceneries for teaching English? Bastidas (2017) affirms:

> There are other challenges that teachers are facing in their daily activities, such as large classes, hours per week are not enough to cover the required topics, lack of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) aids, and deficiency in teachers' skills in the foreign language or absence of English teaching strategies (p. 22).

Those issues are not new, there have been historical situations that teachers have been dealing with for years, at any subject. However, teachers should bring out new possibilities to teach the language in terms of convenience and coverage. For the purposes of meaningful learning, using stories in the classroom allows teachers to introduce new cultures or other aspects

of Colombian culture from other perspectives. Students will recognize, employing another language, different people's behavior in front of other fictitious backdrops and they will probably ask themselves which reaction they would show in a hypothetical situation.

Reading or telling a tale, teachers are presenting grammar in real contexts. One of the students' current question is: In which situations are we going to use those grammatical patterns? And that is a compelling inquiry that will be answered through a story because that universe grants adopting endless grammar patterns to exemplify possible situations with sense and spontaneity. Likewise, the amount of new vocabulary in living contexts is a great advantage that is useful in all English levels. The sustained repetition makes the students can embrace words and spread out their vocabulary, following a didactic model where students can perform new and previous terminology in other stories, as Gómez (2010) stated in her study about the impact of storytelling in a middle school:

> The teacher in charge of the storytelling program should keep a routine and needs to repeat the same vocabulary and questions several times. For example, when the class is going to read a new book, the teacher should say: "Show me the front cover." "What is the title of the book?" (p. 87).

Storytelling

Tell me a fact and I'll learn tell me a truth and I believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.

Indian proverb.

According to the novelist, Philip Pulman cited by Telfer (2014) stated that stories are the most powerful tool for human lives after food, safety places, and community because they provide the opportunity to express our feelings and thoughts about our rising culture. People have sought out different means to reveal their conceptions of the world and share their personal experiences with others as a way to thrive. Even, Anderson cited by Dujmović (2006) agreed that people had preserved their traditions, desires, taboos, history in their communities through stories. Implicitly, generations after generations had told stories about their notions of the cosmos, to teach values, even to explain natural phenomena as a result of their beliefs. At school scenario, "students assume values through samples of their daily life, even if these actions have not had a direct impact on them; however, they consider these actions to be a good way to support their ideas about values" (Castiblanco, et al., 2007, p. 129).

Storytelling is not limited to oral or writing works to express a message, it also includes drawings, performances or monologues to represent people's thoughts. In other words, any human representation that has a meaning, it is hiding a special story to be revealed. Through time, technology has modified the way how society tells stories: "the novelty of digital storytelling in comparison with more traditional narrative forms is its capacity to entwine the personal and individual dimension with mass digital dissemination" (Gregori-Signes, 2014, p. 238). Despite of the format varies, the result remains equal: people have the necessity to convey themselves as listeners call for embracing the sense of tales.

In terms of brain processes, communication is set simply by stories. Medina (2007) affirms when a person tells his thoughts, the listener can understand the speaker's meaning,

merely storytelling helps to reinforce that connection by far because it creates a deep bond between listener and speaker, not just for words but for feelings. Supporting the importance of storytelling in mind operations, Professor Uri Hasson and his colleagues of the University of Princeton (2010) assert that storytelling has the power to activate linguistic areas in the brain, especially when listeners' attention is grabbed by a foreign language tale. Particularly, it requires a further endeavor to muse in the target language, eventually, the receptor may try to connect the speaker's ideas. As a result, both, the speaker and listener reached their goals: somebody told a story and another person keeps a personal message.

Essentially, storytelling gives the opportunity to perceive the language as a communicative tool at any place. That is the main goal when people accept the challenge to learn a foreign language: they expect to acquire the ability to understand and communicate themselves in all contexts. Tales in class are one alternative to reinforce grammar structures, pronunciation, communicational patterns, and self-confidence in a natural manner because that was the way how people learned their mother tongue.

Storytelling in Teaching English

We all need stories for our minds just as much as we need food for our bodies.

Andrew Wright

According to Bruner cited in Medina (2007), education is not a technical issue attached to

the proper usage of processing information or learning styles applicability in the classroom. It is a complex exploration to fit the culture with people's demands and how society can be aware of those urgencies. Education should be in line with humanity's current defiance, exploring new processes and innovating trends in learning methods to rise people who can meet the expectations in contemporary society.

One of those challenges in the academic field for Colombian people is learning EFL. Education General Law (1994) recognizes the importance of learning another language, primarily English because it is a tool that opens doors to different jobs and academic research, without leaving behind the representative advantages for personal growth, brain development and the acquisition of learning skills. As reported by Porras (2010), teaching-learning EFL brings other possibilities:

1. Higher options to learn English: different educative institutions provide in their programs English levels for students, or public entities offer free English courses.

2. Greater professional growth for EFL teachers, scholarships are granted by different universities or colleges around the world for EFL teachers who are interested in expanding their capabilities.

3. The need to track down other strategies to teach English forces current or future teachers to innovate and look for other strategies to improve the English learning experience.

4. The collaborative construction of ELT procedures between policy-makers and the scholar community is a significant opportunity to examine some breaches in ongoing bilingual projects where educative staff can make decisions and keep constant assessments hereafter.

Learning English in the early years plays an influential role to develop in communicative skills, in this sense, teachers should connect culture with teaching English through storytelling activities because tales are the most effective way to give sense to people's existence. Telling a narrative is the earliest and the most natural resource to organize society's experiences and knowledge (Medina, 2007). An explicit mention of this occurs in light of the classrooms when children relate their anecdotes after a holiday period, they exchange relevant episodes at that stage to express their feelings and attract their peers' attention in a transactional way. Kumaravadivelu (2006) defines "transactional language is primarily message-oriented focusing on the exchange of information and content. It may also involve information exchange where two or more participants contribute messages to the transaction" (p. 137).

Learners can operate a great range of grammatical structures and vocabulary, they make an effort to show their story naturally and they use their conversational skills to transmit opinions. Storytelling in teaching English has a similar pattern: to recognize the language as a communicative tool, moreover, children can mature their English abilities: reading: if the speaker reads a story, the listener will decode the grammar system to draw the message. Writing: listeners may feel inspired to write their stories. Inayah (2015) summarized the core components in teaching-learning speaking process:

Teaching speaking means to teach students to produce the English speech sounds and sounds patterns, to use word and sentences stress, intonation patterns, and the rhythm of the second language, to select appropriate words and sentence according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter, to organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence, to use language as a mean of expressing values and judgments, to use the language

26

quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency (p. 27).

"Storytelling is the original form of teaching" (Dujmović, 2006, p. 75). According to Izzah & Mutiarani (2015) including stories in English classes is effective because stories add unlimited sceneries where the language is working as a communicative tool. In regular sessions, the teacher can tell a story several times and students pay attention to the meaning, at that stage, students will learn grammar structures, vocabulary, and expressions based on the context of the story.

To a greater extent, repetition is not monotonous anymore. "Students like reading o listening to a story more than once" (Porras, 2010, p. 97). The natural behavior allows students to incorporate not only the language structures but communicative elements in specific situations. They will be able to disclose different elements in one tale each time they listen to it, hence the teachers are in charge of leading student's attention to the specific point and they may spread their ideas according to the real's story meaning for them. In particular, storytelling benefits listening skills. Castro (2002) confirms that children make an effort to discover the meaning of a story, through association and remembering previous experiences or guessing. That competence becomes natural inside and outside of the classroom because it is not related to translation but it depends on children's capacity to differentiate language codes.

Tales in conjunction with gestures, images, actions or games motivate students to conceive English as a compelling way to elucidate how society works under hypothetical settings. It is an efficient path to make learners feel free of stressful situations because they will not be bombarded with grammar or vocabulary lists, in turn, they will be focused on tracking the story and build a personal meaning. It also has a social impact due to stories gather key aspects of human communication, which may be leverage to students' discussion about their personal

opinions after a storytelling session.

Stories preserve the cultural legacy through time in people's mind as an abstract patrimony, in the light of narratives from different cultures showing other perspectives of the world that may help students to value their and other individuals' culture. Indeed, critical thinking is stimulated as a result of the different issues which emerge from imaginary sceneries. Those vague backdrops will help children to establish comparisons with themselves and ponder over their behaviors, promoting self-awareness and empathy.

In the process of storytelling classes, children may increase their creative development because they will represent all the vivid stories in their minds; turning the words into mental images that will reinforce brain growth at an early age. It will become an invitation to create children's stories as a natural reaction of their engagement to the original tale. In addition, learners are keen on discussing their perceptions of tales with their peers, which is a worthwhile strategy to promote social values inside and outside the classroom.

The reasons above fit into learners' and teachers' needs to include storytelling as a complete tool in the teaching-learning process in Colombian classrooms. Stories bear in mind different social, cultural and economic conditions, for instance, Colombian children could feel alike to Mexican children, even if they are in different countries because their customs are mostly similar and they can learn each other since contrasting perspectives about the world.

Choosing stories

The teaching process using storytelling should be as same as mother tongue instruction: authentic. In other words, it should be natural where students can feel free to use the vocabulary included in tales in their daily life activities. Grammar structures should be smooth to understand

in line with students' level and the stories should be close to their background as a helpful resource to gather learners' attention and introduce the English language as a communicative tool useful in and out of the classroom.

Storytelling activities should not be mere writing materials, they could be supported by audios, images or music. Those alternatives help the students to perceive literature and language in a wide range of possibilities, especially when those stories involve human topics, such as love, friendship, death or family. Those topics are doors where students can open and feel familiar with the English language. Furthermore, literature can inspire students to express their thoughts and feelings through artistic representations, for instance, painting, poetry or sculpture. In most respects, those products are an alternative way to tell stories because they are the result of students' perception and natural conversation between the author and the reader.

Figure 1

Basic Elements in Stories
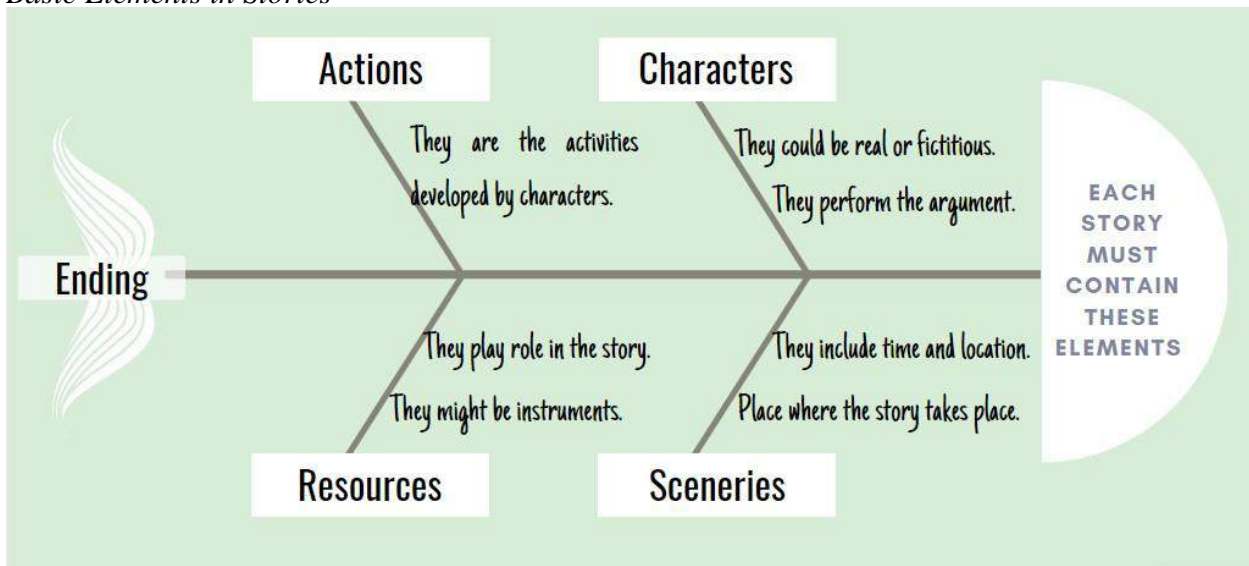
Note. Adapted from Pensamiento y Lenguaje: Enfoques Constructivistas, by Medina, A., 2007, p 9

This model shows the four pivotal elements in stories and their definitions.

The elements mentioned above interact among them to set a story with a meaning depending on the context, the reader or the writer. That significance is arbitrary: the word window brings the proper image in our minds, there are no other images to think about when we read or see that word (Bruner, 1960). Social constructions help society to reach agreements about communication and how the world is interpreted. Storytelling makes up aid to students to understand those codes and reinforce the value and moral scaffoldings among their classmates.

The selected population for this study is between 7-9 years old, according to Piaget cited by Papalia & Fieldman (2012) "they are coming out from early childhood: 2 and 7 years old and they are going into the middle childhood from 7 and 12 years old" (p. 27). Those children are sharing a classroom and experiencing different transformations in their bodies and minds. The following charts put forward the basic mental stages in children conforming to their ages and how storytelling is a practical tool to go over those mental changes:

Table 1

Cognitive Advances During Early Childhood

Capacity.	Description.	Application in storytelling activities.
Using symbols	Children do not have to be in contact with an object, idea or event to think of it. They can imagine people or objects with different properties.	Stories can be remembered a long time after it was told to retrieve grammar structures or vocabulary to put in practice. Children can make some noises to set the story according to their knowledge (i.e: a carriage could sound like a car engine).
Identity comprehension	Children know that superficial changes do not affect things nature.	They will know that if a character changes its role, it will have consequences for the story developing.
Cause and effect comprehension.	Children can realize that consequences are part of the events chain.	They can understand the events chain of a story.
Capacity to classify	Children organize events, things or people according to their importance.	They can break down the main elements of a story.
Quantities understanding.	Children can count and work with quantities.	They can calculate events, people or things in a story.
Empathy.	Children can imagine how other people feel according to the situation.	When they read or listen to a story they describe how characters could feel depending on the event.

Note. Adapted from Desarrollo Humano by Papalia, D., & Feldman. R., 2012, p. 134.

Table 2

Cognitive advances during the middle childhood.

Capacity.	Description.	Application in storytelling activities.
Spatial thinking.	Children can describe basic characteristics of places and their distances.	They know that a forest is a place full of trees.
Cause and effect comprehension.	Children can realize that consequences are part of the events chain.	They can understand the events chain of a story. Even, they can infer possible situations according to the main causes.
Categorization.	Children can classify items in terms of shapes, color, genre or any relevant characteristic.	They can classify the main elements of a story depending on their properties.
Numbers and math.	Children can solve math operations mentally or in writing form.	Along with the stories, some questions can be solved if the teacher asks students. (i.e: how many apples did Snow White eat before to fall asleep?).

Note. Adapted from Desarrollo Humano by Papalia, D., & Feldman. R., 2012*, p. 145.

Added to those physical changes, children are constantly observing models of behaviors to follow. According to social cognitive theory by Bandura (1982):

Socialization in children is defined as the way they interpret their reality based on authority figures (parents or teachers), however, the influence of their peers, inside and outside the classroom, is a pivotal factor to reinforce conducts in consonance with the contexts (p. 152).

Social learning is explored in the school when children discuss their perceptions about stories. A workshop after a story is an alternative to motivate students to interact with their classmates as well as fostering critical thinking. That task could include written activities, such as imagine a different ending to the story, even oral activities like finding a classmate who feels

identified with the same character or it may include self-aware activities, for instance thinking about the personal message hidden in the story.

Figure 2

Aspects to consider at storytelling time
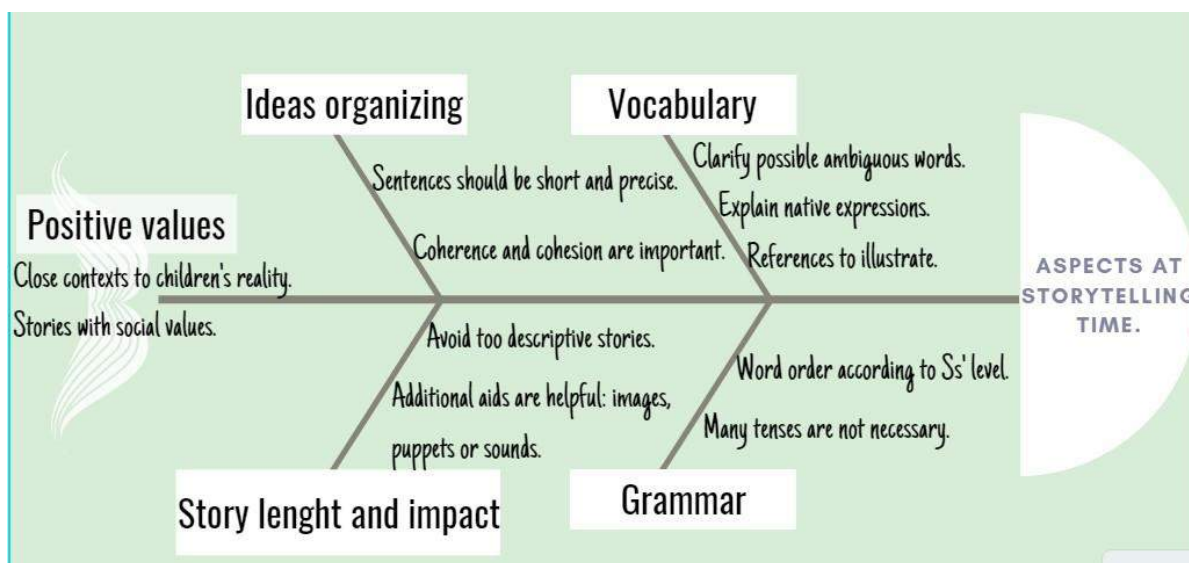
Note. Adapted from Storytelling as a Method of EFL Teaching by Dujmović, M., 2006, Metodičkiobzori, 1(2006)1 (1), p 82 (https://hrcak.srce.hr/11514).

Besides the above aspects, storytelling preparation requires some steps for the teachers. Firstly, setting up tales requires some information about students' backgrounds and needs. Secondly, the teacher should pose key questions about the main goals to reach in the session. Finally, social interaction and workshops go at the end of the narration. The following chart points out the basic elements of those three stages in a storytelling class.

Table 3

Aspects to consider at storytelling time

Stage	Aspects to consider
	Students' English level
	Content usefulness
	Social interaction opportunities
	Curriculum goals
When you are setting up the tales	Learning outcomes
	Is the environment appropriate?
When storytelling time is about to start	Are children ready to listen to you?
	Which are your learning goals?
	Time for social interaction
When the storytelling time finishes	Workshops related to stories.

Note. Adapted from Storytelling as a Method of EFL Teaching by Dujmović, M., 2006, Metodičkiobzori, 1(2006)1 (1), p 77 (https://hrcak.srce.hr/11514).

At school, children explore different learning strategies and they will identify the just right method for their needs. To a greater extent, storytelling contributes to that self-recognizing process in the light of stories and its different formats that bring up children's capabilities to understand their reality. In terms of common situations, a child who performs neatly a play and another child who solves math operations easily are examples of how well-oriented intelligence may lead students to succeed in different areas. Gardner (1993) states that "every mastery to develop an ability is a type of intelligence, and they have different ways to assess them because those abilities carry diverse backgrounds and scenarios" (p. 32, 56). Telling stories promotes children's language perception in other contexts using other imaginary characters to exchange grammar and vocabulary patterns in the target language. The chart below shows how stories could be applied in conjunction with each intelligence based on Gardner's statements:

Table 4

Gardner's intelligence model and its application with storytelling

Intelligence	Description	Storytelling suggestions
Linguistic	It is the capacity to understand the words and their meaning according to the contexts.	Stories in written formats with workshops including reading comprenhension activities.
	It is the capacity to manipulate numbers and solve logical problems.	Math riddles are a challenge for learners because they follow a story but at the same time, they need to solve a situation.
Visual-spatial	It is the capacity to orient yourself and recognize the relationships between space and objects.	Stories full of descriptive elements about places and workshops where they recreate places where the story was performed to increase children's creativity and reinforce this intelligence.
Musical	It is the capacity to perceive and create tone and rhythm patterns.	Songs to learn vocabulary or to tell stories to foster musical abilities in children.
Bodily-kinesthetic	It is the capacity to move with precision and control.	Performing plays or puppets production are alternatives to understanding language in different contexts.
	It is the capacity to distinguish and communicate with other people.	Workshops where students can share their feelings and thoughts of stories to foster empathy and mutual respect.
Interpersonal	It is the capacity to be aware of proper feelings and thoughts in different circumstances.	Fables or stories with a moral are tools to promote self-knowledge in other contexts.
Naturalistic	It is the capacity to make distinctions among species.	Tales with useful and real information about natural elements help to increase this intelligence for students.

Note. Adapted from Desarrollo Humano by Papalia, D., & Feldman. R., 2012, p. 243.

Teacher's role in classes with storytelling activities

Storytelling activities are unknown territory for English teachers. Even, some educators had highlighted different reasons why tales in English class are not a useful resource to teach a foreign language. Correa & González (2016) and Castro (2002) collated some of those justifications in their research studies:

1. Teachers consider that they should be writers to teach English as a foreign language through literature. There is not any connection with grammar structures and instruction because those are opposite approaches to appreciate the language.

2. Not all literature is appropriate for teaching purposes. The rough material to adapt stories to classes is a potential problem to design a course, revealing the glaring discrepancy between children's background and tales' topics.

3. Literature is overrated to include it in the classroom. Even though it is a good tool to observe the grammar in action, literature is full of syntax aspects that may confuse the learners. However, if teachers modify any aspect of the story its essence might lose.

4. Another important aspect to highlight is time. This factor is not enough to cover all aspects that literary analysis can offer, mostly the syllabus does not incorporate the necessary preparation to lead a storytelling class. It requires a lot of planning to insert literary aspects in a class, particularly when there are students at basic levels.

Aspects mentioned above are motivated by misconceptions about the use of literature. Educators need to understand that stories are flexible elements in the classroom because they increase the creativity process in teachers and students, the essence in the plot will not change since the teacher changes words or establishes parallels between cultures because tales allow the

reader can give an opinion about the message.

That is the communicative function in language through stories. It is visible that preparation, planning, and anticipation are key factors to develop storytelling classes, however, teachers do not need to be experts: they need to be creative. Imaginative educators have the possibility to move stories close to the students' reality, to preserve the real message of the story and at the same time, allowing students to reinterpret the story in a large number of ways using English as a conversational instrument.

According to Gail & Brewster (2014), teachers play an affective role in the classroom designing classes with storytelling activities. They need to create a free-stress environment where children can feel motivated to participate in class and valued by their capabilities. Also, teachers are mediators in the classroom because children need to have a sense of calm to use the English language in a natural way. Educators perform a procedural role where they integrate different approaches to reach the specific goals in terms of learning. Those procedures are complemented with assessment and self-assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of those strategies.

In the process of storytelling activities, teachers take part in the behavioral role. Through tales, they need to explore which strategy works neatly according to children's needs and previous experiences. When learners discover what technique is the most natural to acquire knowledge, they will transfer that ability to other subjects, they will gain self- confidence and they will explore other learning styles. They are constantly cultivating self- recognizing in different scenarios. In most aspects, the educators' interactive role is evident in classroom activities, in the light of their reinforcement of critical thinking and motivation of students to be

more committed to the learning process.

Certainly, storytelling transforms the teachers' role into guides: people in charge of showing options and the students will take the most appropriate path as a result of their capabilities. This management during the teaching-learning process is crucial because they give students the space to reflect on what they are learning and its importance. That environment is built by the teachers through attitude, knowledge, and procedures to lead students to enjoy their learning experience and develop the skills in EFL.

Students' role in storytelling classes

Traditional teaching is characterized by letting the students aside and teachers are in charge of transferring knowledge in their minds. Students only reproduce grammar structures that teachers previously said. That approach makes the learning process lays in educators' procedures and didactics. However, didactic strategies and approaches have been changing to include students in their learning growth, they have taken part in teaching design, in the light of different learning strategies to change the interaction student-teacher in the classroom.

In conjunction with student's involvement in their learning process, Vygotsky (1978) stated that children learn through internalizing their interactions with adults. This interactive learning helps students to go through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), defined by Vygotsky (1978) as "the breach between children's acquired knowledge and those aspects which required more effort" (p. 243). In the classroom, teachers will identify the features that demand more reinforcement to guide the learners to cover all those aspects. Vygotsky (1978) added that the ZPD works with scaffolding to offer children possibilities to enhance their potential in the

38

subject. *Scaffolding* is distinguished as "all the tools, aids and information given by the teacher to show the students the way they need to reach their goals in terms of learning activities" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 244).

Storytelling shines a light on the importance of including students in their learning process, they will have the capacity to use the English language to express their perceptions about the world and to interpret their reality. Tales are a two-way conversation where the author drafts some ideas about any topic, at that stage the teachers' strategies may occur: they will adapt the situation to lead students to give their opinion to the author's proposal using grammar and lexical elements taken from the story. That answer could be a written product, an oral request or an artistic representation, but on the whole, the teacher will be only a moderator in that conversation, helping the students in their way to reach communicative goals in practical contexts.

Social learning is evident through stories because children can observe different behaviors in the characters and eventually, learners will be able to make judgments and recognize if those attitudes will help them in their daily routines. They will be confronted with imaginary personalities about familiar situations and they will choose their next reactions in upcoming events through self-recognizing. Besides, this experience involves self-awareness as a social interaction stage where students will have the chance to interact among them about the same story and they will understand and accept other children's opinions.

In general terms, Bandura (1982) states that social learning is the most ancient way of learning and people not only perform responses towards any stimuli, they also receive feedback and observe peers who do the same actions but in different ways. Through storytelling activities,

children will recognize the diversity in opinions and feelings around one topic. Moreover, students will feel motivated to reflect on their and their classmates' responses because they are constantly interacting and activating critical thinking, not just with tales' contexts but in their thoughts on those stories.

Storytelling in Colombia

British Council has been one of the institutions around the world which have coined storytelling strategies to spread that initiative around the world. This institution agrees that stories offer attractive and appealing materials to identify children's needs at primary levels (Gail, E., & Brewster, J, 2014). As this institution is one of the most representative models for Colombian English education, some schools have ruled some of the British Council projects and they have taken some modifications according to learners' backgrounds and requirements. Martha Castro is an English teacher at a school in Chiquinquirá, Boyacá. She stands out some aspects of storytelling based on its communicative function:

Figure 3

Storytelling and its communicative function
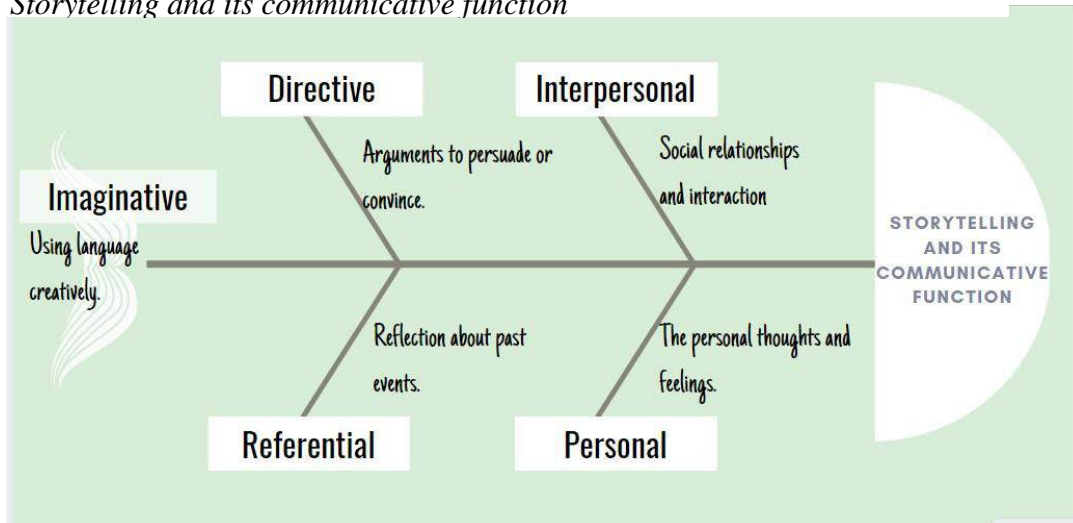
Note. Adapted from The Magic World of Storytelling: Some Points for Reflection by Castro, M., 2002, *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers Professional Development, 3(1)*, 53. (https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/11315)

Aspects mentioned above are the basics to acquire a foreign language in a natural way, to break the old strategies about the GTM and to lead students to express themselves naturally. That is the function of stories in the classroom, giving students familiar elements that they can play with their mother tongue and they can easily shift to the English. Castro (2002) also states that "storytelling allows working with emotional and cultural aspects" (p. 54). Besides, short stories are full of details and events that embrace children in the narrative. The same tale can be told several times and children can participate in it from different roles. They can learn about their culture and express their points of view about the story according to their experiences.

Papalia and Fieldman (2012) declare that creativity is a constant process during the whole life, however, in early childhood should be developed to recreate better learning experiences and

improve the creative process. Stories cultivate children's imaginative operations, through familiar contexts because learners tend to imagine how people or other elements in tales look like or how they sound. Students transform foreign language words into mental images which is a global code. Connected with the mental process, stories also move students' emotions, hence they express their feelings and thoughts in English and they will recognize and explain abstract ideas individually or in groups.

Telling stories has an important objective in Colombian education: "to build learner's confidence and develop within a positive attitude on the foreign language" (Castro, 2002, p. 54). In the same way, some teachers have been working with this strategy in other schools to promote alternative paths to use storytelling as a tool in the teaching-learning process in EFL. Certainly, Professor Nohora Inés Porras, from Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia and her students-team show the importance of storytelling in a public school in Bucaramanga, Colombia. They carried out a study with first, second and third graders including syllabus planning, shaping the stories according to a needs analysis and presenting their results.

In her study, Porras (2010) affirms that teaching English in Colombia is challenging due to students' background and teachers' abilities. Therefore, stories show the foreign language as a familiar vehicle to express ideas and feelings in an interactive way for students on the whole. Besides tales offer to the teachers the necessary instruments to work on learning English as a communicative tool through grammar and vocabulary. After collecting and analyzing data, Porras found two important aspects of storytelling activities in EFL.

Table 5

Aspects in Teaching English through Stories

Teaching English through Stories	
What helps children learn in a fun and meaningful way	What allows children to comprehend and show comprehension

1. Stories created based on children's likes and interests
2. Games and other kinds of motivating activities.
	1. Reading process
	  a. Pre-reading stage
	  b. While reading stage:
	    - Connection
	    - Predicting
	    - Questioning
	  c. Post-reading stage
	    - Oral and reading tasks.

Note. Taken from Teaching English through Stories: A Meaningful and Fun Way for Children to Learn the Language by Porras, 2010, *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers´ Professional Development, 12(1),* 97 (https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/13855/36809).

Mainly, if students can connect their lives, likes and interests with some aspects previously worked in class, they may associate and learn in a meaningful way. From then on, teachers need to activate children's prior knowledge of experiences in their mother tongue to ease the transition to the foreign language. In that shift, games play a fundamental role to prompt students to use grammar and vocabulary patterns in real contexts, as well as interact with their classmates, hence those didactics activities may help learners to feel comfortable in a relaxing environment. In the meanwhile, comprehension and understanding stage take place in the classroom over some steps:

Figure 4

Comprehension and understanding stages
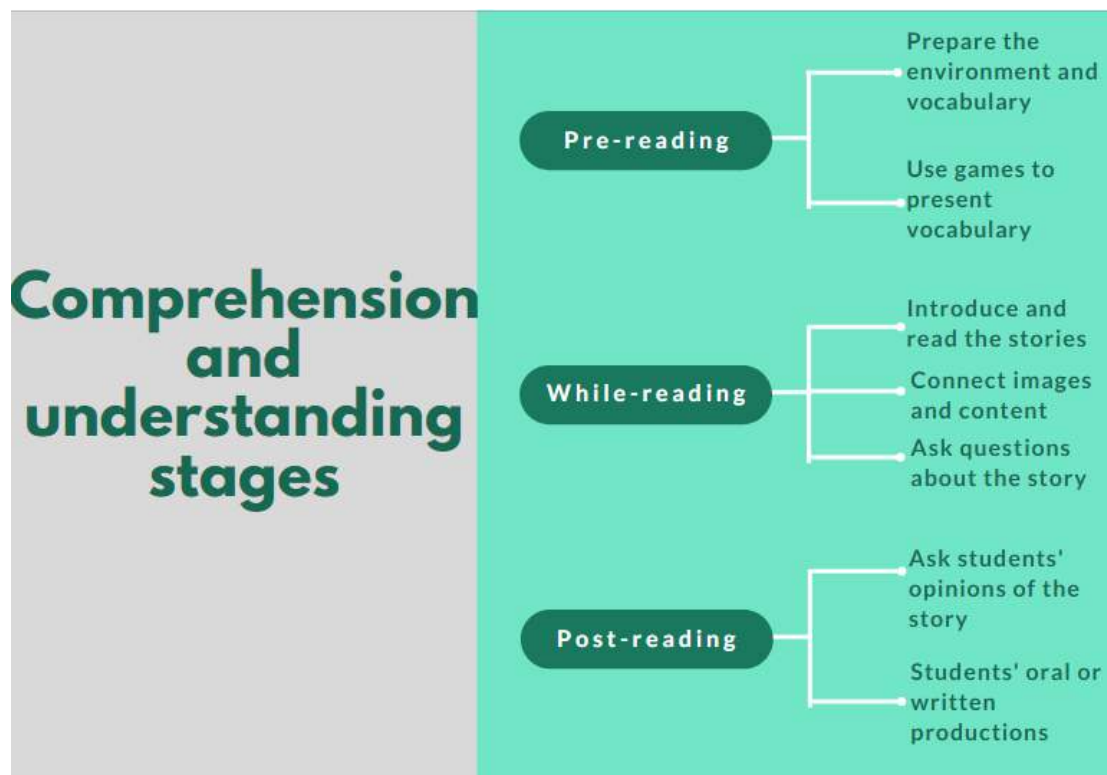
Note. Adapted from Teaching English through Stories: A Meaningful and Fun Way for Children to Learn the Language by Porras, 2010, *PROFILE: Issues in Teachers´ Professional Development, 12(1),* 97 (https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/13855/36809).

The figure represents the main stages at story time stage in the classroom and some advice to follow in those moments.

In the light of those findings, Professor Porras and her team (2010) highlighted the importance of games and stories because those elements complement children's learning process, generating a free-stress atmosphere where learners can express themselves spontaneously.

Stories are important at an early age because they provide familiar contexts for children, besides they include great amounts of input allowing students to predict the next situations and express their ideas. To a greater extent, tales present the language as an engaging tool for learners can enjoy and acquire new knowledge at the same time.

The importance of storytelling for EFL has such relevance that the British Council in Colombia with the support of Foundation PLAN designed a project during 2017 called *Storytelling for Peace Building*, where 80 Colombian teenagers and children told their stories about war and how it impacted their lives. The main objective is giving a voice to some population who were dramatically affected by the armed conflict in Colombia and encouraging the peace process as a road for healing and reconciliation.

That initiative lasted during four months, during that period, British Council arts experts guided and helped those young people to tailor narrative techniques to express their experiences during war and peace process. "When I can tell my story, I feel valued. Listen to other people's stories is meaningful. We are so happy with this project because it captured the main essence of our involvement and we can contribute to peace" Kevin Amaya relates, 15 years old (Canal 13, 2018). "The point is that children survived to hostility, frustration, anger, and fear. They need outlets for these feelings, just as adults do. A folktale may provide just the kind of harmless release that children desire" (Russel cited in Dujmović, 2006, p. 85).

Eventually, children can identify their emotions and recognize other people's feelings and they may be able to act in consequence to build a better society. Storytelling sheds a light on reinforcing values that enrich communities. "Because of their collective character, social values have an objective basis which is not directly dependent on the individual. Social values just

emerge if the child is immersed in a constant social interaction" (Gómez, Rodríguez & Rojas, 2013, p. 75). In the same line, storytelling contributes to acquire a foreign language in a natural way keeping contact with communicative alternatives to express ideas and understanding people's backgrounds, as it meets the students' needs to perceive the language in different way, because "most of elementary learners see the English language as a set of codes to accomplish in academic requirements" (González, 2010, p. 345).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Research paradigm

Qualitative research advocates rather than the individual's personal experiences of the issue that is observed. It is related to the conceptions, characteristics, symbols, or descriptions of events and things (Habib et al., 2014). This approach includes people's reasoning and the justification individuals think in a specific way, therefore this path allows the researcher to understand people's motivations and thoughts towards the specific situation. In consequence, the researcher engages in participants' experiences and builds knowledge, thereby the core of the research takes place in the members' unique particularities around the phenomenon studied (Cohen, et al., 2007).

In most respects, education is a social construction which always is changing in accordance with society's needs and challenges, at this stage, qualitative research takes place to offer different interpretations of a phenomenon, based on population's perceptions, particularly students' and teachers' concepts about the use of storytelling to improve the teaching-learning English process in the classroom.

Research Approach

Descriptive research goes further in examining a matter of study. This approach recognizes and illustrates the issue through interviews, observations and documents reviews (Habib et al., 2014 & Nguyen. T., & Tran. T., 2015). This research is focus on activities developed by teachers when they decided to use stories as a teaching-learning strategy and children's performance during and at the end of those activities.

In this applied project the author describes the impact of storytelling in teaching English in the classroom. This includes a previous needs analysis according to students' earlier experiences with the English learning process, the learners' progress when stories were implemented in that process and children's perceptions during the study. This paper shows qualitative information to clarify the learners' needs before starting the study and their final insights at the end of the project.

Procedures

1. Choosing a research question, delimitating of population sample: this topic provides an alternative to teach English at elementary levels.

   a. Research question: What is the impact of storytelling in English classes with 7-9-year-old children?

   b. Population and sample: this project took students of fourth grade, 35 in total, of the private institution Luna Lunera, which is located in Tintal, West of Bogotá. Those students are in a social-economic status of 2 and 3, in ages between 7 and 9 years old. This is a mixed institution (boys and girls). The sample was 10 students: 5 girls and 5 boys chosen at random.

2. Delimiting a timeframe, applying a needs analysis to the target population, selecting the stories to include in the English classes and designing the lesson plans in line with designed activities. Under the deadline given by the teachers in the school, the researcher will arrange the lesson plans to work in class, including the stories to work in classroom, based on the results of the needs analysis.

   a. Timeframe: the author is not a teacher of that institution, therefore the permission was

given to develop this study for three months, from March 4th until May 15th. The workshops will be developed one hour per week.

b. The author designed and applied a needs analysis of the whole target population. The survey was confidential and the template is available in this document in the appendix A.

c. Selecting the stories to work in class: storytelling for peacebuilding is an initiative of the British Council, where they trained 80 Colombian young people in arts and narrative to encourage them to tell their stories about war or difficult situations in their surroundings and how they overcame that event. The researcher selected 3 stories to work on them along the study, those tales don't have any title, then one of the students' task will be giving a title to those stories. Despite those stories are in a web page, they are not digital stories because they are not "a series of still images combined with a narrated soundtrack to tell a story", according to Dreyer (2017, p. 2). Those stories only have images and the written plot to be read. The transcription of those texts will be found in appendix B.

d. The author designed three lessons plans based on Rodríguez M., & Rodríguez J.,'s proposals (2010) to work during the timeframe according to the school disposition and the topics selected for that grade. Those lesson plans will be available in appendix C.

3. Identifying variables, data collection and variables.

a. Variables: as the independent variable the usage of storytelling in the English classes is an important factor to improve the learning-teaching experience in the institution.

49

In fact, the proposal is the usage of the web page called Storytelling in Colombia that includes several stories written by Colombian children and teenagers who suffered the negative consequences of the war in Colombia, but they got over that situation and they want to leave an important message about resilience and peacebuilding. As the dependent variable, the students' performance and motivation towards English during storytelling sessions are crucial to design lesson plans or syllabi which may include tales to improve teachers' and students' teaching-learning experience in the schools.

b. Data collection and instruments: initially, the researcher carried out a need's analysis survey for students. Secondly, the author made participants observations to recognize the students' attitude, motivation and performance towards storytelling activities. Lastly, the researcher interviewed the head English teacher for this grade to gather more specific information about students' work in regular English classes.

4. Methods of data analysis: the statistical processing empirical data collected during the investigation was processed, taking into account instruments of descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of needs analysis were presented properly analyzed and interpreted in graphs, which were the basics for the respective discussion to elaborate on the general conclusions and recommendations of the work.

CHAPTER 4

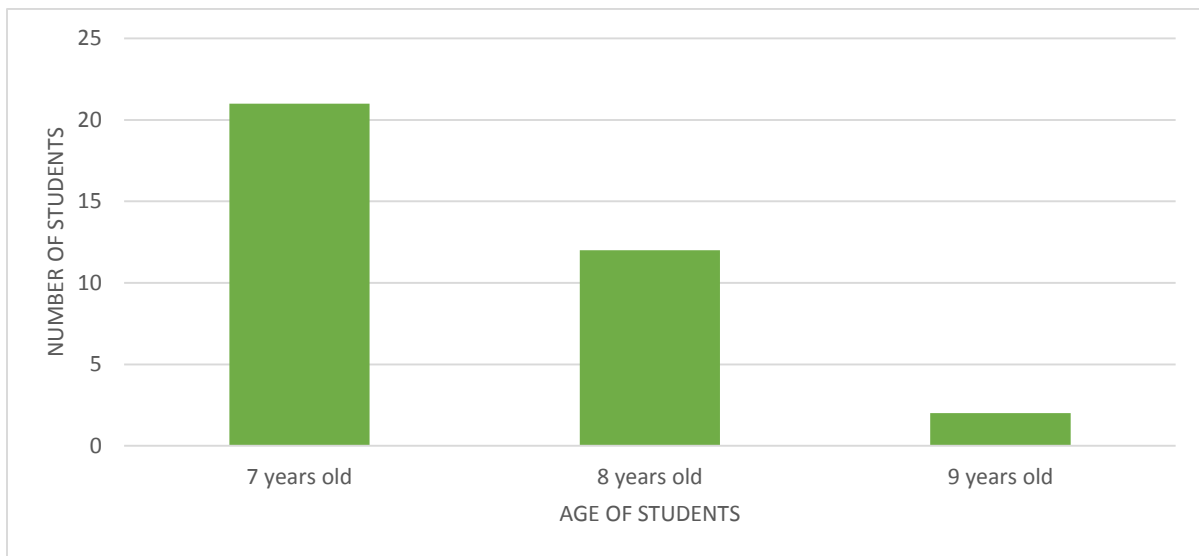## Results and Discussion

Needs Analysis Results

The following information shows the results of the survey (see appendix A) applied to all population, 35 students of Luna Lunera School.
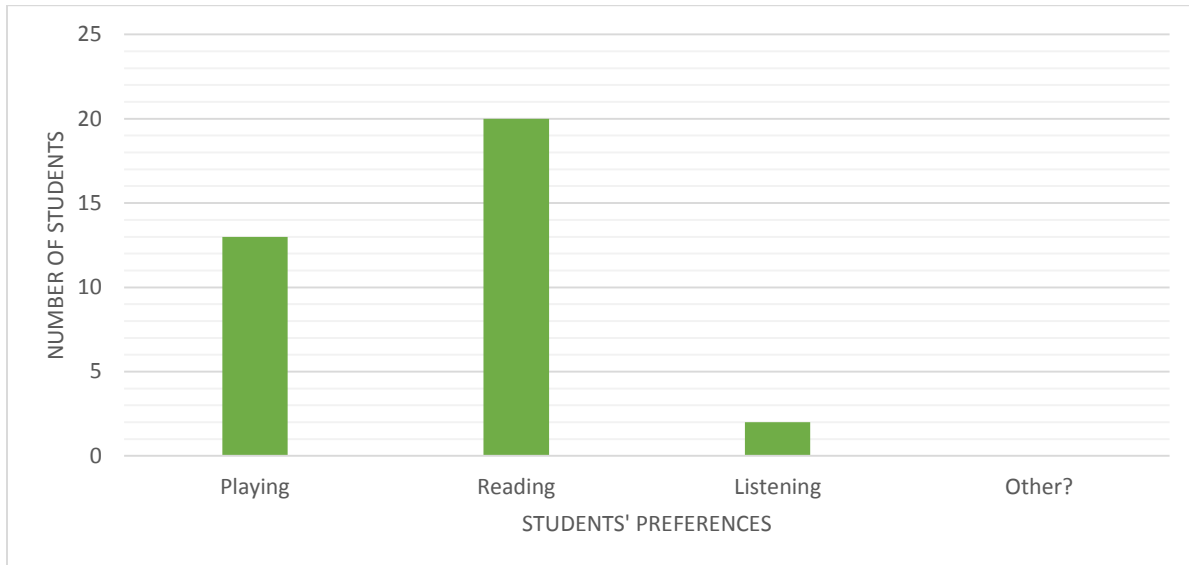
Figure 5

The age of students

Note. In this bar chart, we can observe that most of the population is 7 years old. With the exception of two students who are repeating the course, they are nine years old.

Figure 6

Answer to the question: how would you like to learn English?

Note. The question set a question for the students about their preferences about learning English in classroom, that survey was developed before the storytelling sessions to assess students' satisfaction with regular English classes.

In the graph, we can recognize students' preferences in EFL classes. Indeed, games are always fun for learners, then those activities attract children's interests unlike ordinary lessons because that is a natural students' impulse (Gozcu, & Caganaga, 2016). However, children show a higher preference for reading. Twenty students said that stories can help their motivation in their foreign language acquisition. In this question, students did not state other alternatives to learn English.

Figure 7

Answer to the question: What do you like the most?
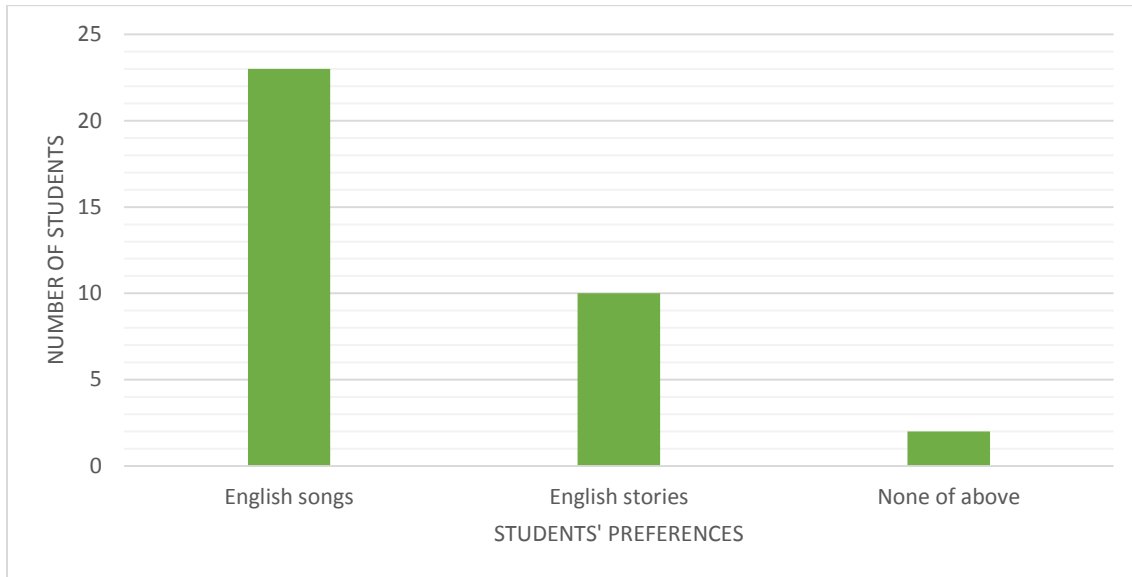
Note. This question was addressed about the format of stories and students showed their preference of tales format.

Regarding the above chart, we can observe that children feel more motivated with songs, however songs also tell a story in different format, in terms of learning process it helps to recognize grammar patterns and vocabulary. Stories may take different schemes to involve students in several plots that contributes to perceive the language in other forms in comparison with traditional classes where the GTM is no efficient for learning purposes.

Figure 8

Students' preferences in homework
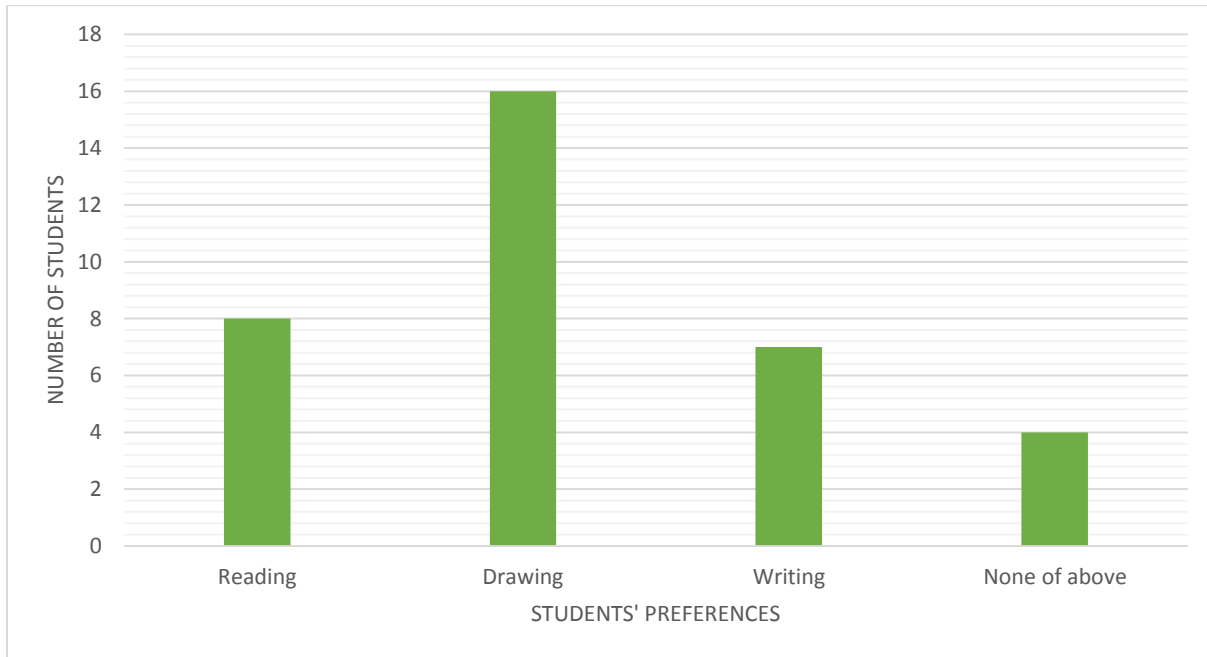
Note. Children showed their preferences about work-at-home time. Those results were meaningful to design the lessons in storytelling sessions to engage students' interest in home tasks.

In the last part of the survey, children were asked about their preferences in homework time. The most important part of the population agreed with making draws as a good option to do tasks, for that reason stories go with graphs to motivate students to acquire a foreign language. The other two important results were reading and writing, both components are supplementary in storytelling activities in the production stage, where students can express their feelings and thoughts about a story.

Motivation Survey Results

After three months of activities with storytelling, the author designed another survey to assess the motivation levels in students. The model of this survey is in Appendix C in this work. The following were the results of that survey which was applied to 35 students.

Figure 9

Students' perception of regular classes and storytelling sessions
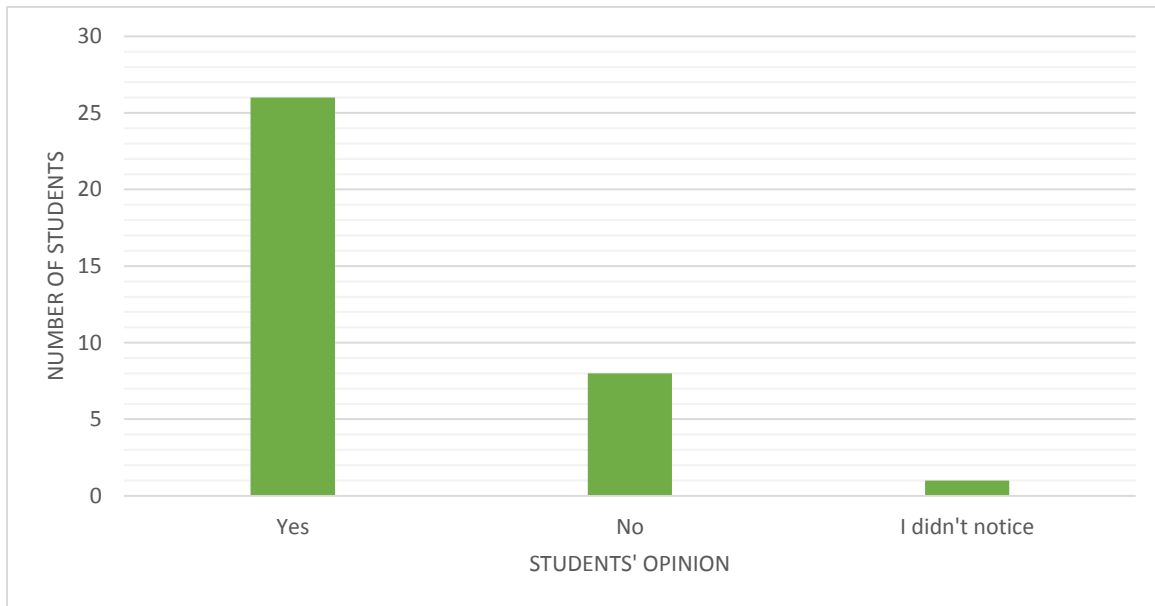
Note. The original question was: Did you notice the difference between regular classes and storytelling session? (See appendix C).

The bar chart represents the students' perception of the activities developed in those workshops. We can notice that 26 students agreed with a strong difference between regular classes and activities with stories. Despite of the research lasted 3 months, students identified the

changes in teaching English in regular form, grammar patterns or lists of vocabulary, and a class where they can infer the meaning of words through images and contexts.

Figure 10

Answer to the question: Were the activities easy to understand?
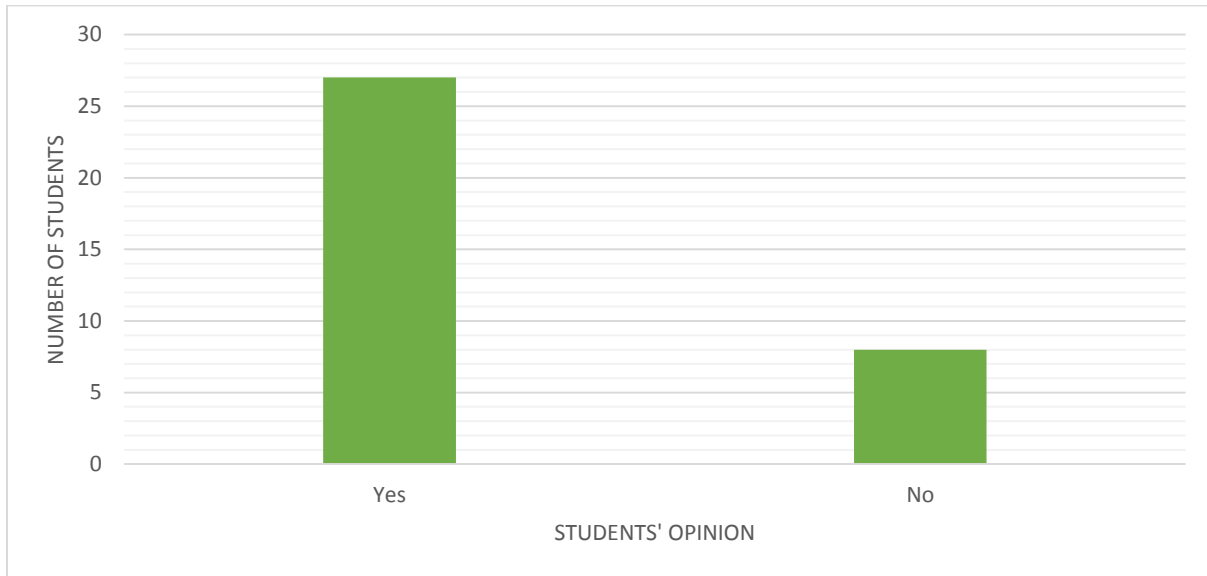
Note. The author made some clarifications to the students in this question. Easy activities, it is referring to tasks with enough tools in the class to develop them in and out of the classroom.

According to the previous chart, more than half of students found effortless to understand the topics in each activity. As reveled by the students, they use different channels to understand the stories, such as association with mother tongue, drawings or recalling previous classes, they reached to understand and complete to a greater extent the proposed activities. In addition, they worked in groups to give enough support when they struggled with any task.

Figure 11

Students' motivation after storytelling sessions
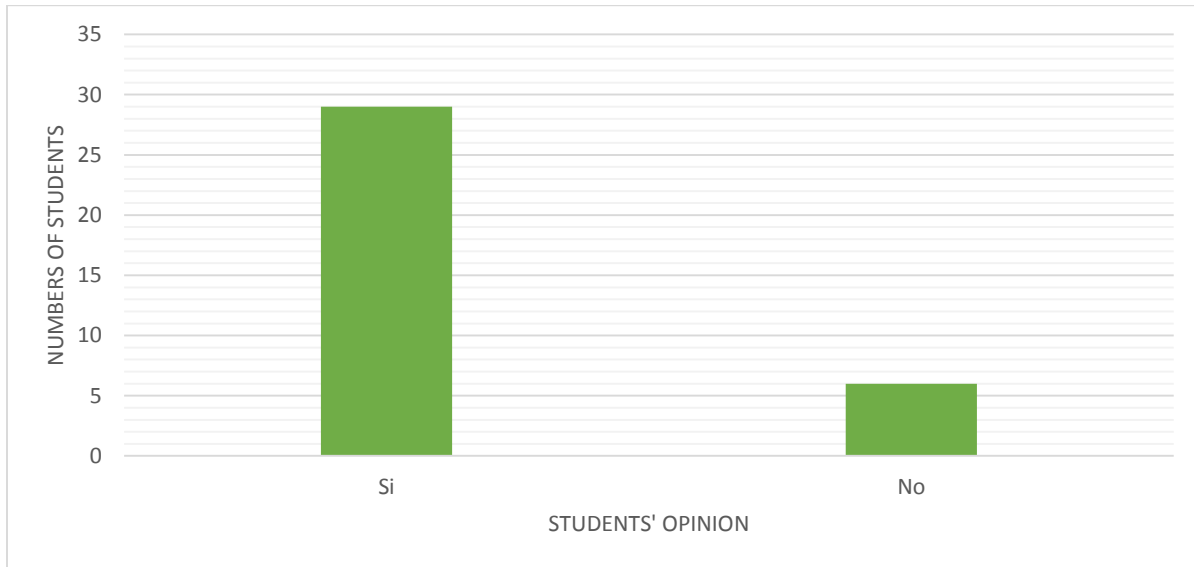
Note. As one the key factors in teaching is students' motivation, this question was made in order to know if learners feel engaged with the activities worked in the sessions.

This graph represents students' level of motivation in English classes after storytelling sessions. There were asked if they would like to continue with classes where tales were the core of the session. Generally, the bulk of the students showed a positive attitude when teachers explore other paths to teach English, not just with written stories, but in different formats in conjunction with technological aids.

Figure 12

Students' opinions about importance of the English language
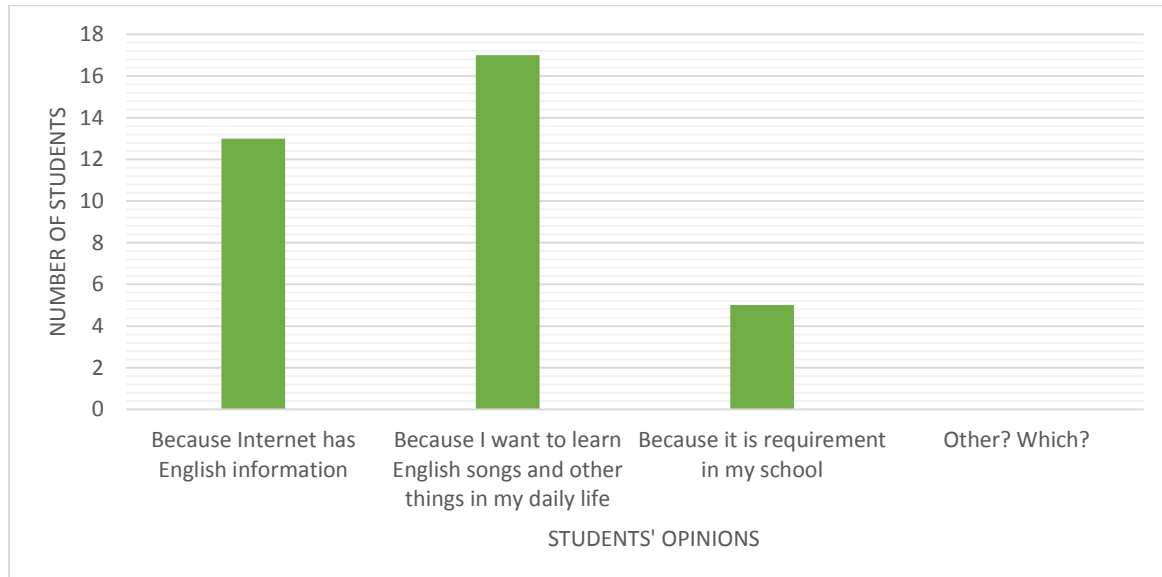
Note. The options for this question were based on common students' comments during storytelling situations, where the author asked them about the importance of the English.

The above bar chart shows the main students' motivation to learn English. The two principal reasons: the motivation to understand English songs and because the Internet has additional information in that language that they wanted to know. Those arguments lay on the technological transformation, consequently, English culture has become popular due to songs, books or raising opportunities to know people through websites. In consequence, high-tech devices play an important role in contemporary teaching-learning methods to attract student's attention and reach meaningful learning.

Figure 13

Students' opinion about percentage of speaking language in class
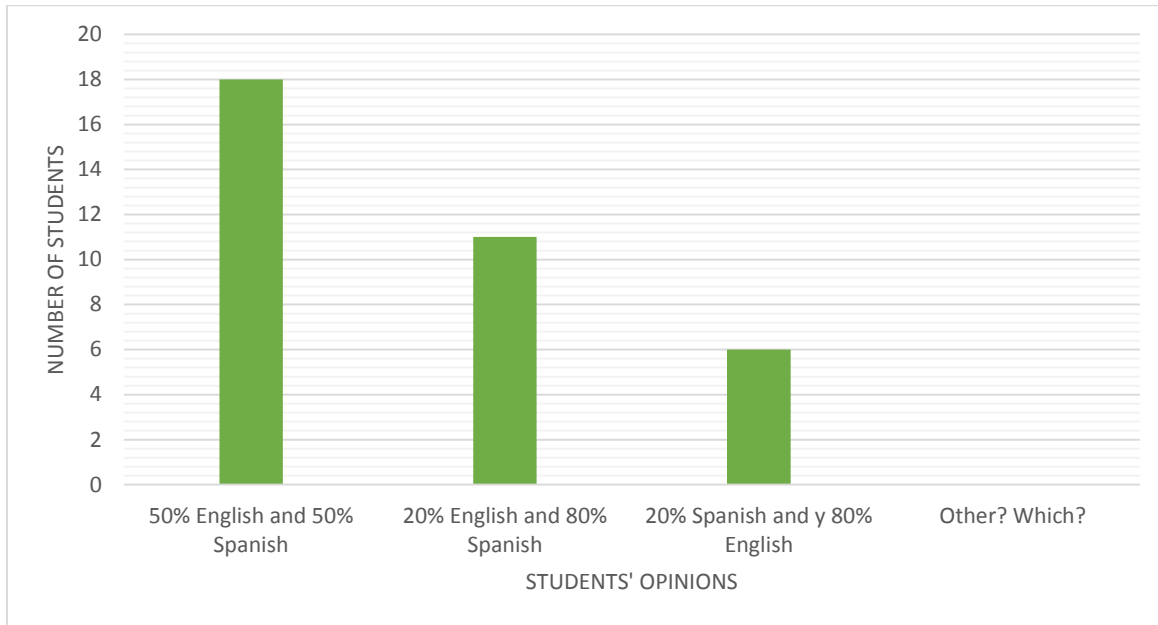
Note. Students' opinion refer to the percentage of teachers when they are talking in English in class. The question does not include the amount of students' intervention using the English language.

This graph presents an opportunity to motivate students to reach a complete immersion in English environments. Learners feel the inherent need to translate every word, however it is highly important to guide the students to use other strategies to understand English grammar patterns and vocabularies such as flashcards, images or mimics. Translation to the mother tongue should be used as an ultimate resource to explain complex structures or abstract ideas.

Discussion

Teaching English through storytelling activities helps to reach a meaningful impact on students' experience in the classroom. They perceive the difference between regular classes which are full of grammar contents and songs which a high amount of vocabulary that is not regularly used in contexts. In the light of stories, teachers can use those songs to introduce different topics included in the tales and students can observe that everything is connected in the class.

In addition, besides gathering information from students' perceptions, the researcher also conducted an interview for the only English teacher at the elementary level in the school, where some questions were posed around the experiences with storytelling classes and the impact in the teaching-learning process. There was a question where the author asked about her opinion about stories in the classroom, the teacher answered the following:

"I consider that we [teachers] need more training about how to look for other resources in teaching English because the methodology is traditional, and this is teamwork. Stories are indeed the best way to understand grammar, vocabulary and English structures in context and students can make the most of them, but it requires a lot of preparation and those activities are time-consuming from teacher's free time. In my case, I am a self-contained teacher and I don't have enough time to plan those kinds of activities" (V. Jiménez, personal communication, May 24th, 2019).

The teacher recognized the effectiveness and the importance of stories in the English class, however, one of the weak points to apply that strategy is lack of time because it demands a lot of preparation. As it was mentioned above in the section related to the teachers' role, with just

one story, teachers may highlight different grammar or communicational topics to apply in different sessions.

Another question about this research was the difference in students' performance after the classes using stories and regular classes. Teacher answered:

"It is evident that there was a significant impact on students' performance because they [students] felt the necessity to continue talking about the story and discover other similar stories, even they linked English vocabulary with other assignments. Other teachers said that some students wanted to translate some historical events into English. They [students] learn more vocabulary and grammar structures using stories" (V. Jiménez, personal communication, May 24th, 2019).

The teacher mentioned two important points to observe in this study: Firstly, how stories can cover grammar structures and vocabulary at the same time. Stories have a context, where children can associate words with close elements in their lives, next, learners can connect that terminology through grammar structures and understand the difference naturally. Secondly, the teacher stated that storytelling helps children to understand other subjects through the target language, for instance, learners know about geography or weather while the teacher is explaining the context of the story. That aspect triggers an important transformation in traditional teaching in Colombia because it includes Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which states that "schools should prompt the integration of subject and language learning in foreign language acquisition" (Ioannou & Verdugo, 2011, Stories and Cognition section).

Ioannou & Verdugo (2011) also declare that CLIL complements storytelling strategies, because it includes other contexts with the target language, thereupon, students can link authentic

situations with grammar and vocabulary learned in previous sessions, while teachers use scaffolding structures to preparing students to use those structures in different contexts. Stories make part of the well-known environment for students, for that reason, it is the best way to include EFL in the classroom activities. Even though, CLIL and storytelling activities "on a wider scale and for a longer time could possibly contribute to further developing children's FL skills, sensitizing them even deeper on diversity issues, and educating them for being active, unbiased, and responsible citizens" (Korosidou & Griva, 2016, p. 127).

In essence, it is evident that didactic activities with tales are innovative alternatives to change the way how English teachers present their classes or how they prepare their material and concurrently, those strategies help children to see from a different perspective English classes as an important tool to learn from other cultures, to express their ideas and feelings and motivate critical thinking with real-life scenarios. There is an opportunity to motivate students to reach a complete immersion in English environments. They feel the natural need to translate everything, however it is important to guide students to use other means to understand English structures besides translations or talking in their mother tongue.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

English Colombian education has been suffering important changes since 2004 with the first initiative National Plan of Bilingualism, where it is expected students to reach important goals in the foreign language as they move forward in their schooling process, however, it has been running by foreign institutions to establish the best way to lead students to learn English. However, teachers know their students' learning styles and which their educational needs could be handled to get better results for that reason, teachers should be trained in different ways to design learning and teaching strategies according to social contexts. Those conditions should be close to the Colombian population to get meaningful results in terms of teaching-learning English as a foreign language.

On the basis of children's opinions about storytelling activities presented in this document, they show high acceptance with that strategy, in fact, they can recognize the difference between regular classes and the classes with storytelling approaches. That reaction is valid to implement more tales in English with useful activities that reinforce that acquired knowledge and that positive impact in learners' process.

In most respects, the English teacher in that institution reinforces that favorable image in her regular classes, because children associate different topics with tales or with the activities worked previously. For that reason, teachers should change progressively their methodology including short tales in their classes, it does not require cover all grammatical content in just one class, a story could be told many times and it always has something different to offer for English learning.

63

To conclude, stories have different formats: songs, videos or through teachers' voices. It makes the stories a suitable way to identify students' learning strategies because the teachers, since their facilitator roles, can observe different effects in learners' attitudes depending on tale format and they will recognize the best way learners can acquire a foreign language. In light of this study, learners always kept a conversation with the author's story. They wrote their answers to those stories from their point of view, they were free to express their ideas and feelings and English was the tool to develop that talk. The study did not use traditional or foreign tales during the project, the author used a Colombian website that includes some stories about real-life contexts, and in consequence, students felt the desire to express a message using another language. In other words, this is an invitation to adapt other paths to teaching English despite uneven agreements between policies and real-life situations in the classroom in line with students' interests and learning styles.

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Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera

Encuesta de necesidades educativas - Área de humanidades – Inglés

A continuación responderás las siguientes preguntas. Encierra en un círculo la respuesta que sea correcta para ti.

No serás evaluado en ningún aspecto, por eso no tienes que marcar la hoja, sólo queremos conocer tu opinión acerca de tu aprendizaje en inglés y de la forma en que podemos mejorarlo, porque tú eres nuestra prioridad.

1. ¿Cuántos años tienes?
a. 7   b. 8   c. 9

2. ¿Cómo te gustaría aprender inglés?
a. Jugando   b. Leyendo   c. Escuchando   C. ¿Otra? ¿Cuál?

3. ¿Crees que es importante aprender inglés?
   a. Sí   b. No   c. No sé.

4. ¿Qué te gusta más?

   a. Canciones en inglés   b. Cuentos en inglés   c. Ninguna de las dos.

5. Cuando haces tareas, ¿qué te gusta más?

a. Leer   b. Dibujar   c. Escribir   d. Ninguna

SELECTED STORIES

The following stories are retrieved from the web page https://storytellingcolombia.com/, which is an initiative from the British Council in Colombia and the Foundation PLAN, who were in charge of animating the stories.

Story #1 by Angela, Qubdó, Chocó.

Once upon a time there was a happy town. A town where joy dwelled in every person. Dancing and laughter made us forget all the things that were wrong. Our problems simply no longer existed.

And then one day, shadows took over the sky. There was no light, darkness covered everything. A red shadow and a black shadow took over our village. Where is it? I want it for myself.

This town doesn't need it. You don't need it. Joy is mine and it will remain mine and no one else's no matter whom I have to face. The shadows were fighting over the town's joy. Joy was a diamond that shone within every person who deeply felt it.

When they finally found the diamond they fought so fiercely over it that they broke it into thousand pieces. "What have you done? You destroy joy and you're going to have to pay for it"

The fight between them lasted for months. As days went by, the shadows became weaker and fainter. "You destroyed the whole town by selfishly wanting to possess all joy. You have kept nothing and left us with nothing at all"

It was then that the shadow, defeated began gathering the pieces of what once was the town's joy. "I must apologize. I should have never put you through this. Your joy will never be as complete as it once was, but this was all I managed to find for you"

The joy of that town was my brother, and even though the bad guys took his life, we had to forgive them in order to move on. Today, joy has gradually come back and I know that it´s joy teaching us to forgive to be able to write a different story.

Story # 2 by Juliana, Codito Bogotá.

Every morning, while the sun is shining…I wake Jack up and we go looking for things in the rubble that might help us to survive. Jack is my only partner since everybody disappeared since water crisis in 2030.

Sometimes we are lucky and we find some canned goods and vital resources, when we do not, Jack goes hunting for rats or birds so can we have something to eat. Acid rain killed all the vegetation and the sun's ultraviolet rays are burning the skin of the few animals that managed to survive in the shadows.

We had to figure out a way so that toxic air wouldn't affect us. But it is not easy. Animals had to adapt to this horrifying environment, and they became beasts that ravage whatever crosses their way.

One day we walked for hours, until we found an underground city. "Jack, I think I found water" "But it is murky and polluted" "This is all we have to survive on, we could try to filter it and drink a bit" "Look over there, there is a mountain of skeletons, humans that have been devoured by beasts" "We have to scape. Let's take as much as we can water and go out of here" "Wait, there is a distant sound…" "It sounds like a nuclear reactor" "Look carefully, I think it could be something else, something that could save us" "Forget it, we are doomed, Jack" "It is a quantum communication device, you can use its atomic probes to send a message through space-time" "It still has some charge, we can communicate among decades with somebody in the past…"

Story #3 by Stiven, Buenos Aires, Cauca.

"Today I want you to imagine yourselves in the future. What do you want to be when you grow up?" "I want to be an astronaut. I want to research life outside earth" "I want to be a doctor. I want to save many lives" "I want to play football and bring people joy when I score goals with the national team" "I want to be a fire fighter and feel like a hero at the end of every day" "I want to be a carpenter and build houses for everyone" "I want to be a mayor… and fix everything that's wrong here, to build a sports center that is not flooded and where children can play, to fix the roads and let everyone travel at ease, to build parks where children and elders alike can enjoy their time out, to build great big hospitals and schools that are accessible to everyone and that don't lack anything. When even guerrilla members are welcome so that they can learn, work as part of society and reconcile with it. And after that, I want to be a president I want to fix everything that is wrong in the country I want to work for the people" "Anyone else?" "I want to be a president too" "And me" "me too" "I am going to be a president"

LESSON PLAN 1			
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English	
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 6th March 13th March 20th	
Topic: Emotions Weather Empathy phrases		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize classmates' emotions. To be capable to describe weather characteristics. To use expressions to express sympathy for an event.	
Objective(s): **To describe people's emotions.** **To identify weather.** **To show empathy for a situation.**			
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION		**TIMING**	**TEACHING RESOURCES**
Warm-Up: **Emotions:** Song related to emotions: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMOnyPxE_w8 **Weather:** Song related to the weather: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfAB4BXSHOA **Empathy:** Song related to empathy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9A-Hpwp3lU After emotions song, students will describe their feelings in that right moment. After weather song, students will describe how the weather is today and how the weather was yesterday. After empathy song, students will say some phrases that they remember of the song.		5 minutes.	TV, internet connection.

LESSON PLAN 1			
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English	
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 6th March 13th March 20th	
Topic: Emotions Weather Empathy phrases		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize classmates' emotions. To be capable to describe weather characteristics. To use expressions to express sympathy for an event.	
Objective(s): **To describe people's emotions.** **To identify weather.** **To show empathy for a situation.**			
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION		**TIMING**	**TEACHING RESOURCES**
Previous Knowledge: **Emotions:** Teacher will present different images about emotions and students will recognize them according to the previous vocabulary. **Weather:** Teacher will record different sounds about weather and students will recognize them according to previous vocabulary. **Empathy:** Teacher will show different situations and students will repeat common phrases to express sympathy for a problem.		5 minutes.	Power point presentation, TV, recordings.
Presentation: Teacher will present the first story and the most important vocabulary with images related to its meaning to understand the story. This tale will be presented in its original online version from the web page: https://storytellingcolombia.com/,		15 minutes.	TV, internet connection, images with the vocabulary related to the story.

Practice: Emotions:	15 minutes.	Colors, papers, pencils.

LESSON PLAN 1		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 6th March 13th March 20th
Topic: Emotions Weather Empathy phrases		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize classmates' emotions. To be capable to describe weather characteristics. To use expressions to express sympathy for an event.
Objective(s): **To describe people's emotions.** **To identify weather.** **To show empathy for a situation.**		
ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	**TIMING**	**TEACHING RESOURCES**
Students will divide the story by phases, where they will describe how the characters feel at the beginning, at the middle and at the end of the story. **Weather:** Students will draw the most important part of the story for them and they will describe it in terms of weather. **Empathy:** Students will draw a comic where they represent a dialogue between the shadows and the little girl using empathy phrases.		

Production:		Papers, magazines, newspapers, pencils, pens, cardboard.
Emotions: They will draw other emotions that are not mentioned in the story and which are their characteristics.		
Weather: Students will use magazines and newspapers to look for different weather seasons and they will make a collage. They will present other weather characteristics.	15 minutes.	
Empathy:		

LESSON PLAN 1		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 6th March 13th March 20th
Topic: Emotions Weather Empathy phrases		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize classmates' emotions. To be capable to describe weather characteristics. To use expressions to express sympathy for an event.
Objective(s): **To describe people's emotions.** **To identify weather.** **To show empathy for a situation.**		

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Teacher will propose different hard or happy situations and students will write a card expressing their empathy about it.		

		Papers, pencils, pens.
Assessment: **Emotions:** Students will assign a name to the story including one emotion in its title and they will write and alternative ending with other emotions on it. **Weather:** Students will assign a name to the story including one season on it and they will write the story again in a different place, describing the weather. **Empathy:** Students will write an answer to that story using empathy phrases to the little girl.	15 minutes.	

LESSON PLAN **2**		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 27th April 3rd April 10th
Topic: Routines in the morning Routines in the afternoon Routines at night		**Communicative goals:** To be able to express their daily routine. To be capable to describe other people's routines. To use expressions about time and frequency.
Objective(s): **To describe people's routine.** **To identify time expressions.** **To connect previous vocabulary with the current topic.**		

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Warm-Up: Song related daily routine https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUXkj6j6Ezw **Routines in the morning:** Students will recognize which activities the characters do in the morning. **Routines in the afternoon:** Students will recognize which activities the characters do in the afternoon. **Routines at night:** Students will recognize which activities the characters do at night.	5 minutes.	TV, internet connection.
Previous Knowledge: **Routines in the morning:** Teacher will show different activities during morning at school and their names. Students will select which activities they do.	5 minutes.	Flashcards, TV.

LESSON PLAN 2		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 27th April 3rd April 10th
Topic: Routines in the morning Routines in the afternoon Routines at night		**Communicative goals:** To be able to express their daily routine. To be capable to describe other people's routines. To use expressions about time and frequency.

Objective(s): To describe people's routine. To identify time expressions. To connect previous vocabulary with the current topic.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Routines in the afternoon: Teacher will show different activities during in different places and their names. Students will select which activities they do. **Routines at night:** Teacher will show different activities during in different places and their names. Students will select which activities they do.		
Presentation: Teacher will present the second story and the most important vocabulary with images related to its meaning to understand the story. This tale will be presented in its original online version from the web page: https://storytellingcolombia.com/,	15 minutes.	TV, internet connection, images with the vocabulary related to the story.
Practice: **Routines in the morning:** Students will think in which other activities the characters can do during the morning. They will make a draw and describe it according to routines and weather vocabulary.	15 minutes.	Colors, papers, pencils.

LESSON PLAN 2		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 27th April 3rd April 10th

Topic:	Communicative goals:
Routines in the morning Routines in the afternoon Routines at night	To be able to express their daily routine. To be capable to describe other people's routines. To use expressions about time and frequency.

Objective(s):
To describe people's routine.
To identify time expressions.
To connect previous vocabulary with the current topic.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Routines in the afternoon: Students will think in which other activities the characters can do during the afternoon. They will make a draw and describe it according to routines and emotions vocabulary. **Routines at night:** Students will think in which other activities the characters can do during the afternoon. They will make a draw and describe it according to routines and which kind of empathic expressions they can use each other.		
Production: **Routines in the morning:** They will create a comic about their routine in the morning. **Routines in the afternoon:** They will create a comic about their routine in the afternoon. **Routines at night:** They will create a comic about their routine in the afternoon.	15 minutes.	Papers, pencils, colors.

LESSON PLAN 2		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** March 27th April 3rd April 10th
Topic: Routines in the morning Routines in the afternoon Routines at night		**Communicative goals:** To be able to express their daily routine. To be capable to describe other people's routines. To use expressions about time and frequency.

Objective(s):
To describe people's routine.
To identify time expressions.
To connect previous vocabulary with the current topic.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Assessment: **Routines in the morning:** Students will suggest a title for the story. They will design a comic when they imagine how the life could be if they were in that situation and their routine. **Routines in the afternoon:** Students will justify why they chose the title for that story. They will draw a poster where they propose alternatives to solve the environment. **Routines at night:** Students will give an answer to the girl according to the story. They can make stories, comics, drawings or any other artistic representation.	15 minutes.	Papers, pencils, pens.

LESSON PLAN 3		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** April 24th May 8th May 15th
Topic: Professions Professions and their clothes Professions and their places		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize different professions in a community. To be capable to identify clothes related to professions. To distinguish places where professions are performed.

Objective(s):
To name different professions.
To describe people's clothes
To recognize places in the city.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Warm-Up: Song related occupations https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6Oxqyd5qUw **Professions:** Students will recognize different professions in their family according to the song. **Professions and their clothes:** Students will identify how people are wearing according to their profession. **Professions and their places:** Students will recognize in which places people perform their professions.	5 minutes.	TV, internet connection.

Previous Knowledge:		Flashcards, TV.
Professions: Teacher will show different professions which were not included in the video.	5 minutes.	

LESSON PLAN 3		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** April 24th May 8th May 15th
Topic: Professions Professions and their clothes Professions and their places		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize different professions in a community. To be capable to identify clothes related to professions. To distinguish places where professions are performed.
Objective(s): **To name different professions.** **To describe people's clothes** **To recognize places in the city.**		

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Professions and their clothes: Teacher will show again different professions which are not included in the video and students will describe their clothes. **Professions and their places:** Teacher will show again different professions which are not included in the video and students will describe their places.		

Presentation: Teacher will present the second story and the most important vocabulary with images related to its meaning to understand the story. This tale will be presented in its original online version from the web page: https://storytellingcolombia.com/,	15 minutes.	TV, internet connection, images with the vocabulary related to the story.
Practice: **Professions:** Students will ask to their friends and classmates which they want to be when they become adults. And they will make a list at least with 10 classmates' opinions.	15 minutes.	Colors, papers, pencils.

LESSON PLAN 3		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** April 24th May 8th May 15th
Topic: Professions Professions and their clothes Professions and their places		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize different professions in a community. To be capable to identify clothes related to professions. To distinguish places where professions are performed.
Objective(s): **To name different professions.** **To describe people's clothes** **To recognize places in the city.**		

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Professions and their clothes: Students will draw the professions they heard in the story and they will describe how they are wearing. **Professions and their places:** Students will think about in which places the professions in the story perform their job and they will make a comic about how those occupations interact among them.		
Production: **Professions:** They will draw three professions they like the most and why. **Professions and their clothes:** Taking into account those drawings they will describe those clothes. **Professions and their places:** They will exchange their drawings and they will describe in which places the other professions would perform their jobs.	15 minutes.	Papers, pencils, colors.

LESSON PLAN 3		
Teacher's Name: Sandra Marcela Ladino Yate		**Subject:** English
School: Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera	**Grade:** Fifth	**Date:** April 24th May 8th May 15th
Topic: Professions Professions and their clothes Professions and their places		**Communicative goals:** To be able to recognize different professions in a community. To be capable to identify clothes related to professions. To distinguish places where professions are performed.

Objective(s):
To name different professions.
To describe people's clothes
To recognize places in the city.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	TIMING	TEACHING RESOURCES
Assessment: **Professions:** Students will suggest a title for the story. They will make a draw about the most important profession in a community and why. **Professions and their clothes:** Students will compare different professions and they will stablish which professions have similar clothes and different clothes. **Professions and their places:** Students will give an answer to the girl according to the story. They can make stories, comics, drawings or any other artistic representation.	15 minutes.	Papers, pencils, pens.

APPENDIX D

Liceo Infantil Luna Lunera

Encuesta nivel de satisfacción - Área de humanidades – Inglés

A continuación responderás las siguientes preguntas. Encierra en un círculo la respuesta que sea correcta para ti.

No serás evaluado en ningún aspecto, por eso no tienes que marcar la hoja, sólo queremos conocer tu opinión acerca de tu aprendizaje en inglés y de la forma en que podemos mejorarlo, porque tú eres nuestra prioridad.

1. ¿Hubo una diferencia entre los talleres de inglés con cuentos y las clases regulares de inglés?
    a. Sí   b. No   c. No me di cuenta

2. ¿Los talleres fueron fáciles de entender para tu nivel de inglés?

    a. Sí   b. No

3. Después de los talleres de cuentos infantiles en inglés, ¿me siento motivado(a) a investigar más a cerca de cuentos en ese idioma?
    a. Sí   b. No

4. ¿Por qué creo que es importante aprender inglés?

    a. Porque internet tiene mucha información en inglés.

    b. Porque quiero entender canciones y textos que están en mi ambiente.

    c. Porque es un requisito en mi colegio.

    d. ¿Otra? ¿Cuál? _____

5. En clase de inglés te gusta que el (la) profe te hable…

    a. 50% inglés y 50% español.   b. 80% inglés y 20% español.

    b. 20% inglés y 80% español   c ¿Otra? ¿Cuál