

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LANGUAGE GAMES TO PROMOTE VOCABULARY  
LEARNING IN FIFTH GRADERS STUDENTS**

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**LICENCIATURA EN LENGUA INGLESA**

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GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

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## 1. Abstract

The present classroom project attempts to analyze the impact that language games have on second language learners, at time to acquire abilities in a second language through the use PPP approach. This proposal will benefit learners since this has the main purpose to provide learners meaningful resources that help them to be confident at the moment to participate in different activities in the classroom and, also to increase the range of vocabulary for more complex process in the future. This project was carried out in an English class of fifth graders students of a public institution in Pereira-Risaralda where the use of English as a second language was dismissed at point that students were not able to construct simple sentences. The participants were exposed to PPP methods: presentation, practice and production were the main stages that allowed teachers to reach to good outcomes. The results showed that students level of confidence at the moment to participate in class activities increased since they were enjoying what they were doing and they were able to take the risk to produce spoken language even, when they knew they were pronouncing words incorrectly. Additionally, this implementation allowed students to work in groups and reduce stress to a minimum since the level of rapport and participation in class were the main source encourage learners to interact with the language.

In conclusion, the information collected will introduce you in the achievements and challenges in terms of professional growth and learners' linguistic outcomes.

### Resumen

Este proyecto pedagógico de aula intenta analizar el impacto que tienen los juegos de lenguaje en un segundo idioma, al momento de adquirir habilidades en una segunda lengua a través del uso enfoque PPP (Presentación, práctica y producción). Esta propuesta será beneficiosa ya que tiene como objetivo principal el proporcionar a los estudiantes con recursos significativos que les ayude a tener confianza para participar en las diferentes actividades de aula, así como aumentar el rango de vocabulario para procesos más complejos en el futuro. Este proyecto se llevó a cabo en una clase de inglés en estudiantes de quinto grado de una institución pública de Pereira-Risaralda. Los participantes fueron expuestos a métodos de PPP: presentación, práctica y producción; las cuales fueron las principales etapas que permitieron a los profesores llegar a buenos resultados. Dichos resultados mostraron que el nivel de confianza en los estudiantes al momento de participar en las actividades de clase aumento ya que se evidencio una relación causal directa entre las actividades que se estaban realizando y el nivel de entusiasmo que los estudiantes ponían en cada uno de los juegos propuestos para este proyecto. De igual manera se evidencio que los participantes fueron capaces de tomar el riesgo de producir lenguaje hablado, incluso cuando sabían que estaban pronunciando las palabras de forma incorrecta. Además, este proyecto permitió a los estudiantes trabajar en grupos para así reducir altos niveles de estrés y aburrimiento ya que el nivel de participación en clase era la fuente principal para que los alumnos interactuaran con el lenguaje.

En conclusión, la información recopilada dará a conocer los logros y desafíos de este proyecto en términos de crecimiento profesional y resultados lingüísticos.

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Roosevelt Lopez Rodriguez

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John Harol Hernandez Cardona.



### 3. Introduction

This classroom project was focused on describing the influence and importance that the implementation of games has on vocabulary instruction when children are exposed to learn a foreign language. “If language structure makes up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and flesh,” (Hammer, 1991, p. 153). The use of games in the classroom contributes to support and construct language abilities in a language since, it helps to create an atmosphere in which learners are required to interact to achieve a common goal through a student centered setting.

The focus of this project was the provision of input to children of primary school using as a support games for activating their critical thinking skills in the target language due to according to Venon (2009), games bring positive effects in the use of a language as well as for maintaining students’ interest and motivation among the English lessons.

On the other hand, the design of the games for the correct implementation of the project were guided under the parameters established by the Colombian government through the MEN (Ministerio Educación Nacional), that promotes bilingualism in the country by the National bilingual program Colombia very well and the Guia 22 Estándares básicos de Competencias en Lenguas extranjeras. Taking as reference this source, the material and the lessons are analyzed before every planning stage in order to benefit the learner’s interest, learning outcomes and language use. As a result, primary students received input according to their levels and expectations for being exposed to the target language since, this is the main goal that the Ministry of education attempts to achieve in Colombia.

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For the above reasons, this classroom project pretends to raise awareness in the creation and implementation of simple strategies (language games) for vocabulary instruction in primary levels, for building language abilities that will help learners to communicate in the target language in future situations. Additionally, this project also will help to design methodologies and strategies oriented to the development of language teaching in order to support the learners to succeed in the process of learning a language.

#### 4. Justification

As it is well known, English is a worldwide language which is becoming highly important in the modern life due to its use as lingua franca in many countries, and it has been employed in several areas such as: technology, diplomacy, science and tourism. Moreover, it also has a great impact on society in relation to educational opportunities, professional development and for personal enjoyment. UNESCO (2005) estimates that approximately 50% of the population in the world are bilingual having English as a foreign language which evidences that currently, it is the language that most of the population of the world is encouraged to learn by virtue of the several demands that the global market requires (De Mejía 2005).

Learning a language also implies learning the culture in which the speaker is immersed as Wang (2008) states “foreign language teaching is foreign culture teaching, and foreign language teachers are foreign culture teachers”; additionally, to be competent in a foreign language there is a set of elements that grants to the language user the ability to communicate and express their ideas accurately. According to CEFR (2001), there are three main components that a foreign language learner has to keep in mind when learning a language, those components are: the linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence.

Each of those competences has some specific items that assists the learner to be competent for using the language; for instance, the linguistic competence involves grammatical, phonological, orthographic, orthoepic and lexical competences that describe the main elements that have to be achieved in order to have enough proficiency to communicate. CEFR (2001).

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One of the key competences that are necessary to learn a new language is the lexical competence which is the ability to use a range of words learnt in combination with grammatical structures CEFR (2001). Moreover, it is stated by (Meara & Milton 2003, p. 8) that the vocabulary size must be around between 1500 and 2500 words, to communicate fluently in the target language, however Stæhr (2008) points out that with only 1000 words a language user has the basic foundations for interacting purposes.

Taking into account the requirements mentioned above for interacting in the globalized world, the Colombian government, through the MEN (Ministerio de Educación Nacional) has implemented the national bilingual program that intends to make that all the citizens of Colombia become competent in English as well as Spanish at 2025 (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2015). This program also seeks to support the professional growth of pre- service and in -service teachers in order to make that the scaffolding that foreign learners receive onward in the process of learning, become valuable for their lives.

The program proposes a set of standards taken from the CEFR (2001) whose main focus of attention is to guide teachers to provide significant elements to the Colombian students, regarding the process for learning the target language and culture of an English speaking country. This initiative encourages teachers and learners to construct lexical abilities from early period of literacy until professional levels.

The Colombian government has as a priority to prepare the students and teachers with a good level of proficiency in English, for that reason many policies and programs such as: COFE 1991-1996 (Colombian Framework for English), the National Bilingual Program 2004-2019, and

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the most recent, the National English Program 2015-2025, COLOMBIA very well! had been implemented but unfortunately without any success.

On the other hand, current statistics evidence that approximately 30% of the graduated students from the university have B1 level, and 59% of the students from elementary institutions have the same level of proficiency than students who have never been exposed to English. ICFES (2013). Additionally, the “Ministerio de Educación Nacional” states that more than the 50% of the population of the students from schools do not achieve the A1 level of English, it means that Colombian levels in the target language do not fulfil the requirements to become a bilingual country.

Another related issue which can affect the process for learning a language is the fact that some teachers continue providing instruction based on traditional methods; for example, the use of rote verbal memorization in which teachers encourage learners to write, repeat and memorize words in order to improve the range of lexicon, is analyzed by Nation (1990) who points out that using rote memory strategies could not be beneficial due to the fact that learners will be required to use their lexicon in real communication and if they do not remember a word the levels of understanding and accuracy can decrease.

That is why Decarrico (2001) points out that words cannot be acquired for short periods of time and without understanding because language entails enough lexicon for providing coherent messages depending on the context so, in order to provide meaningful vocabulary teachers must implement strategies that help student firstly, to acquire words and secondly in such a way that they become willing to learn. Consequently, Thu Trang (2011) states that a common issue when learners are immersed in vocabulary instruction is that they find boring learning vocabulary

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passively. For that reason, Nguyen & Khuat (2003) find interesting to include different sources as games in order to avoid the problematic situations that affect vocabulary instruction.

Huyen and Nga (2003) highlight that in vocabulary instruction, it is necessary to get students interested and involved in the process in a non-imposed way. Hence, the implementation of games is a strong strategy that can be developed to achieve this purpose; furthermore, Bradley (2010) suggest that when students play games they are more interested for gathering comprehensible input and for practicing the language that they already have.

In this order of ideas, vocabulary learning is not simply repetition, it implies encountering the word at least from 5 to 16 times in different contexts, before it can be truly internalized and activated for real communicative purposes. Koprowski (2006) argues that the repetition and the retrieval of new items through the use of games, can help students to maintain in long term memory, new words and recycle those words that in certain degree have been forgotten, making form-meaning connections for genuine use.

Some examples of vocabulary games that Koprowski suggests are:

After mentioning the general and specific issues regarding the importance of learning a language from early periods of literacy, this implementation intends to contribute with the enhancement of the learner's lexical abilities since elementary level in order to decrease communicative language issues in the future.

To sum up, this classroom project was relevant and pertinent to be implemented on the grounds that it attempted to provide more engaging sources and procedures that benefit learners to be willing for learning a foreign language; moreover, it also sought to find strategies for making

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learners interested during vocabulary instruction through language games that empower their lexical abilities for their whole process of learning.

For the correct development of the mentioned before, practitioners employed sources such as flashcards, stories, videos, songs and mainly language games such as puzzles, matching games, ordering, logical sequences games and guessing games which are considered by Hadfield (1990) as the main innovative activities that involve rules and goals for having fun and learning at the same time.

In this sense, students were benefited from this implementation by exposing themselves to real language and for building their language proficiency. Moreover, it also attempted to put into practice their guessing, logical thinking and reflective skills considering that teachers will also will empower their professional competences to design the activities taking into account, learners need and interests in order to achieve meaningful outcomes.

## 5. Conceptual framework

The aim of this paper attempts to give an overview of the foundations of the use of games as a strategy for teaching and, what is the main role that games play in the process of learning English as a foreign language; indeed, in the first section of the paper we briefly discuss about what are the perceptions of some authors who consider imperative to reach an agreement about which are the best definitions of vocabulary and games; furthermore, it is analyzed the importance of including games in second language lessons for the creation of a good rapport ensuring meaningful learning; further in the text, the most important strategies and techniques that should be kept in mind during the performance of the lessons will be presented.

### 5.1 Defining vocabulary

Vocabulary is an essential part of the communicative language proficiency of second language learners since, as Richards & Renandya (2002) state, a language speaker who has a good range of lexicon and who constantly develops strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, is a speaker who has greatest possibilities to interact in real language situations.

Hornby (1995) stands out that vocabulary is more than the total amount of words in a language; it is the key factor that helps to master the target language well; according to Piaget's learning theory, children are always expecting to recognize and know the meaning of new words in such a way that they can repeat them over and over again in order to memorize them, and is in that way that the construction of lexicon could be achieved throughout the process of learning.



## 5.2 Vocabulary teaching

It is often claimed that when learners can master the structure of the second language, they are already prepared to develop strategies and techniques in order to enhance their lexicon Twaddell, (1973); however, he also argues that vocabulary must be seen as an independent skill which must be taught by virtue of complement others as writing and reading skills since, as Judd (1978) points out, vocabulary is the most important aspect of fluency in a language. Although the idea of including vocabulary as an independent teaching field is not defined yet, Schmitt (2009), highlights the importance to incorporate this aspect in teaching practice given the fact that learners are used to learn new words through word meaning repetition and memorization and, the practice of the language in real social situations is neglected.

Nevertheless, memorization is a crucial factor in the process for acquiring new vocabulary (*taking into account that benefits of constant repetition has been properly demonstrated*), which Bunch (2009) considers important to connect with a variety of innovative activities such as games, role plays, social media and others that enable the learner to take benefits of the higher exposure to the target language in a more effective way.

It is for that reason that a set of elements are proposed for this classroom project in order to provide meaningful instruction during the process of teaching vocabulary.

## 5.3 Stages for teaching vocabulary

Vocabulary instruction requires to be presented in a sequence which allows guaranteeing the comprehension of input; is for that reason that Doff (1988), states that there are four stages in teaching vocabulary, named presentation, practice, production, and review.

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- *Presentation:* Considered by Thornbury (2002) as the most essential and complex aspect which is need at time to introduce new lexical units since, learners are required to have plenty knowledge of the meaning, grammatical and real form in which it is used .in this stage is taken into account the level and schemata of the learners and also, the complexity of the language to be introduced.
- *Practice:* Thornbury (2002) underlines the popular belief that “*practice makes perfect*”; he points out that vocabulary can be appropriately activated whether the teacher provides opportunities during the lesson to practice over and over again the presented lexical items, through the use of different activities and exercises.
- *Production:* Thornbury (2002) suggests that learners need to produce a final outcome by their own in order to evaluate whether the goals of the lessons were properly achieved or not.
- *Review:* Davies and Pearse (2000) determine that in this stage the teacher plays an important role since he/she helps the learners to acquire meaningful and productive vocabulary through the provision of feedback, taking as reference the old language in order to improve the final outcome.

Consequently, these must be close connected with important aspects that help to keep appropriately the sequence for teaching vocabulary.

#### 5.4 Steps for learning vocabulary

The sequence for learning vocabulary is joined together with some aspects that must be taken into account at time to learn new vocabulary previously established by Brown (1995) and recited by Cameron (n.d):

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- *Having source for encountering new words.*
- *Getting a clear image for the form of new words.*
- *Learning the meaning of new words*
- *Making a strong memory connection between the form and the meaning of the words*
- *Using the words*

Those aspects mentioned before must be linked to the type of vocabulary that determines the content which will be taught given the fact that it controls the path of the lesson.

### 5.5 Importance of vocabulary

Having good lexicon and control of the language for communicative purposes, is an important aspect that in most cases help second language learners to communicate effectively in different social situations and contexts; thus, considering the importance that vocabulary has in the role of learning a foreign language, it must be ensured and developed on the grounds that second language speakers need to be prepared to speak fluently and communicate themselves accurately.

Although the construction of knowledge is commonly associated to the primary years of schooling, MCKeown (1987) claims John Carol recommendation about "*schools have a task to teach vocabulary to their student from early periods of learning a language*" since it is important to take advantage of the critical development period of the children given the fact that the plasticity of the brain allow to them to acquire a set of abilities that will be internalized in a more comprehensible way.

As a result, it appears the necessity to connect the method for teaching vocabulary with an aspect that result interesting and engaging for learners; games are the more innovative strategies which allow learning and acquiring knowledge from different perspectives.

### 5.6 Types of vocabulary

The production of a language involves vocabulary which is the key feature that allows comprehending and producing meaningful utterances what Nation (1990) has divided vocabulary in two main aspects:

- *Receptive vocabulary*: learners have the ability to recognize and identify certain grammatical patterns when a word is heard (listening and reading comprehension skills).
- *Productive vocabulary*: it involves the learners as main agents in the production of spoken or written language along the use of acquired vocabulary.

After knowing the types of vocabulary implied in language learning, is relevant to take into account the importance that vocabulary has to enhance the lexicon of the students for producing the target language in different contexts such as school, the house or the street.

### 5.7 Defining language games

One of the challenges that emerges in an EFL class is the student's lack of vocabulary no matter the age they have, it is always an impediment to achieve a good level of proficiency in the target language: is for that reason that teachers have to affront an important question: What is the best way to introduce new vocabulary to the students? The answer to that question is to implement games as an essential approach to give the student's new perspective to acquire new vocabulary; according to Hornby (1995) game is an activity that you do to have some fun. Games are an excellent strategy to teach vocabulary since, the students do not feel that they are learning vocabulary in a traditional way thus it helps to retain the new information more effectively, it

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means that the use of games as strategies to teach vocabulary can significantly reduce the anxiety level of the learner.

The use of games helps the learner to internalize the knowledge and, at the same time it reduces the levels of anxiety as it is stated by Richard-Amato (1988). In addition to that, it is important to keep in mind the importance of vocabulary in the development of the four skills in any foreign language is for that reason that the teachers must have different methodologies to impart that specific knowledge. As Harmer (1991) states that games are the most important piece of equipment that every teacher has, not only for academic or pedagogical purposes but also to make the class more pleasant for the students; these activities can be implemented either at the beginning, middle or end of the session, depending of the kind of audience and if the conditions to integrate the activity are fulfilled.

Other question discussed by some authors is when to use games? The best of language games is that can be used at any stage of the lesson, it can be used at the beginning of the class as a warming up activity, in the middle of the session or as a closing up activity, with the aim of clarify or reinforce the new vocabulary, besides that teachers can use it in order to activate their schemata.

An important issue that teachers need to have clear is the aim of the game, and the rules must be as clear as possible to prevent lack of interest; consequently, it is important to analyze the target audience due to if the teacher take too much time in the explanation of the game some students, in particular the youngest, are going to lose interest very fast and teachers should avoid those situations.

### 5.8 The use of games for teaching vocabulary

The implementation of different sources in an English class is the challenge which teachers have to develop to engage students into a more positive learning environment; for that reason, Freeman (2000) considers that games take a very important role in language teaching and learning since, through the use of games, the high levels of stress and anxiety can decrease considerably. Students do not feel forced to develop a proposed task; besides, games also provide motivation and entertainment, providing to bashful students, opportunities to express their opinions and feelings.

In that sense games, as an innovative resource in the classroom, provide the students with new experiences that current lessons do not provide while they are learning a foreign language. Lewis (1999) states that games supply many advantages for teachers and students. The use of games catches student's attention to learn English because it is fun and make students to be encourage to experience, discover and interact with their environment so, it disallows the old teaching methods in order to implement new ones.

### 5.9 Advantages of using games in the classroom

Lewis (1999) also states that there is a direct causal relationship between the applied games in language classes and the constant progress in the learning path of the students, so he proposes a set of advantages that games can provide:

- Engaging pupils with games, breaks paradigms about traditional lessons making that learners (especially young learners), found the motivation that they require on the grounds that through games they achieve this stimulus. Lewis (1999)

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- While learners are playing, they can interact all the time with the target language, and the context requires the use of the provided input even for those students who refuse to participate actively Lewis (1999).
- Like the mother tongue is acquired unconsciously, by playing games in a foreign language the knowledge is learned in the same way due to the fact that pupils do not feel stress and levels of boredom decreases significantly.
- The entire group of class can learn a lot because even introverted students are incentivized to participate.

### 5.10 Games as strategy for teaching English vocabulary

Students who have a huge range of vocabulary are considered by Richards & Renandya (2002) as speakers who find easier to interact with others in the target language. However, those who do not achieve that goals in learning a second language usually feel frustrated when they cannot produce enough output, leaving the learning process apart of.

That is why Bradley (2010), states that games help students to maintain interested, active and motivated for learning during the performance of the activity: by playing games, students take active part in the activities due to they are very competitive and always expected to be the winners so, they share opinions and feelings making the group work more effective and implementing collaborative and cooperative learning skills.

Employing games as a technique to solve student's boredom and increase their interest in the second language learning involves using certain material and sources, such as flash cards, pictures, audios, objects and many other mechanisms that can help them in the process of learning given that young learners can learn easier by watching, listening, touching and even by doing.

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Children have the ability to acquire knowledge from situations that they are familiar with as Bruner (1978) states, learning is an active social process in which learners construct their own knowledge based on their experiences. He provides the following principles of constructivist learning:

- The instructions must be adapted to the context of the child to promote intrinsic learning.
- -The instruction must be as easier as is possible, to guarantee that the child will achieve the task.
- -The instruction should be design to increase the learners' curiosity and go beyond of the initial task.

In conclusion the use of games as a strategy to teach vocabulary, is an important resource that the teacher can use in order to provide meaningful vocabulary to the students who will use it in the daily basis instead of vocabulary lessons which are pointless for them. Cole (1997) & Vygotsky (1982) state that the key aspect in the physiological development of the child is the acquisition of the culture which they belong. For instance, in the Colombian context is worthless to teach vocabulary related to “how to take the subway” or “Thanksgiving Day”; although it is important to highlight that all those activities have interesting vocabulary to teach, the lack of context is a constant.

On the other hand, the implementation of games to teach vocabulary also has a strong impact in student’s motivation due to they perceive that learning using this approach can provide superior resources than traditional strategies. Gardner (1985) points out that motivation is the union of two major factors such as effort and the willingness to learn a L2 so, motivated students do not feel



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that they are forced to learn certain input; on the contrary, they can enjoy themselves and learning at the same time.

Teaching vocabulary through the use of games help to decrease the level of student's affective filter and also, to perform successfully the activities developed in the classroom in which student's levels of anxiety and shyness are brought into a minimum.

## 6 Literature review

In order to demonstrate the effectiveness of learning vocabulary through the use of games, Nguyen & Khuat (2003) develop a study which evidences that the construction of vocabulary is the main factor that must be developed in the first stage for learning a second language since, it is strongly connected to the acquisition and performance of the four language skills and this helps the learners to communicate in an appropriate way in the target language (Nguyen & Khuat, 2003).

Nguyen & Khuat (2003), explore the importance for helping twenty primary Vietnamese students from a public institution, to decrease the level of boredom that is evidenced in second language lessons due to the constant perception that learners have in relation of learning English in a traditional way, where the students are passive participants of the process of learning and they only use paper and a pen to write new words, leaving apart the opportunity to internalize that input for further experiences.

As a result, the authors bring to the discussion the statement made by Decarrico (2001) who claims that words should not be learnt separately or by memorization without understanding their real use; thereby, the need for changing the traditional way in which learners are just required to memorize the meaning of the words without taking into account the several uses that they have in real life communication, becomes essential.

In second language lessons, learners tend to receive the meaning of the word and the exact grammatical usage so, they just write them down in their notebooks and the students do not have the chance to practice how to use new vocabulary in the real context. According to Nguyen & Khuat (2003) this kind of rote verbal memorization is effective in certain level as the correct use

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of the word for grammatical aspects however, in the lexical aspect the vocabulary meaning is neglected since the students do not know how to practice it in real communication environments.

Is for that reason that the idea of including games to break the paradigms of the traditional method for teaching and learning is highly supported given the fact that as Nguyen & Khuat (2003) point out, playing games for learning vocabulary helps to improve the communicative language skills of the students and it is more effective in CLT (communicative language teaching) classes; moreover, in the performance of this approach learners are required to participate in an active way in several tasks where they are encourage to use language to communicate and exchange basic information.

The implementation of games promotes that the process of learning becomes more enjoyable and it also decrease anxiety and other psychological factors. Thus, students are highly involved in the construction of their own communicative skills rather than being only passive participants in the lesson.

After analyzing the data collection, Nguyen and Khuat (2003) concluded that applying games in the classrooms can be helpful for teaching and learning vocabulary since, students begin to feel more comfortable in the classroom and the rapport increases. Those results were classified into three main subsections: students' expectations and attitudes, student's progress learning the language and finally unanticipated problems.

First of all, in the students expectations and attitudes analysis Nguyen and Khuat (2003) reported that primary students used the grammar translation method as the unique technique for acquiring new language, but the vocabulary was nearly forgotten due to the lack of memorization and practice; as a result it was boring for the pupils and they expressed the need for increasing

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their range of vocabulary in an un-complex form where they can retain the meaning of the words for a long period of time.

Nguyen and Khuat (2003) noticed that when they implemented games in the classrooms, most of the pupils (17 of 20) worked actively using the maximum of their creativity and imagination as well as their motivation, they showed great satisfaction while they were playing games; in fact, they wanted to play more and more games. In conclusion, Nguyen and Khuat determined that it was pleasant for them to know that most of the students showed good results using the language provided in the applied games, and those students who do not work properly (1 or 2) expressed that simply they do not like games and rejected to participate.

Secondly, there was evidenced the importance that the implementation of games have to enhance students vocabulary given the fact that while students were developing activities where they had fun, they were learning because this is an aspect that is intrinsically connected and it sustained student's attention; For example, one of the games conducted by the teacher was a game called, "Hangman" the outcome was better than expected: student's got eleven correct answers out of twelve questions so, it means that they scored 85 percent in that particular game so, it brings to the conclusion that tasks which are thought for the level and interest of the learners can facilitate the process of gathering and use of comprehensible input.

On the other hand, in the activity called, "Poster Session" the students had to create an advertisement related to places to visit in USA using their schemata and some models that the teacher provided, what became evident was the good level of rapport since, during the session the students were really motivated due to they were learning from each other and the atmosphere of the class was almost perfect showing the efficacy of using games to improve their vocabulary.

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Finally, in the unanticipated problems there were no major obstacles in the implementation of strategies to teach vocabulary through games. However, when the journals were revised some difficulties were found; for example, teachers state that one of the biggest problems that they had to face at time to perform a game was that the students did not understand the game and they felt uncomfortable at time to perform it and as a result, they did not want to participate on it, but fortunately some of her students were able to perceive it in a more suitable way to explain it to their classmates.

To conclude, the use of games to enrich and reinforce the vocabulary in young learners is highly recommended due to it is a useful strategy that allows students learn in active way, since the learners are highly involved in the performance of different tasks and the teachers can create good rapport in the lessons as well as make the process of learning more enjoyable.

## 7 Methodology

The following section presents the general information that were required for the correct development of this classroom project; aspects related to the context, participants, design and resources are analyzed in order to have enough support to conduct the implementation.

### 7.1 Context

This classroom project was developed in the Institución educativa Suroriental from Pereira/Risaralda located in Boston neighborhood, this is a public institution which offers basic primary grades, from preschool to fifth; basic secondary, from sixth to ninth grades; and mid secondary, from tenth to eleventh grade. Those are regulated under the parameters and requirements of the Colombian Ministry of Education which promotes the English instruction at schools under the national bilingual program guide N°22 of Estándares Básicos de Competencia en Lenguas Extranjeras.

Taking into account that those institutions offer their services without any cost (as established by the Colombian government), populations from different status, religions and races come to them.

On the other hand, it is important to mention that Institución Educativa Suroriental provides a “malla curriculum” which is a frame constructed at the beginning of the academic year in order to establish the competences and achievement indicators that the students need to accomplish during the year; this curriculum is based in the subjects that the school offers and in this case, the curriculum established for English is articulated with the syllabus and the general thematic that the teacher is required to teach during the academic year.

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This type of curriculum is characterized for being divided into four academic periods and in each one it has a set of standards that students are supposed to achieve; those standards are taken from Guía N°22 el reto estándares básicos de competencias en lenguas extranjeras: inglés; furthermore, the syllabus is built according to the general competences from the CEFR (conocer,hacer y ser),it has the standards that the learners have to achieve by language skills and also it contains the thematic for being taught at every academic period.

### 7.2 Participants

#### 7.2.1 Students

The current classroom project was focused on children of primary school in a range of age between 9 to 13 years old, from fifth grade ( approximately 37 students) in which there were male and female learners with a the level of proficiency that can be placed A1 level according to Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras and whose native language is Spanish; however, the real level of language proficiency of the students vary because of many reasons; for example affective factors, lack of motivation, interest for learning the language, etc.

In the same way, the lack of appropriate formal instruction and the social status (which are factors that determine the higher or lower levels of motivation that students have for learning a second language) are important issues since, in the case of the population of students who belong to these communities their main priority rarely is to acquire abilities for using a foreign language. Finally, taking into consideration the vast number of the students, it is possible that the provision of formal instruction and feedback to each student can be directly affected.

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Additionally, student ethnicity varies due to there are students that come from different parts of the country, for instance we can find white people, mestizos and Afro-Colombian. Moreover, student's characteristics concerning with learning styles, can help the teachers to decide what are the most appropriate strategies to the provision of vocabulary instruction according to the learners needs as it is stated by Felder & Brent (2005) because some of them are visual learners, other are more kinesthetic and another portion are auditory learners.

### 7.2.2 Teacher and observers

The English instruction was provided by a preservice teacher of ninth semester from the English Licenciatura program during the performance of his guided teaching practicum; concerning to the personal characteristics of the teacher he is man of 23 years old whose English level proficiency is placed in B2 level and who will be in charge of the implementation of techniques and strategies proposed in this classroom project; moreover, there were two other pre service teachers of ninth semester. They were in charge of designing the games, evaluations, material need it, observing and analyzing the information was useful for the improvements or changes in future lessons; The time for English instruction will be of two hours per week (tuesdays and thursdays).

### 7.3 Instructional Design

The purpose of this classroom project was to center the attention in the use of games as a learning strategy to enhance vocabulary in students of fifth grade on the grounds that they could enjoy what they were doing at the same time they could learn valuable input as Richards & Renandya (2002) state, a language speaker who has a good range of lexicon and who constantly develops strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, is a speaker who has greatest possibilities to



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interact in real language situations. Equally important, this classroom project attempted to encourage learners to empower their lexical abilities making them to be exposed to receive vocabulary that will be useful for the real life situations.

That is why, that before starting the implementation of this project, it was important to establish through an assessment test some aspects such as language proficiency, level, attitudes and expectations of the students towards the language.

The vocabulary taught during the implementation was focused on the level of the learners taking as reference the standards from the guide N°22 Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras and those were articulated with the corresponding syllabus of the institution.

The procedure of the lesson was focused on the implementation of the PPP approach: presentation, practice and production consider by Cook (2008) as one of the most effective approaches for teaching English that still preserve the EFL language instruction style; moreover, in relation to primary schools guidance it is a useful approach since as Sanchez (2004) states the “school approach” (ppp approach) is a method by which learners continue acquiring grammatical and vocabulary patterns that they need for using the foreign language from early stages.

The implementation process comprised two academic period terms with lessons of 50 minutes respectively. in first place the ground rules were presented to the pupils, in order to have a good classroom atmosphere throughout the period, also in each lesson the linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences were considered given that vocabulary related to the family, fruits, clothes, etc. was the main input for raising awareness about the functional use of language in real contexts.

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By the end of each lesson, students were able to perform certain tasks in which the content was presented through the practice of the language skills. The procedure of each lesson was framed into the procedural PPP approach using different games to support learning. The games that were used to scaffold vocabulary instruction to the students were guessing games, jigsaw or matching pair games, logical sequences games, board games, Sorting, ordering, or arranging games and searching games: those were articulated depending on the vocabulary that was planned to be taught and also with the aims of each lesson.

In this order of ideas, playing games made that learners and teachers use different strategies for being exposed most of the time to the target language since as Bunch (2009) points out English language learners will benefit from a variety of activities in which they will be interacting and reflecting upon the use of the language. In this implementation techniques like using realia, TPR (total physical response), learning by doing and problem solving were used in order to make that students used all the language and energy that they already had. Finally, teachers did use monitoring and feedback strategies for checking understanding after the performance of each language game.

The presentation stage had the purpose to engage learners into the lesson and to encourage them to participate in an active way so, warming up and ice breaking exercises were implemented; moreover, during the presentation of the vocabulary were used as a supportive material different sources as Prezi presentations, videos, readings, etc. Additionally, the teacher presented and explained the topic providing the appropriate input using questionnaires, reading comprehension activities, elicitation of information that allowed the learners to comprehend and get ideas of the topic. On the other hand, in the practice stage the students had the opportunity to put into practice the input provided that was properly developed during the implementation and finally in the

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production part the students used what they learnt during the lesson in certain tasks designed to evaluate the process.

Here, we listed some examples of games that were used in our project

**Pictionary:** this game consists on divide the group into two groups A and B. Groups A will be located in one side of the classroom and group B in the other side; then, they select a member from each group (A & B) to go in front of the class, in secret the teacher shows them a picture, a word or an expression and they have one minute for drawing pictorial clues on the board related with the flashcard that the teacher showed. Finally, the group who guess at first the word, is going to get a point.

Note: Written words, verbal cues, or gestures are forbidden.

**Variation:** The teams can take advantage from their notes from prior classes, and collectively come up with a list of items the other team will have to draw.

**Concentration:** To start with this memory game the teacher needs to have a set of flashcards about the topic that he/she would like to introduce or revise.

After this, the teacher proceeds to stick in the board all the flashcards upside down, making rows and columns; the rows will have letters from A to G and the columns will have numbers from 1 to 7. Then, the teacher continues the activity dividing the whole group into two groups, for doing this, he/she can take advantage of different grouping techniques or simply one side of the classroom is going to be group A and the other side of the classroom is going to be group B. (It depends to the teacher enthusiasm and creativity)

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Finally, when the two groups were already formed, the teacher asked one student to say a number aloud, and the teacher looked up in the list of students, who is the person that belongs to that number. Then, the selected student named a letter from the rows and a number from the columns and the teacher flips the flashcards that the student said. If the images of the flashcard match, the group is going to have a point, if not, the same student will select from the other group the next participant and so on; the group that matches more couples will win the game.

Variation: Rather than using draws on flashcards, students can match the first and second half of common phrases, expressions, idioms or other multi-word lexical items; e.g. "have" on one card, "a good time" on the other card.

### 7.4 Resources

#### 7.4.1 Materials

As principal resources for the implementation of games to promote vocabulary in primary students we attempted to use images, flashcards, videos, music, worksheets and realia material as the main support to scaffold learners understanding so, in this way we allowed students to interact each other with authentic material which have highly exposure with the target language; in addition to that, learners will have the possibility to interact with the designed games made by the pre service teachers (bingo,domino,puzzles,etc).

### 7.5 Reflection stage

In relation to the reflective part, we were focused on the model “reflective practice” defined by Schon (1983) as the main frame in which practitioners have the opportunity to become aware of their own process IN /ON action; it means that when disruption and problems occur

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during the performance of the activities, the practitioner can reflect on what aspects must be included, modified or changed during the performance of certain tasks; consequently, taking into account the before mentioned, while one the pre service teacher was implementing the strategies and techniques, the observers collected the data in order to reflect about the situations that must be kept or omitted at the end of each section in order to avoid certain mistakes that can lead to some disruptive behavior, or lessons that are not fulfilling the student's needs.

Another type of reflection that will be included in this classroom project is the one based on Gibbs' (1988) model called "Learning by doing". This model is taken from an earlier theoretical model from David Kolb's four stage experiential learning cycle (1984). Meanwhile Kolb's model is based in an experiential learning that is learning through experience, Gibbs' model it is referred as an iterative model, which main goal is to learn through repetition. Gibbs' reflective model implement six stages of reflection which are: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusions and action plan.

In order to understand and follow this model it is important to mention that each stage has a specific purpose and specific questions which help to construct the reflective cycle. According to Gibbs, the first stage is description, which is only about the narration of specific and relevant information only; the second stage is the description of feelings and the thoughts during the session, always avoid to comment about emotions; the third stage is the evaluation about what went well and what went, using some reflective questions; the fourth stage is the analysis and reevaluation of why things goes badly and what can be done to improve that situation and also make questions about the things that went well and how to maintain this actions in further experiences; the fifth stage it is to provide conclusions from the previous experience, reconsider about the things you learn, what can be done differently next time, and how to avoid certain

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situations that end badly, and the final stage is the action plan which aim is to recapitulate all the items need it to improve knowledge, ability and experience.

For the collection of information some sources are implemented such as observation formats, notes and personal journals; these will allow that aspects for further reflection could be analyzed for further reflection.

### 7.5.1 Observations and field notes

The term observation is usually used as an instrument that provides to the researcher the opportunity for gathering important information about what is happening in an EFL classroom, and also to hand his/her own information from real situations instead of depending on secondhand sources of data (Cohen et al 2007).

Moreover, field notes are the detail description of events that occur in EFL classroom such as the interaction among students, the types and amount of participation during the session (Hall, 2012). The use of those elements attempt to facilitates the collection of information which is considered valuable for the reflection and analysis of the information since, it allows to identify whether the methodology used during the session is appropriate or not.

### 7.5.2 Journals

According to Hall (2002), a journal is the main element in which a research can capture his/her reflection, feelings and thoughts in relation to relevant situation additionally, in journal certain aspects can be registered and that descriptions were valuable for the implementation and performance of the English instruction; for that reason, we used this element for writing our most

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important perspectives, ideas and feelings in order to reflect about them and then create strategies among the learner's interests.

## 8 Results

The teaching practice experience shed light on factors that needed a constant reflection and analysis. It offered a good opportunity for gaining experience and growing professionally, for that reason it is important to highlight three main aspects that received more attention during the implementation in the enhancement of our teaching skills such as innovation, commitment, preparation, organization, etc. In this first section, we analyzed the way these factors were evidenced considering the positive and challenging issues shown during the implementation of this classroom project.

### 8.1 Professional growth

During this teaching practicum, pre-service teachers constantly were required to perform several reflections upon their teaching practices in order to be able to enrich their capabilities and methodologies that enhance the process for becoming a successful teacher; considering classroom management, material design and lesson planning key factors in the professional growth of every effective facilitator. In this chapter, those factors will be evaluated taking as reference the performance and experiences gathered along the implementation of the project.

#### 8.1.1 Classroom management

One of the main aspects that influenced the teaching performance is classroom management, since it has a positive effect on student achievement and allows the teacher to create a good atmosphere and ensure the good development of the session (Wong & Wong, 2009). Throughout the implementation of some language games, we could evidence the important role that instructions have when the students are required to practice the input provided. We learnt that



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instructions are the main guidelines which support the students to arrive to the proposed goal of the lesson. In this order of ideas, providing a good set of instructions to the students (providing the students with a good set of instructions), before starting an activity guarantees that the sequence and pace of the lesson can be completed appropriately by the teacher.

Having this in mind, the teaching experience led us to devote enough time to examine the instructions given that we could notice the decisive role they had on the success of the learning event. For example, pre service teachers identified at the beginning of the course that when the students did not understand what they had to do, they tended to lose attention, interest and the pace of the lesson was affected and they behaved disruptively.

To avoid this problematic situation, we, pre service teachers, made use of their reflections and analysis during the stage of lesson planning; in this stage, journals and articles were used with the purpose of informing ourselves about some strategies to cope with disruptive behavior. As a result, in further sessions instructions were given in a clearer way, using a non- complex language and non-verbal communication such as body language gestures and movements. This led students to have a better understanding and active participation in the games because they were attentive and willing to learn, besides disruptive behavior decreased considerably.

Other challenging aspects that affected teacher's performance among the implementation of the project was disruptive behavior; as a result, teachers used some classroom management techniques, for instance, settle down activities that helped the teacher to calm the students, call their attention and keep a good rapport in the classroom.

For example, strategies like "teacher says class, class and student's response was yes, yes" or "teacher said: "voices" and students answered very louder Shhh! This helped a lot because it

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was a routine established at the beginning of the course and the students already knew what they were required to do, so students recovered the attention in the class again. The strategies mentioned, were the result of research and analysis by teachers in order to reduce noisy situations.

To close the section of classroom management, it is important to mention that the time in each activity of the lesson determines if a session is successful or not, consequently we learnt that the teacher should seek for strategies and solutions to problems that were evidenced in the lessons.

During the first implementation, the teacher had to face several challenges concerning with time management. For example, one of the proposed activities was a lotto game, and it brought some problems due to the students spent more time than expected and it consumed the time available to the correct development of the game.

The second challenge was that the students did not have the sufficient vocabulary to understand and complete the game, for that reason the teacher was required to repeat the words many times and in some occasions the use of the L1 was necessary to clarify game's instructions spending valuable time. As a result, the first game was unfinished and the teacher was forced to do it in the next session.

Noticeable issues like these, encouraged teachers to reflect and analyze the possible solutions in order to avoid that type of drawbacks, so it led us to implement some strategies with the aim to have a better control of the time available for each class. For instance, the teacher decided to set priorities in the lesson, delegate functions for distributing material to two students and talk just about the most important issues avoiding wasting time in non-necessary information

Furthermore, the use of a chronometer facilitated and provided many benefits when controlling the time hence we were able to complete the tasks proposed in the lesson plan. As a result, this valuable experience had a strong impact due to the fact that facing with these challenges

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helped us to get informed for solving those situations and it brought positive results in terms of teaching skills.

### 8.1.2 Material design.

In relation to the material used during the implementation, the interests, needs and learning styles were identified and considered with the purpose of integrating those interests into the lesson to motivate students to be active participants in the process of learning.

Throughout the implementation, we could determine that the usage of realia was a type of material that was more attractive to students. By identifying their likes and preferences, we were able to design classroom tasks that were suitable to this material seeing that it was noticed that during the lessons was useful to teach vocabulary such as parts of the body and school supplies. The students used some sort of vocabulary to retain information that could be used in real context, providing students with a strong relation between the word and the object that it represents.

In brief, including this source in the EFL classroom allows students to stimulate their minds interacting with their five senses (smelling, touching, watching, and hearing) for acquiring new language. In addition, to help students retain the target language presented, teachers considered that the learning styles facilitate the process of information: for example, teachers decided to design flashcards, worksheets and videos keeping in mind the students' interest according to their age.

Making use of current cartoons from the TV programs, for those visual learners were included, as well as audios with songs that helped them to comprehend the information for auditory learners. The use of tasks and games was beneficial since those caught their attention and they interacted with high levels of motivation which strengthened their knowledge.

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The last one aspect required during the implementation was the use of recycle material due to the fact that it was appropriate at the moment of evaluating or checking comprehension of the vocabulary presented; It served during assessment, quizzes and language reviewing. The aforementioned were components that in certain way affected the professional growth of the practitioners since those were features that needed further reflection, critical ideas, imagination and creativity that encouraged us to become more reflective teachers.

### 8.1.3 Lesson planning.

Planning lessons is an important factor that facilitates the process of teaching/learning in the classroom since it is like a roadmap that guide what the teacher has to do as well as students as Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2005) point out “a lesson plan helps teachers to think what they are going to teach and how they are going to teach it”. Moreover, it helps to establish the objectives and learning outcomes that are expected to achieve. For example, in this classroom project pre-service teachers attempted to facilitate the presentation and reinforcement of vocabulary instruction through the inclusion of language games which makes the assimilation of the input provided easier.

Throughout the implementation of this classroom project it was used the PPP approach (presentation, practice and production) as a meaningful method to create a sequence that helped to connect ideas during the whole lesson. Harmer (2009) remarks the importance of including this procedure with lower level students since, he points out that this facilitates the acquisition of early language abilities; for that reason the lesson plans were articulated according to the parameters established on the booklet Guía N° 22 “Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas

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Extranjeras” in which the students were exposed to practice basic vocabulary such as family members, jobs, animals, school supplies, etc. through the interaction of language games.

The implementation was conducted with a group that was supposed to be in A2.1 level according to the standards; however it was evidenced during the collection of information that they were not allowed to achieve the outcomes that were required at this stage; in this order of ideas, the aims of the activities for the lesson plan were based on a lower level of the students taking into account the real language proficiency that the students were able to be in contact with for example : *A1: “Copio y transcribo palabras que comprendo y que uso con frecuencia en el salón de clase”, “Participo activamente en juegos de palabras y rondas”*, what became an advantage for the pre service teachers since in this sense the students gathered more meaningful information that helped them to enhance their comprehensible and communicative abilities and the providing elements to facilitate understanding.

### 8.2 Student’s responses

The process of learning a language through the implementation of language games in 5<sup>th</sup> graders, involved both positive and negative aspects which become a valuable knowledge for students as well as for our own teaching experience. As a result, we could identify strengths and weaknesses in students at the moment of guiding the process in the classroom, which facilitated the construction of games, lesson planning, material design and the reflection stage; it helped to get students focused on the activities and maintaining high levels of motivation, interest, participation and attitude towards the activities in the classroom.

### 8.2.1 Student's reactions towards the implementation of language games.

All the language games were designed in order to take advantage of the lack of inhibition that 5<sup>th</sup> graders students still had, since the main purpose of the activities was to make all students active participants in the implementation.

In addition, the interest of the students towards each single game was most of the time positive since pre-service teachers tried to guarantee the provision of input through the use of colorful flashcards, songs, videos and worksheets to complement the language games. Moreover, it also promoted high levels of enthusiasm, key factor that facilitated the creation of good rapport in the classroom and make the activities enjoyable for the students.

As previous studies had shown, the implementation of games in the classroom increases the disposition of the students to perform the activities and it was clearly evidenced when the pre-service teacher arrived to the classroom and the learners' attitude changed from the beginning because they already knew that a new game will be presented. In this sense, we took advantage of the students' interest and preferences in cartoons, soccer teams, T.V programs among others to activate their background knowledge and connect it with the game itself and with new knowledge that they will acquire.

However, in terms of behavior, sometimes the students had a better disposition than expected and most of them wanted to do everything at the same time which created a lot of noise in the classroom and some kind of indiscipline emerged during the development of the language games. Nevertheless, the Pre-service teacher used effective classroom management techniques such as grouping, giving roles, timing in order to have the group focused on the activity itself.

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To conclude, students' language production increased during the different stages of the implementation of the language games as well as the Pre-service teacher acquired new elements to have control of the classroom, since students' shyness was reduced and attitudes and feelings towards the topics and activities were the expected in order to maintain a good learning and teaching environment

### 8.2.2 Students' participation, engagement and interest during the implementation

During the process of learning a second language, facilitators are required to cope the learners' linguistic needs in order to get them involved in a class. As a result, during the implementation we found interesting to include different type of material and strategies as the main tool to guarantee the learning aim.

Using language games as a strategy to foster the use of the vocabulary presented, brought positive results since, they provoked students' motivation to participate and learn. At the beginning it was evidenced the lack of understanding for solving the activity and as result, most of the students were losing interest for participating in the game. It was an issue that needed further reflection so, it was mandatory to establish a strategy in order to avoid difficulties in the future.

Students' abilities for understanding instructions were examined in a couple of classes and this led us to include group-work during the performance of the games so, students were divided based on their capabilities (students that easily caught ideas were working with those who had some lack of understanding) and, this worked in such an effective way that participation and motivation increased noticeably. Students felt comfortable working with a partner, they shared information and they were a support for each other.

### **Observer's journal entry**

[... Teacher gives instructions about the lotto game. Basically what the students have to do is to connect the image with the correct written form. “You have to match (teacher uses body language most of the time) the image, this image with the correct word (he points out to the example written on the board) did you understand? Ok let's start. In a group it is evidenced that one of the students did not understand, so his partner tells her, “lo que hay que que hacer es poner la imagen con la palabra como esta en el tablero, si es lápiz- va con el lápiz asi es”

When students finished the game they want to participate, to say the words, they raise their hands and it is noticed that they are enjoying it ...]

After putting this kind of strategies into practice, we found that it was not an obstacle to conduct the activities due to young learners love to play, compete with each other and obviously learn. Considering that in previous sessions, the teacher practitioner provided them with the enough input to develop the activity so in that way the students became very participative, displaying what they know without fear of making mistakes and the most important thing they became risk takers.

Here there is another example: the teacher shows a picture of a firefighter (a difficult word for them) and the student that took the risk and mispronounced the word but the student 2 said: “así no se dice, se dice /'faɪə, fɑɪtə/ and the student 1 was able to pronounce it correctly, and every time that the practitioner shows that particular picture, he was the first in saying it.



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As the core of our classroom project is to implement games to provide vocabulary to the students, it is very easy to engage and keep their attention and interest at the highest level, so it was natural for them to conquer the emotional barrier which prevents them to take the risk and go to the board and write or stand up and say the name of a specific animal, profession or school supply.

### 8.2.3 Student's affective willingness throughout the implementation

Based on our experience as foreign language learners, we already know the crucial role that feelings and emotions play in the learning process since, we can state that we easily remember things that were learnt in an interesting and engaging way and, also in an environment that made us feel comfortable and relaxed. That is why, we could evidence along the implementation of this project some important aspects related to student's attitude and motivation that influenced the students' disposition for learning the target language.

Furthermore, Krashen's concept of the affective filter aims to explain the reason why emotions have such a big influence in the language learning success or failure. Krashen (2013) highlights that language acquisition can bring successful outcomes whether the affective conditions in the classroom are optimal. Taking this in mind, pre-service teachers consider relevant to establish at the beginning of the course a good "rapport" in order to optimize the development of the activities, active participation and students interest. Once rapport was established, we could notice that students felt comfortable in the classroom due to the teacher provided enough confidence and they were not afraid to take the risk or to make mistakes during the games.

On the other hand, the inclusion of games in the students of fifth grade prompted students' feelings and emotions. While the students were executing the games they demonstrated their

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attitude and anxiety towards playing the games. For example, some students had a positive attitude for participating saying “si yo quiero jugar” unrelated to others who rejected to the idea by saying “eso no me gusta”; to avoid this, we used authority as the main strategy to encourage them to participate. Moreover, it was also evidenced students’ tolerance to receive feedback on the grounds that some of them accepted in a decent way, instead of others who felt frustrated and embarrassed.

Finally, anxiety was perceived during the implementation; students were concerned when they felt they could not participate, take turns or just when they did not know the answer. Additionally, they were highly interested to be the winners so they were expectant all the time which triggered stressful situations.

The aforementioned also was meaningful in terms of professional development since, before preparing the lesson and designing the games, we thought about how the games are going to motivate the students, keep them engaged and interested. Based on that, we consider Kyriacou (2001) statement in relation to the fact that “activities must elicit and sustain pupil’s attention, interest and motivation” so we tried most of the time to enhance these aspects through the reflection stage.

As a conclusion, the material used was very captivating for the students by virtue of it was appropriate for their age and likes so students were highly motivated to participate in the task as well as interact with the resources provided as we stated it in one of our observations.

### **Observer’s journal entry**

[... The students are willing to play this game. Everybody wants to participate and interact with the flashcards...].

[... The majority of the comments of the students about the game were positive. Teacher asked one of the students “did you like the game?” and she described why she liked one particular game by saying “me gusto mucho el juego porque aprendí nuevas palabras” ...]

### 8.3 Linguistic Outcomes

Regarding this section, it will be introduced the positive and challenging aspects in terms of student's progress when students were required to use the target language to demonstrate comprehension and progress in the learning stage.

#### 8.3.1 Student's achievements when using the language

Reflections amongst the implementation part were the main evidence that served to analyze the principal objectives to be accomplished by learners in terms of linguistic aspects and additionally, it allowed the evaluation of student's attitude and reactions at the moment to be exposed in a direct way to the language.

One of the key aspects assessed in the implementation of language games in fifth graders, was the exposition to written and oral production by them; through the analysis of spelling, pronunciation and confidence when using the language, we could identify the areas to improve in further lessons. Furthermore, the use of L1 was also taken into account since it was extraordinarily helpful for students when they are trying to communicate a message.

The main purpose of this project was to increase the amount of vocabulary to be used in during the classes; for achieving this, we used different material that allowed the learners to interact several times with the language and it was the principal support for gathering learner's interest for learning the language. The students were encouraged most of the time to write in a correct way the

## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

words; for this activities like spelling words, crosswords and word search were the central part and thanks to the constant practice of these activities, learners showed an improvement during written tasks.

On the other hand, learners were required to use oral production to demonstrate comprehension among lessons. At the beginning of the implementation students did not feel comfortable speaking in English since they expressed their fear for making mistakes in front of their classmates, however we decided to create a positive atmosphere in order to reduce the lack of inhibition when using the spoken language. Besides, teachers decided to use English as much as possible in order to create a bilingual environment and reduce the usage of L1.

Good pronunciation, good intonation and detailed explanations were the essential part that the learners gathered in order to put into practice the language. Although sometimes they used L1 as a source for speaking, at the end we motivated them to use English and pronounce words through the games, so they felt comfortable using the language and they used the words in an unconscious way during oral production tasks.

In terms of spoken production, students had the opportunity to be exposed all the time to the target language (songs, videos, teacher's lessons), and the varied contact with these sources served as support for the students to be immersed in a different context inside the classroom.

Taking into account the previous aspects, introducing learners to vocabulary lessons through the use of games could be one of the practical methods for engaging learner's interest and willingness to learn.

### 8.3.2 Students and teaching challenges among the implementation

## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

Issues related to the implementation were evidenced due to the use of the L1 at the moment of the explanation of the activities since, when students were dispersed, the main source that we use to catch their attention was the use of our native tongue. Code switching was throughout the process of teaching as a rescue to save the path of the class because calling the attention of the students in Spanish served to keep the main objective of the activity proposed.

Another important aspect that affected the proper development of the activities and the provision of feedback was the overcrowded classroom; having 40 students and only one hour to develop the whole activity made almost impossible to evaluate and provide feedback to each student. Nevertheless, we tried to create a teamwork environment in which students were required to work in groups and also to say words aloud and once we noticed that a group mispronounced a word, we provided the corresponding feedback in order to reduce that specific issue. As Fernandez (2004) states, when learners have a clear communicative need in the target language, they are most willing to learn the language unconsciously by participating in class activities. Also it is important to highlight that some students did not want to participate even though, we developed several engagement techniques, none of them worked, so we decide to put that students away in order to continue with the natural flow of the activity.

## 9 Limitations of the study

During the implementation of this classroom project we faced a variety of limitations that we as future teachers must overcome in the best way in order to ensure to our students the best learning experience possible despite the obstacles that we face in the daily basis.

Firstly, the classrooms were not appropriate for the English lessons due to the lack of bilingual resources such as Mp3 players to facilitate listening activities and the inappropriate use of the English laboratory or computers; secondly the poor quality or absence of a textbook to follow, and finally the school did not provide any kind of material to the teacher to develop the class; so in order to ensure the correct development of the session the teachers will put into practice their creativity using as support their own material such as portable speaker, printable material, their own voice and all what he/she could provide to make more valuable the process of learning.

A second limitation consisted of the role that the students played in this classroom project, as we anticipated the expected level of the pupils was lower than we estimated for that reason several sessions were devoted to the teaching of the needed vocabulary to perform the activities designed by the pre service teachers.

The final aspect to take into consideration was the number of hours that the pre service teachers could spend with the students since the time available for the classes was not enough to finish some of the games due to we did not anticipate the time necessary to arrange the classroom and the students to the proper development of the activity.

## 10 Conclusions

The purpose of implementing language games as a project, was to demonstrate the importance that it had at when providing meaningful strategies to the students to acquire new language, retain it and use it in real life situations. Is for that reason that we can analyze the impact of this classroom project in three main areas, which are: academic, personal and professional.

First of all, it is important to highlight that at the beginning of the implementation the students were not adapted to receive all the input in the L2, for that reason the use of body language and constant repetition, leads to have a better understanding of the instructions and therefore a good development of the activities.

Additionally, it is always important the implementation of theory in each section to help us to deal with certain behavior or disability of one student in particular, thus, it is important to articulate that we learned from theory and the experiences that we had in the sessions in order to make students feel that they are an important part of the process, in the interest to obtain great results from them not only good grades but also that the vocabulary that was presented in the sessions it is continuing use it by them in the daily basis.

Forasmuch as, we decided to focalize our goals in providing learners with all the necessary elements to achieve a minimum level of language production taking into account that they must be articulated with theory, and were the games the main source to achieve it.

Regarding the professional growth, it was evidenced that the objectives that we have were successfully accomplished, even though we faced some difficulties regarding lesson planning and

## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

classroom management, but making use of our reflective journals and peer- observation, derive in a better understanding of what went well or what did not go that well in a particular session and the type of strategies or approaches that could be used to solve it. In contrast, the practicum gave us an insight about the hard work that be a teacher is, all the preparation that it is essential to maintain the students focused and willing to perform the activities.

Finally, we also draw that the results obtained showed an important improvement in terms of personal growth, since the pedagogical strategies that we used as teachers to implement all language games in the classroom, were essential resources for transmitting confidence at the time we were guiding EFL classes making that our responsibility and commitment for English language teaching increase in such a way that we and our students made a mutual cooperative learning, that is to say, they learned from us the language and we learned from they how to understand their attitudes and behaviors towards the classes, how to adapt the classes according to their learning styles and preferences, how to make the class itself enjoyable for them and how to take advantage of their lack of inhibition to involve them actively in the classroom actively, owing to we already knew young learners are physically active by nature.



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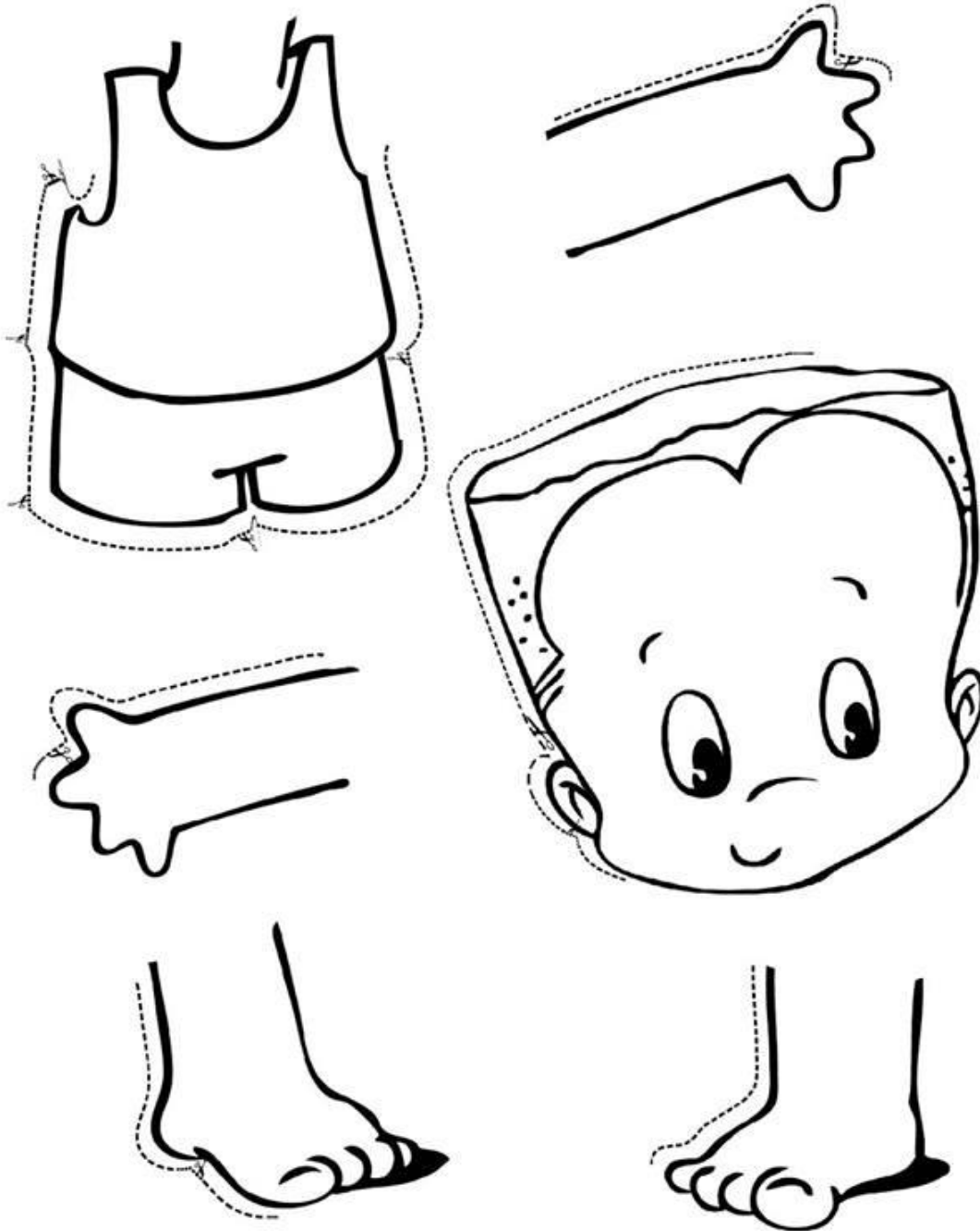
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## MY BODY



 CUT AND GLUE THE BODY PARTS  
CORRECTLY.

GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

**Write the greetings under each picture!**  
Colour.

**Word Bank**

- Good Evening
- Goodbye
- Good Morning
- Hi
- Good Night
- Hello
- Bye
- Good Afternoon
- Bye-bye

In the crossword puzzle given below the names of the relatives are incomplete. Complete the crossword.

g \_ \_ \_ \_ m \_ \_ e \_  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ h \_ \_ r \_  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ a \_ \_ \_ \_  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ u \_ \_ \_ e \_  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ b \_ o \_ h \_ r \_  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ s \_ \_ \_ r \_

**BODY PARTS**

M H K M T E N A F K A R  
 O T N F N O S E C A E K  
 U O E R I G O A M D C C  
 T O E S L N B F L Q J E  
 H T E E T H G U S I W N  
 E L G I A A O E D N A H  
 Y R O I M H M Y R X E J  
 E J R V S G E B P L E F  
 E P H F E N Z Y B P T D  
 E N G L I S H O N C A L  
 B O D Y I Y W R A E R H  
 N G T F U N R R H K M R

Find all the words below:

- |      |          |        |      |
|------|----------|--------|------|
| head | nose     | arm    | leg  |
| face | mouth    | elbow  | knee |
| hair | teeth    | hand   | foot |
| ear  | neck     | finger | toe  |
| eye  | shoulder | back   | body |

**School Supplies**

- Crayon Pencil Book Scissors Eraser Glue Pencil Sharpener Ruler Pen Paper Notebook

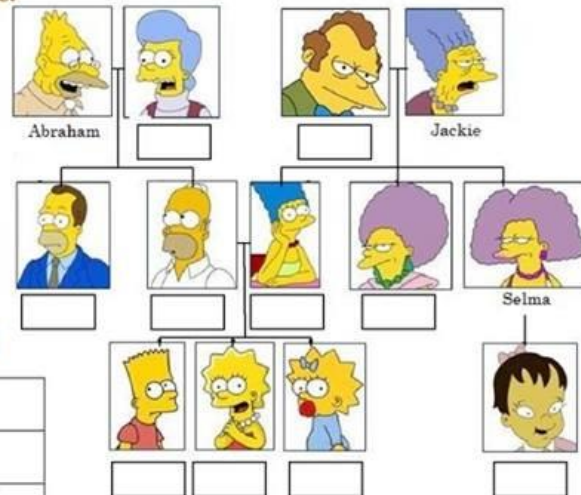
EDR LEUB LCBKA  
 RGAOE URELP YARG  
 ELWOLY KINP SIWTE  
 REGEN RWNOB



# The Simpson Family

1. a) Read the text and complete the family tree.

This family is very big. Abraham is the father of Homer, and Mona is mother of Homer. Herb is the brother of Homer. Marge is the wife of Homer. Her father is Clancy and her mother is Jackie. Marge has 2 sisters, Patty and Selma. Selma has a daughter called Ling. Homer and Marge have 3 children. The son is Bart and the two daughters are Lisa and Maggie.



1. b) Read the text again. True (T) or False (F).

a) The Simpsons family is small.	
b) Marge has one brother and one sister.	
c) Ling is the daughter of Selma.	
d) Homer and Marge have 3 children.	
e) Homer and Marge have 2 sons and 1 daughter.	

1) Jackie is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Lisa.

2. Complete the sentences.

7) Maggie is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Marge and Homer.

2) Ling is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Bart and Lisa.

8) Bart is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Lisa.

3) Maggie is a \_\_\_\_\_.

9) Marge is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Homer.

4) Herb is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Lisa.

10) Abraham is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Bart.

5) Homer is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Marge.

5) Patty is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Maggie.

6) Marge is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Patty and Selma.

3. Write about you and your family.

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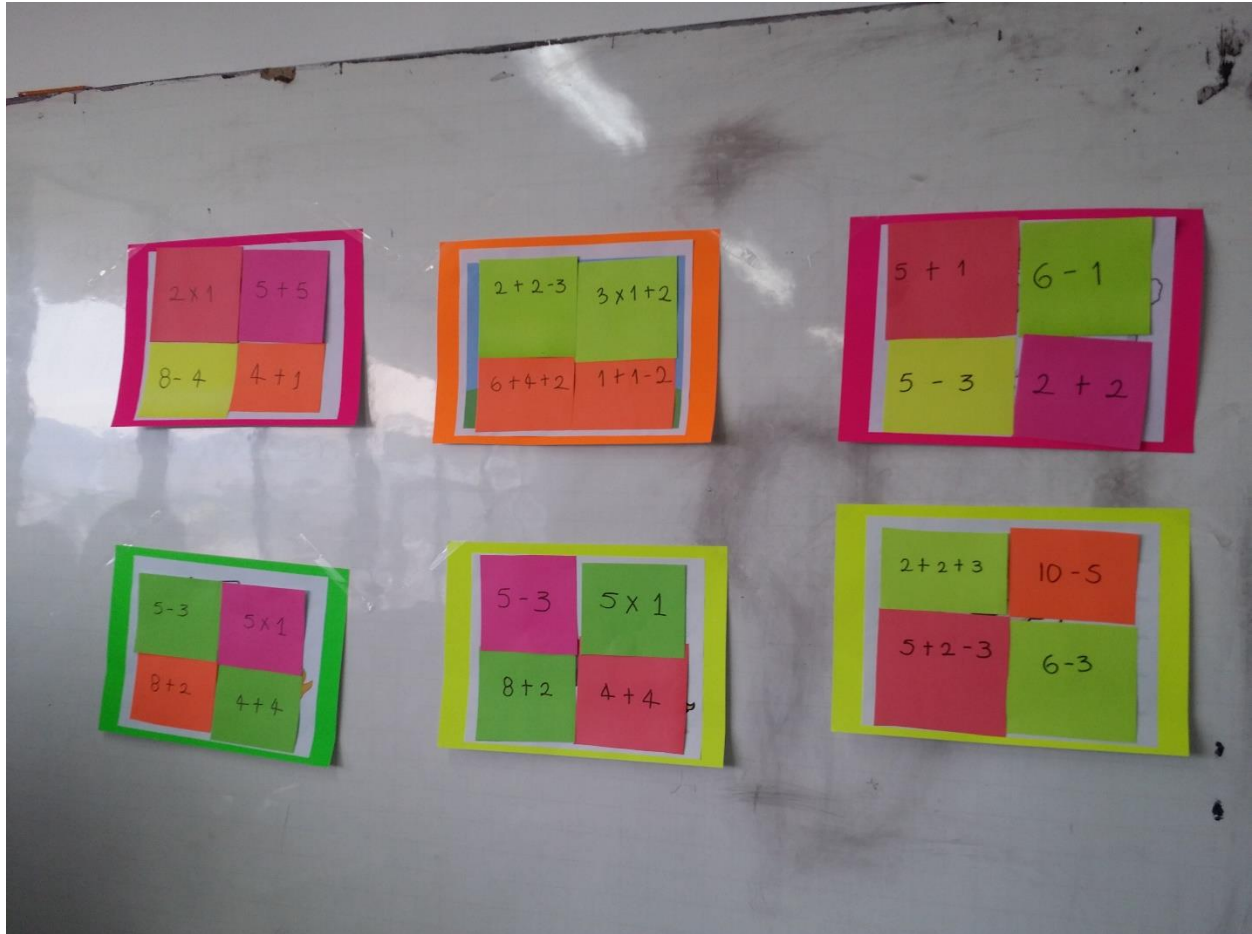


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## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY





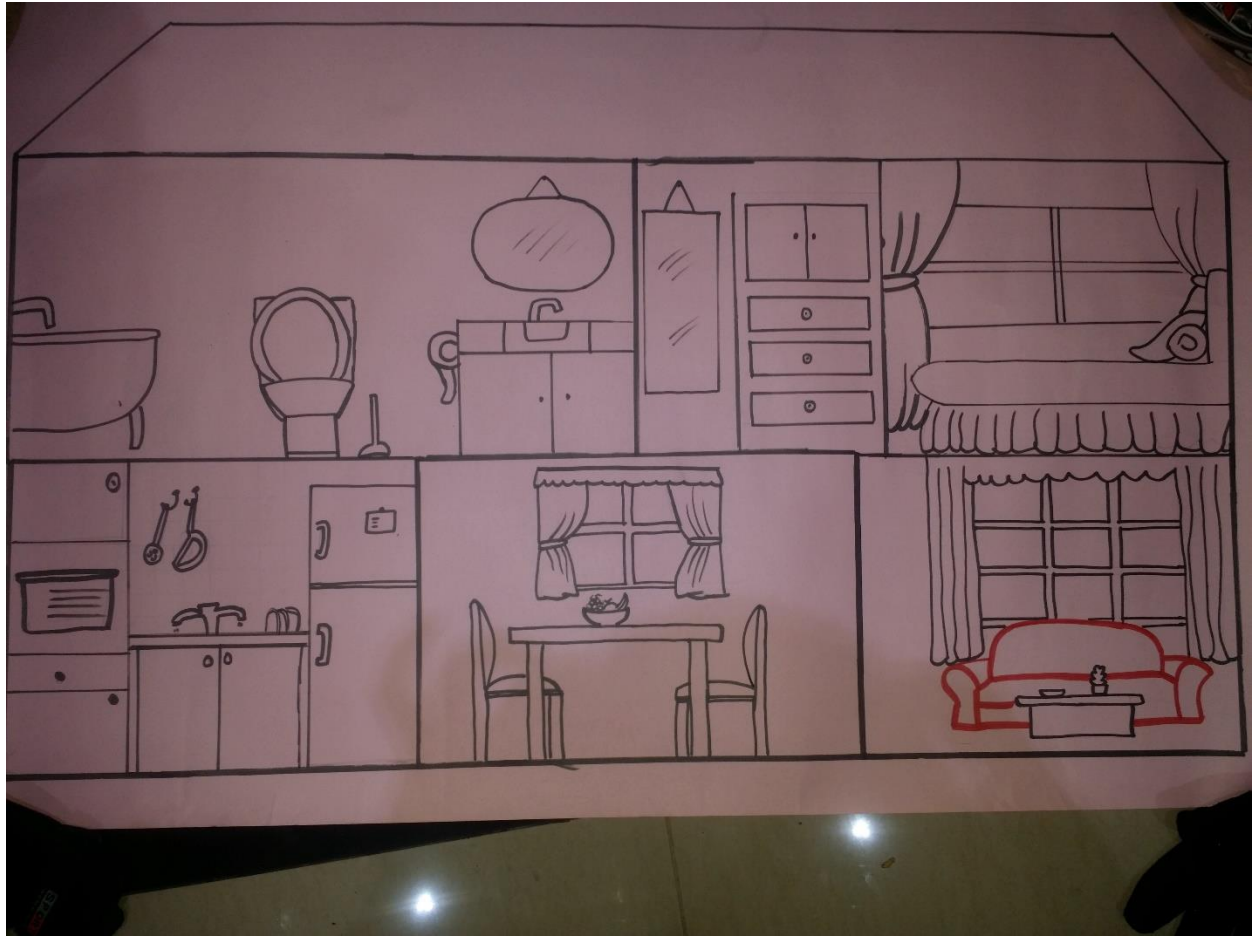
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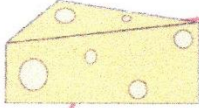
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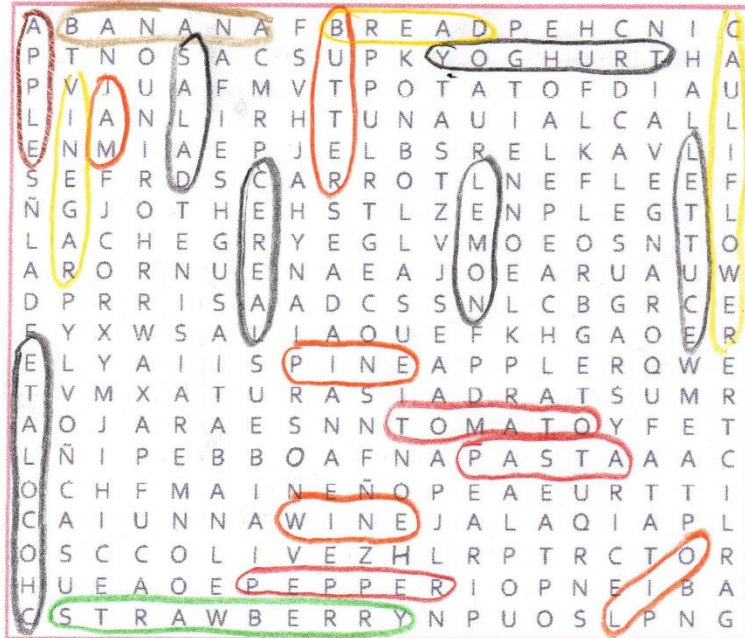




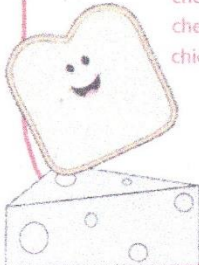
## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_*Comney*



# FOOD





- |             |           |           |              |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| • apple     | chocolate | olive     | rice         |
| • banana    | cucumber  | onion     | salad        |
| bread       | fish      | orange    | soup         |
| butter      | garlic    | pasta     | • strawberry |
| carrot      | jam       | peach     | sugar        |
| cauliflower | lemon     | pear      | tomato       |
| cereals     | lettuce   | pepper    | tuna         |
| cheese      | meat      | pineapple | vinegar      |
| cherry      | mustard   | potato    | wine         |
| chicken     | oil       | raisin    | yoghurt      |



## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

STAGE (skill practice)	PROCEDURE (Teacher and learner activity)	TIME	COMMENTS
<b>ENGAGE</b> Warmer	As a warm up activity, pre-service teachers will implement and activity called "Symon says." Which will consist in one of the pre-service teacher saying: Symon says to make groups of... and the teacher says a random number, and the teacher does this five times, and the last time, he says make groups of two, and those couples are going to be the team Works for the next stage.	5 Min.	
<b>STUDY</b> Reading.	In this stage, the students are going to be reminded about the appropriate pronunciation of the vocabulary taught in previous classes, in order to prepare them for the next stage that will be the first implementation session of our classroom project, "The implementation of games to promote vocabulary in primary students"	10 Min.	
<b>ACTIVATE</b> Speaking. Listening.	In this part, the Pre-service teachers will explain the activity that is a lotto game. After given clear instructions, the lotto charts are going to be given to the couples form in the previous stage. For developing the activity students will be ask to pick up from a bag, a lotto card, then they have to read it aloud,	20 Min.	






	whether the student needs correction, the pre-service teacher will give it immediately. The activity continuous in this way until one couple has covered, all the images of the lotto chart.		
<b>CLOSURE</b> (Extra-class work, announcements, things to consider)	As extra-class activity, students are asked to bring for next class, a family photo; preferably one that they are in, for engaging them for the next class. If they do not have a family photo, they can bring a magazine picture containing a family.	5 Min.	



## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

<p><b>5 minutes</b></p> <p><b>Practice</b></p>	<p>the students have to: firstly, listen and repeat the name of the animal and secondly say the name of the animal in the target language after the sound of the animal is played.</p> <p>After the presentation of the vocabulary some images will be stuck on the board and this will be useful for elicit information about the vocabulary related to animals of the farm: for example</p> <p>T: How's the sound that cows make?</p> <p><u>Ss: muuuuuuuu!!</u></p> <p>T: which animals makes quack <u>quack</u>?</p> <p><u>Ss: duck</u></p> <p>After that, students will play a game for practicing the vocabulary presented; in this game the students have to use the vocabulary provided and also their mathematical abilities:</p> <p>For discovering the hide animal the students have to do some addition and subtractions in order to discover the animal. This game is called "math's and answers".</p>	<p><b>speaker does not work.</b></p>	
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## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

<b>STUDY</b> Reading. Writing.	<p>Then the pre-service teachers will use a set of flashcards that contain the school supplies (Images) and the written form of the images.</p> <p>The pre-service teachers show the picture and read it aloud, and ask students to repeat. After that, students are asked to write the vocabulary in their notebooks.</p>	10 Min.	
<b>ACTIVATE</b> Speaking.	<p>After, the images are stuck on the board upside down. They are placed in cell, where the columns have letters (A,B,C,D,E) and the rows have numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). So the students are selected randomly, they say the location of the image by saying the column and the row, for instance B3, and another cell, D4, if the images match, they are turned, the student needs to say the words aloud. In addition, the student's group has a point and the group has another chance to match more images, if they fail, the other group has the chance to do it. This memory game will end when all the images are turned and matched.</p>	15 Min.	
<b>CLOSURE</b> (Extra-class work, announcements, things to consider)	<p>As extra-class activity students are asked to complete a worksheet which consists in images and disordered words. Then students need to organize the words and after that, students match the correct image with the word. Whether the students do not know the word, they are asked to look for them in the dictionary.</p>	5 Min.	

<b>STAGE</b> (skill practice)	<b>PROCEDURE</b> (Teacher and learner activity)	<b>TIME</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>ENGAGE</b>  Warmer	<p>As a warm up activity, and to review the vocabulary from the previous class, they are going to play Chinese whisper or broken telephone, which consists in dividing the class into two groups. Each group make a line and the pre-service teachers give a word to the last student of the line, the student has to pass the word in the ear of the other student until the first student of the line gets the written word from a bag. If the word is the same that the teacher gave to the last student, then group will have a point.</p> <p>After, the students get back to their sits and the pre-service teachers present different school supplies (<i>realia</i>) in a desk. Then, the pre-service teachers start asking questions about the objects, for instance: taking an eraser, what is this? What is it for/what is its use? <i>etc.</i> If they say the words in English, the pre-service teacher will congratulate the student or correct them, if students say the words in Spanish the pre-service teachers will say it in English and emphasize in the pronunciation. All that, in order to activate their background knowledge and relating objects and their use.</p>	<p>5 Min.</p> <p>10 Min.</p>	



25 minutes	<p>After this fun activity the T will explain the second part of the Wh questions, this time the T will explain the question where? The T will use the card board use to explain the parts of the house but this time it will be used to explain the question where. A little puppet will be used to ask the students where Mordecay, The T will put the puppet in different parts of the house to generate answers from the Ss.</p>
25 minutes	<p>Finally a word search activity will be deliver by the T, this time the Ss have to find words related to food, and also they have to write them down in their notebooks with the corresponding translation and draw for next class.</p>



## GAMES FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY

DAY/STAGE /ACTIVITY/TIME	PROCEDURE TEACHER AND LEARNER ACTIVITY	ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS AND PLANNED SOLUTIONS
15 minutes	To begin the class, the T will divide the group in two halves, group 1 and group 2, after that the T will write nine professions on the board, to select the participant group the T with the help of his cellphone will use a app that acts as a dice, an even number will give the turn to G2 and an odd number will give the turn to G1. After this will show a flashcard randomly, this flashcard will contain an object that is used in a specific profession. After show the flashcard to the students they have to guess to which profession belongs, if a group fails, the other team will take his place and points.	Ss behavior may be a problem to take into account, the activity will be stopped if the Ss does not want to participate properly.
25 minutes	After this short game, the T will ask to the students what they want to be when they grow up. After some participations, the T will show the flashcards but hiding the name, they have to remember as much information as they can, if they do not remember the T will show the name, but the Ss have to write it in their notebooks. After two rounds all the flashcards will be placed in the board for the following activity.	I

