



ABSTRACT

This monograph is written to provide guidance for using oral presentations such as debates and round tables as a resource for teaching English as a foreign language. Teachers who have never used oral presentations may have major misconceptions about its content, use, and impact on teaching. Teachers who have used oral presentations may only be familiar with a small portion of the information available to them. This monograph will seek to help teachers and students familiarize with oral presentations; their importance in the EFL classroom; and their learning limitations.

It also manages to guide teachers to use oral interactive activities, debates, and round tables, in order to help students develop communicative competence

Finally, it covers the basics of making use of oral presentations. It will provide examples of how to include them within a lesson plan. It will also tackle some of the positive and negative aspects regarding its use.



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Sara Arévalo López- Hendry Narváez Jimbo

Authors

Msc. Guillermo Pacheco

Director

CUENCA – ECUADOR

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AUTHORSHIP

All the content of this Monograph is the exclusive responsibility of its authors.

Sara Arévalo López

Leandro Narváez Jimbo



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I would like to dedicate this monograph to my family and close friends who always encouraged and supported me during good and bad times. Their constant help and encouragement motivated me to pursue my goals.

SARA ARÉVALO LÓPEZ

LEANDRO NARVAEZ JIMBO

I want to dedicate this monograph to my family and friends who always encouraged and supported me during my carrier. They helped me to achieve my dreams.



INTRODUCTION

Nowadays English is one of the worldwide communication languages in many fields. Therefore, it is a very important element in our future as students or professionals. Many people from different countries around the world use English to communicate with others. For example, a Chinese businessman uses English to communicate with his costumers in other continents. Likewise, a French scientist communicates with the English, German, or Dutch scientist by means of English. In consequence, we can say that English is an important feature of the twenty-one century education.

With the objective of getting students to learn English and to be able to communicate in English without major difficulties, many methods, strategies, and books have been created and tried to get so.

This monograph will provide useful information and examples about how oral presentations can be used in class in order to improve students' communicative competence. The oral presentations suggested here are debates and round tables which are interactive oral activities that can benefit both teachers and students. They can help students to get a solid foundation in the use of English and to acquire communicative competence, and on the other hand, they can be useful tools for teachers to help students reach so.



CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 JUSTIFICATION

The purpose of this monograph is to propose a lesson plan that includes debates and round tables as methodological resources in order to develop the EFL students' communicative competence. This Lesson Plan will be applied to the students of Unidad Educativa "UNE" High School (Azogues) in their senior year, who have an intermediate level of English.

The lack of oral interactive activities that include learning strategies to improve the EFL students' communicative competence has caused a deficient speaking performance. By means of this monograph, we expect to find significant information that helps teachers solving the different problems students might face when speaking the target language in the classroom.

The oral activities suggested here include learning strategies in order to improve the oral communication of the students. Our aim through the application of these activities, plus a comfortable working environment, is to rehearse the oral production of the students from "UNE" high school.

We will give a broader explanation about debates and round tables. We will also analyze in more detail each of them, their concepts, importance in teaching English, and their limitations in the classroom.



1.2 DEBATES

1.2.1 DEFINITION

A debate is a discussion about a controversial topic, about a current issue, and something according to the students' needs. The main objective of a debate is to generate discussion among the students. We can also say that students get more interested in the learning process when they participate actively than when they receive information in a passive way. These types of activities demand a higher level of oral expression; although, they can be used at an intermediate level to improve fluency.

We think, by means of debates, students learn how to be more analytic and more truthful in what they say, this way they will be able to prove their ideas with valid evidence and the same will be expected from their other partners. They will learn how to present their ideas in a way that they take over the audience.

When debating, students will challenge their knowledge and this in turn will make them work under pressure, which will allow them to make quick and accurate decisions; and therefore use their oral abilities to the fullest.

To carry out a debate in the classroom the first thing it is to select the topic. To make the debate have good results, the topic has to be of the students' real interest. It is advisable to divide the class in two groups; the first one can be in favor and the other one against the issue being debated. With two groups with different opinions, there will be more opportunity to generate controversy in the class.



The debates should be very organized and guided by teachers in order to give all the participants the opportunity to expose their ideas and arguments in an organized way. With this in mind, it will be necessary to establish a time limit so that the representatives of each group and their members can give their comments. Questions raised after concluding the debate, also open the opportunity to generate discussion in the class.

The idea of preparing a debate can be intimidating for many English teachers because they can be time consuming and also due to the limitations students have at the time of speaking. But the oral activities, as debates, can be an effective way to improve students' communicative competence and fluency. That is why we consider important to use them in teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language.

1.2.2 IMPORTANCE IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

Teaching English as a Foreign Language has the objective to make students understand the language they are learning, either in a written or spoken way, to make the students able to give oral or written messages. Thus, the main goal is to get the students acquire communicative competence, that is to say, to know when to speak, when not, what to speak about, and how to speak in the different daily life situations. The use of debates increase the meaningful use of language and students have better “opportunities in the classroom to use the language for genuine communication” (Willis and Willis, 4)



Based on our teaching experience, we have come up with these three important reasons why oral presentations such as debates should be used in English teaching.

a) Debates give more opportunity to practice the four language skills

By means of debates the speaking, reading, listening, writing skills are reinforced in a higher degree. When getting ready for a debate, students need to get informed about the topic that will be debated. Students will read a variety of information to be more prepared during the debate. In this way, the reading skills are rehearsed.

Besides reading, students will also have to take notes of the arguments they will use during the debate. Here, the writing skill is highlighted as the students select and organize their notes in a clear way to complete their arguments during the debate in the class.

During a debate students are expected to give their opinions, even the students that rarely speak in class, will be more willing to give their comments in a debate. When giving their comments, students develop their communicative competence, which not only wraps what to say but how to say it. Among the benefits of the use of debates, we stand out the oral skills as the most substantial ones.

When students participate in a debate, they listen to both sides of an argument. So, to give good rebuttals, they will have to listen carefully to the comments of the opposed team.



b) Debates support development of critical thinking skills

When getting ready for a debate, students should adopt a position, either in favor or against the debated issue. To defend their point of view they will go a little deeper. To defend their position, they need to analyze consequences, to compare and to contrast, and find possible solutions to the problems. All this, allows students to approach the material with a critical eye.

Debates also open the opportunity to develop empathy because students are more open to different opinions; this means that they will be more willing to accept and respect different opinions, and not to attack their classmates' opinions. Using debates also prepare students to use the target language spontaneously outside the classroom, and allow them use important language functions correctly, including “agreeing and disagreeing, interrupting, asking for repetition and clarification” (Willis and Willis 136).

c) Debates promote learning

Through oral presentations, students have the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. Debates allow student to take the role of the teacher when explaining the topic to the class. We can say that students learn more by explaining to others. That means to be able to explain to others, first, they have to understand what they are going to explain. The fact of having to explain their position in front of others motivates students to learn more about the topic that will be debated.



It is important to highlight that oral presentations allow the teachers evaluate students in a more effective way. While students are debating, teachers are able to distinguish between what students have memorized and what they have really internalized.

To overcome this situation, we suggest asking deeper questions. That means, asking not only about what has to do with the topic itself, but asking them what the consequences of doing or not doing this/that would be; or what is this/that message trying to say; or what would you do in this/that situation. Thus, we can say by asking this type of questions, students are, in a certain way, forced to give their opinion: and teachers will realize who is only memorizing.

1.2.3 LEARNING LIMITATIONS

Although the oral activities suggested here, as debates, rely on authentic oral communication production and can be an effective vehicle for teaching English, it is also important to mention that they have some limitations.

a) The use of native language

At the time of speaking English, students generally take advantage of any opportunity to make use of their native language (in this case Spanish). When learning a foreign language it is natural to see students making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes or that they ignore the meaning of some words; there is no point in pretending that these difficulties do not exist. All this can lead to the use of the native language and not the target language.



To avoid the later situation, teachers should get students involved in a real life context practice of the language, and to see the importance of its use in their own lives. Teachers should also encourage students for their effort to use English.

b) Embarrassment to speak in public

Students may feel shy or embarrassed of speaking in public or in front of the class, especially in English. When it comes to debates, the ideal thing would be having every student participate. But unfortunately, not all students find it easy to be in front of an audience or to give a speech, and especially when they have to make it in a language that is not theirs.

Therefore, it is important that, as much as possible, teachers create an environment where everybody feels comfortable. According to our experience we have seen that many students do not speak because they are afraid of making mistakes and they do not like to be corrected in front of others. Therefore, teachers should correct students without offending them, which means it has to be done with tact. Teachers should measure what is appropriate for a particular student in a particular situation.

For those students who are still embarrassed to be in front, teachers can make them participate gradually. They can be assigned to place the posters representing their group; or to write on the board the points that defend the opinion of their group. Then gradually, teachers can make them take more oral participation. The more students practice, the more confident they will feel about their speaking.



However, it is important to say that some students can participate fully while saying very little which does not mean they are not learning. Many students may enjoy listening to teachers or to their classmates and, the language they are hearing can be of real benefit to them.

c) Lack of time

In most of the educational institutions a certain number of hours is assigned to the teaching of English classes, which are distributed along the week. Many teachers might think that a class of one hour or in the more fortunate cases two hours is not enough to carry out a debate. It has caused teachers not wishing to carry out these tasks.

Although, the time a debate will take is left to teachers' consideration, shorter debates can be carried out in the class. In these cases the debate topic does not have to be less controversial. What would be needed is a careful planning and organization as well as teachers' and students' cooperation

1.3 ROUND TABLES

1.3.1 DEFINITION

A round table can be defined as a meeting where several people discuss about a topic. A round table is made up based on suggestions, resolutions, and changes, etc. In most round tables, its members consider topics that need to be given a solution or change. The final decision will be made according to the agreement of the majority. The purpose of a round table is not to convince the other of a position, but to give consideration to other perspectives that can



address a problem in a better way. A round table is not about having the students giving a summary of a certain topic, but rather to get the students involved in a communicative real life situation.

1.3.2 ROUND TABLES USES AND ARRANGEMENT

Due to its positive effect on students' communicative competence development, we consider round tables should be included in an EFL classroom. We suggest three ways round tables can be used.

. One way to use round tables is when culminating a certain unit. In this case, the class will design a problem or question that has to do with that unit. Students will have to contribute to solve the outlined problem. To support their suggestions, they can use the results of their investigation or express their own feelings or experiences.

Another way to use round tables is as part of an exam. In this case, instead of simply memorizing the information for the sake of passing the exam, students will synthesize the information and they will evaluate their point of view critically to defend it. By doing this, they will build up vocabulary related to the current topic being discussed; which will allow them to face any similar situation in real life.

Finally, round tables can be simply used to break the monotony/routine of the class. We do not think it is necessary to set up a round table only in "formal situations" like exams. With this, we do not mean students and teachers should take advantage of the situation for not working and thinking it is a free period.



Teachers can use round tables for students to have fun or relax; of course the purpose will still be to promote students' conversation.

In this case, when round tables are used for fun, there is no need for teachers to tell students it is for fun; otherwise, they will think it is not important. Even in this case, teachers should direct the class with total respect

Now for those teachers wondering how to arrange students' desks in a round table, we consider useful the following recommendation.

If possible, it is advisable to organize the desks in a way that all the students can look at and talk to each other. The teacher does not always need to be in front of the class; for this reason, it is a good idea to reorganize the furniture in such way that all the students are the center of attention.

We also want to stand out the practical use of visual aids. In our opinion, visual support such as: photographs, diagrams, and drawings, can be a motivating factor. Sometimes because of nervousness, students forget what they were going to say, but pictures can help them to get the idea back or to come up with new and different ideas. By giving a quick glance to the visual aid, can reduce students' stress.

1.3.3 IMPORTANCE IN THEEFL CLASSROOM

In real life students face situations that require them to use the language skills, especially the oral ones. Just as Herington (192) notices" to prepare learners to communicate in real-life situations", round tables are suitable and useful for students to develop communicative competence. However, oral communication usually outlines a lot of difficulty for the speakers of a foreign



language, since in educational contexts, writing and reading skills are usually the ones the student dominates first, but when they are requested to talk in the language they are learning, it is usually more difficult. Therefore, it is vital to include talkative activities that develop the ability in the conversation like round tables, which main objective is not the perfection in speaking, but fluency.

Next we will point out the reasons why round tables should be used in English teaching.

a) The use of round tables reduces the fear to speak

We all have sometimes experienced fear before the challenge of having to speak in a formal way in front of big groups. Participating in round tables can help reduce fears without foundation. In round tables all the students are free to express their personal opinions, and to do this, they do not need to have memorized anything.

Watching others' participation can also motivate students to speak. Observing their partners participate without being afraid of making mistakes or being criticized, can be the push they need to take courage and speak. The more they participate, the less nervous they will feel, since they will gain self confidence. This produces a positive effect because the security and trust they feel, will make them think their contributions are valuable and needed.

Using oral presentations from these recommendations can reduce anxiety. Students will have fewer reasons to feel nervous and anxious; and they will surely obtain good results if they are very prepared.



b) Team work promotes communication

Just as it happens in real life situations where people can share knowledge and ideas that help them solve problems, a round table is a good opportunity for students to experience community work or team work. Working as a whole, contributes to students sharing significant ideas and to “involve learners in different types of extended discourse. It provides an arena for informal spontaneous interaction” (Willis and Willis 136). By taking each and every individual contribution students make, the final product will come out as one. That is to say the final result will be based on all the contributions of students have made.

By means of round tables, students can not only learn a topic, but how to get along with their classmates. Team work promotes a deeper communication in order to come up with a final decision or resolution.

This does not mean that teachers should play a passive role. Just the opposite, they can explain to students what they are expected to do and not to do. In this way teachers become mediators that supervise or guide students' progress.

c) Participating in round tables increases students' motivation

When talking about real topics and trying to solve problems, students feel that their work is useful because they have defined objectives, and because in a certain way it contributes to find solutions for authentic situations that are of interest of all students.



In difference from the mechanical classes which aim is to improve grammatical concepts, round tables require the active participation of students, where they become the main characters of the class. Round tables give the chance to each student feel able to talk despite of their possible speaking limitations. This way when they see their oral abilities are improving, they will feel strongly motivated. Once this confidence is gained, students will be more self-assured when expressing their own points of view. As a result, round tables makes teaching English more productive and satisfying, thereby freeing teachers from “impulsive and routine behavior” (Farrell 20).

1.3.4 LEARNING LIMITATIONS

For their great contribution to stimulate communicative competence, we have stood out the practical value of the use of round tables in English teaching. However, as everything, round tables have some disadvantages. Now we will discuss two learning limitations.

a) Noise

As the main objective of round tables is to stimulate communicative competence, it is logical that noise takes at the time of speaking. However, this noise should be moderated, that is to say, one that does not block the understanding of what is being said in the round table.

It can be the case that at the beginning of a round table, students feel eager to participate and speak all at the same time, and in turn this causes noise and some disorder. Most teachers do not like to see that their class has



become a chaos because of the noise. But it is important to mention that the noise caused in a round table is positive, a noise that can be “good noise”.

We say that it is a “good noise” because this means that the students are using the target language and they are immersed in the learning process. What teachers can do to not let the noise become a problem is to tell students that they do not need to shout to be heard. We can say it is a matter of giving clear guidelines before starting a round table; this will help to keep the noise at a moderate level.

b) Difficulties controlling the class

One of the reasons why round tables might not be very used in class is, in fact, because many teachers may believe that they will not be able to have the class under control. They might be afraid this can cause misbehavior and indiscipline on behalf of the students. Many may even think that students will not take these classes seriously but rather, they will take advantage of this time to make other activities or talk with their classmates without paying any attention to what is being spoken in the round table.

Therefore, it is important to remember that, although students have the opportunity to express their ideas freely, the teacher continues being the one that directs the class. That is why it is necessary that teachers make sure students are aware of this, and that they demonstrate the deserved respect just as they would have done in a class where the teacher is the one that speaks and it is in front of the class.



To avoid losing control of the class, it is of vital importance to give clear instructions before beginning the round table. Letting students know what they have to do and how they have to do it, will contribute to the order and right flow of the class.

We do not recommend having students taking turns to speak or that they give their comment in alphabetical order. If students know exactly the moment when they should speak, they will not pay attention to the previous or following comments. On the other hand, if they are said /told the order in which they can speak is shadowy, this will make them be attentive to what their partners said or will say to be able to give their comments.

Likewise, we believe convenient that teachers' role in the classroom continues being indispensable, still when the main character of the class is not him/her, but students. In this type of oral presentations as round tables, teachers will have the obligation to move around the classroom with the purpose of clarifying doubts or monitor what students are doing. If the class is carried out in this way, there is no reason to lose control

In view of the fact that at the moment, the didactic practice in most of English classrooms is unidirectional, that is to say, teachers to the group of students, we believed pertinent, in this chapter, to analyze the oral presentations shortly with the purpose of reinforcing the oral production of the students.

In this focus, the objective of the teaching-learning process is the communication among the participants. The fact of opting for oral presentations does not suppose that they will be always used as methodological strategies,



but rather these must be the mean by which to adapt to the contents that are worked in each moment.

CHAPTER 2.

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION: CURRENT SITUATION OF THE “UNE” HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR STUDENTS

During our teaching experience we have found that most English students are eager to speak; however, when trying, among other things, they feel intimidated. If they do not know a certain word, they tend to use their native language; or they stop speaking; or they refused to continue participating.

In those classes where English is spoken, the time of speaking of the students is unequal, student(s) that know(s) English is/are the one(s) that mainly participate, while the one(s) that do/does not know remain quiet. On the other hand, it is hard to believe, but some English teachers prefer to give their English classes in Spanish because they think students are not going to be able to understand what they are saying. They use English only with advanced level students not with basic level students.

In the case of the senior students from Unidad Educativa “UNE” high school, where we are going to apply a lesson plan that includes interactive oral



activities, the situation is a bit similar. The English teacher, licenciada Fanny Gonzalez, at the moment works with 21 students who have an intermediate level of English. She has been working in this high school for fifteen years and has taught English in all the different levels, from freshmen students until senior students.

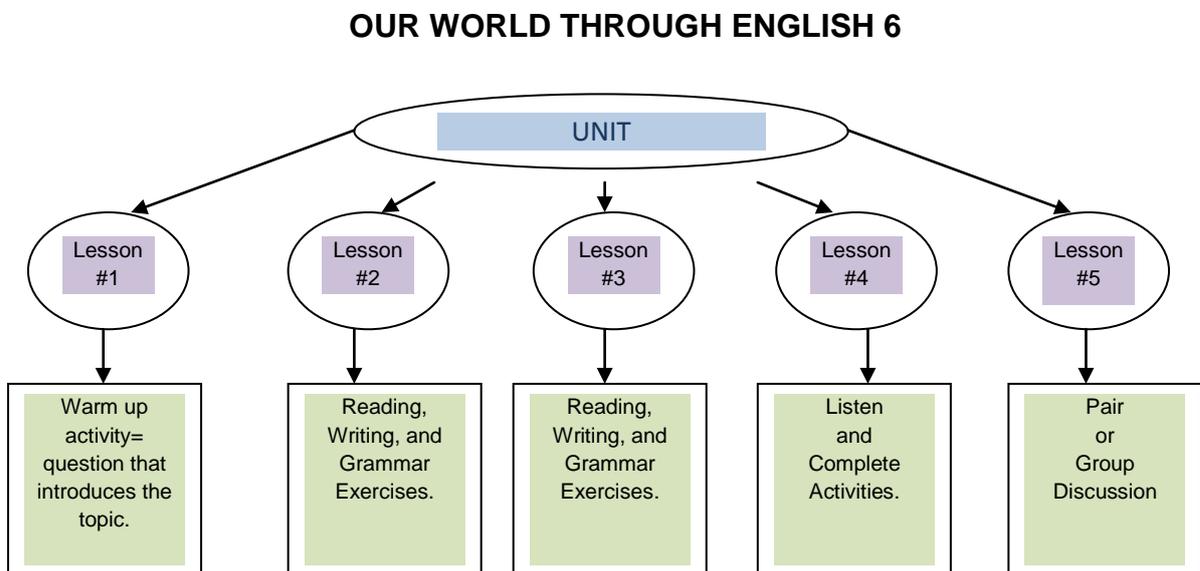
The book students are using at the moment is “Our World through English 6” which includes two CD’s. This book has two main sections: *Core Units* and *Extension Units*. The fifteen *core units* are the main units the students and the teacher analyze in class. The fifteen *extension units* are the units that, according to the OWTE, are good to consolidate the work of each unit and they are designed for the individual study either at home or in class, if time and students’ progress allow it.

The book itself is not as bad as people may think. In fact, as stated in the introduction, the main objective of this book is to have a solid foundation in the use of English. The methodology of the “UNE” high school has been designed to develop of speaking abilities and autonomous learning.

The units exposed in this book point out the practice of the four language skills. Most of the topics this book uses are based on our Ecuadorian real life situation. Each unit is divided into five lessons. The first lesson starts with a warm up activity which is usually an opinion question that introduces the topic of that unit. The second and third lesson, usually have reading, writing, and grammar exercises. The fourth lesson is focused on listen/complete activities. The fifth lesson centers its attention to pair or group discussion. Anybody who takes a look at the way activities are organized may agree that studying and



using this book prepares students in the handling of English as a foreign language. The following diagram will help understand better the way the units of the book “Our World Through English” BOOK: 6, are organized.



So, what is the point of using extra oral activities? As stated in the first chapter, there is a need for students to acquire communicative competence. We agree with the fact that students need to learn how to read or write; vocabulary; or grammar. But we would like to emphasize on the importance of being able to hold a conversation in English without major difficulties. Thus, we recommend using extra speaking activities such as debates or round tables; with this in mind, we do not mean teachers have to put aside the book or any other material



they use to teach English, but rather to include them, as much as possible, with the activities to be used along the year.

In this chapter we will propose a lesson plan that includes oral presentation activities to promote class conversation. But first, we will analyze what a lesson plan is; how we recommend to elaborate a lesson plan; and finally, we will propose a lesson plan that will be applied to the senior students from “UNE” high school to develop their speaking skills,

2.2 LESSON PLAN

2.2.1 CONCEPT AND BROAD OUTLINES

According to Linda Jensen, “a good teacher has a plan before a lesson. This lesson plan can be as simple as a mental list, or as complicated as a detailed typed document”. With this in mind, we can say that a lesson plan can be informal, that means it will be only used by the teacher who made it; or a lesson plan can be formal, that is, when it has to be written or delivered to a supervisor. In either case, a lesson plan is a very useful tool that guides the teaching- learning process. We say it is a guide because a lesson plan tells the teacher about the students, objective, contents, methodological strategies, resources, evaluation, and any other aspect he/she has to take into consideration when elaborating a lesson plan. So, a model of the lesson plan we recommend to follow would look like this. Of course it is not a fixed model; teachers can modify it according to their circumstances (page # 35 shows the complete lesson plan).



Lesson Plan				
School: Level: Subject: Topic of the unit: Function:				
SKILLS	CONTENTS	METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES	RESOURCES	EVALUATION

At the beginning of a lesson, it is important for teachers to get involved and familiarized with students and to make each class unique and special for pupils to feel motivated. In our opinion, we consider a good technique to introduce a new topic by relating it to students' prior background knowledge or life.

Before applying a lesson plan, we recommend to take into account these three important aspects:

- What to teach
- In what order, and
- How long

As we said before, a lesson plan is like a map that guides teachers in knowing what they want to do next. It is also a registration of what teachers did in a former class.



When it comes to evaluation, a lesson plan helps planning evaluation measures such as tests, partial exams, and final exams. It is also helpful when unexpected inconveniences arise and teachers cannot come to class. The substitute teacher will be able to continue the class without a problem. Thus, without a lesson plan, the substitute teacher will feel lost and will have to appeal the students to ask them what their last class was about, and that is not very professional.

Students come to class expecting their teacher to come prepared, and not to improvise or let students do what they want for the sake of not having prepared previously. A lesson plan is part of being prepared and organized, and teachers are aware of that. Teachers who love their profession should make good use of even the last minute of class to give students the maximum.

A lesson plan does not necessarily have to be rigid but changeable. It is not a recipe that has to be followed step by step. A lesson plan does not dictate but guides teacher in what and how to teach; and it benefits teachers, administrators, substitute teachers, and of course, students. As long as the circumstances allow, a lesson plan can be modified or switched.

There are some key factors we consider should be taken into account when planning a lesson.

- To leave room for debating and generating questions among students.
- To dispose of extra material in the event of having spare time.
- Not to have an authoritative attitude, but being friendly.
- To let students express freely and respectfully



- To enhance participation
- To foster team work
- To promote reciprocal respect
- To be open to change

2.2.2 HOW TO ELABORATE A LESSON PLAN

Most lesson plans begin with a short class and students' description; for example: name of the school, students' level, subject, etc. We think it is very useful to note down students' background. It is also important to mention the date as well as the week and the day the class will be given. The lesson objectives should be included and also the materials or resources to be used. It is a good idea to take notes about any task or homework that was or will be assigned, because such information can be very useful at the beginning of the following lesson. In general, lesson plans begin with review warm-up activities. Once students have warmed up, they are ready for the new lesson.

For inexperienced teachers, we recommend to plan their classes in such way that every minute is counted up before coming into the classroom. It is important to bear in mind the minutes assigned to each activity. But of course, we cannot say that an activity will always take the assigned time. It can be the case that a certain activity that seems simple turns out to be complicated for some students. In those cases, teachers need to make room to explain doubts during or immediately after that activity.



Stealing a march on problems and looking for solutions beforehand, makes possible for experienced and inexperienced teachers to feel sure and comfortable when walking toward the classroom.

The final section of a lesson plan should include comments to either summarize the lesson or assign homework to students. Another way to finish a lesson is checking students' questions in order to have students look for information for the next class. It is also a good idea for teachers to evaluate their lesson plans after the class finished. Analyze students' comments and reactions could help to plan future lesson plans.

We agree with Linda Jensen when she says that there are three things teachers have to take into account when planning a lesson: variety, coherence, and flexibility.

To avoid students getting bored, lesson plans do not have to follow the same established model. Teachers centered or students centered activities should vary from lesson to lesson. There will be days when teachers want students to mostly participate, and days when students are a little quieter in order to receive new information.

When we talk about coherence, we mean connection or flow. Teachers should make sure the way a lesson plan is organized helps students to understand the logic of each activity. The last thing teachers would want is to confuse their students. That is why the activities should be presented in a way that they make sense.

Keeping in mind that teachers are not slaves of a lesson plan and that they do not have to servile follow it, will help them to know when it is time to



change an activity, independently of what the lesson plan says. An unexpected question from any student can turn the class into something different from what was planned. We do not want this idea to be mistaken and think a lesson plan is purposeless. It is but, we want to stand out that knowing what to do in the classroom implies having a lesson plan to follow, and being able to cope with unplanned situations.

Before planning a lesson, teachers should be aware of the objectives they want to pursue, the material they will use, and the activities they will develop during the class. Likewise, they will take into account the students' needs as well as their level, age, and background.

If teachers keep these guidelines in mind, we believe the teaching-learning process should become an unforgettable experience that will benefit both teachers and students.

2.3 LESSON PLAN PROPOSAL

In this chapter we intend to propose a lesson plan that includes oral activities. We will carefully explain how this lesson plan is going to be carried out in class by giving general information about the students we will apply this lesson plan to. We will also explain our main objective, contents, methodological strategies, resources, and evaluation.

For our lesson plan proposal, we have selected unit number six of the book "Our World through English 6"; the title of this unit is "Drug Use and Abuse". It is important to mention that this unit has already been studied in class. This unit is divided into five lessons. As we have already explained that



each unit begins with discussion questions, in the same way the first lesson of unit number six introduces the topic with group discussion in order to get students familiarized with the topic. In the same lesson there is a reading about types of drugs and their effects. Immediately after the reading, students have to complete an information table about that reading. To rehearse vocabulary, there is a matching exercise based on the reading. Here students have to match the words used in the text with their definitions.

In lesson number two, students work in pairs asking questions to each other to see how much they can remember about drugs. The next task of the second lesson is to listen and complete a chart. After that, students brainstorm ideas about how drug addicts' family and friends would feel about them. Finally, to represent their feelings, students have to work in small groups and make up a short story and role play it.

The third lesson shows a diagram which students have to label the parts of the body that are affected when using Ecstasy (a type of drug) by using words from a box. To practice grammar and vocabulary, students complete sentences using the second conditional and the information in the diagram.

Lesson number four talks about Marihuana and the dangers of using it. Students practice writing by pair-brainstorming about the possible effects Marihuana can have on people who use it. After that, they check their ideas by listening to an interview.

Finally, lesson five concludes with group discussion. Students are supposed to list as many ways as they can that might help addicted people change their mind and get help.



As we have seen, the topic of the selected unit and the activities may be relevant to students. But still we insist on the idea to include more communicative activities in the classroom. Now we are going to explain carefully about our lesson plan proposal. Our lesson plan proposal would look like this.

Lesson Plan				
School: Unidad Educativa “UNE” High School				
Level: 6 th				
Subject: English				
Topic of the unit: Drug Use and Abuse				
Function: Express ideas and opinions, and make suggestions and give advice.				

SKILLS	CONTENTS	METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES	RESOURCES	EVALUATION
Speaking:	Drugs:	-Round table	-Pictures of	-The



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Describing the consequences of using drugs -Making suggestions and giving advice -Sharing information with others 	<p>Heroin, Cocaine, LSD, Solvents and glue, Ecstasy, Marihuana, etc.</p> <p>Modal Verbs: Should Shouldn't Must Mustn't Could Couldn't Would Wouldn't</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Brainstorming: What students know about drugs -Develop students' knowledge by listening to a short story -Showing pictures of different types of drugs. Describing the consequences of using them -Exchange Information. Students express their opinions and make suggestions by using modal verbs - Making a suggestion Box. Students have to write down one advice using either modal verb. 	<p>different types of drugs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -pencils -Board -Markers -Tape recording, short story -loose paper 	<p>evaluation process is carried out during the round table.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students are evaluated during their participation.
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This lesson plan will be carried out in two classes, which means two academic hours (40 minutes each hour). The oral activity we will use in this lesson plan is a round table. In this case the purpose of using a round table is not as a review of the culminated unit or as a final exam, but to enhance communicative competence.

As students are already familiarized with the contents of this unit, the topic of the round table will not be a surprise for them. Before the round table takes place, we will provide the students with clear instructions about what will be done during the class. Likewise, we will arrange the students' desks in a u-



shape, so everybody can look at and listen to each other. For this round table we will use visual aids like pictures of the different types of drugs and pictures of the possible effects drugs can have on our body, family, and friends.

We will begin our class with a warm up activity, which in our case is a brainstorming activity. The main idea of their comments will be written on the board. With this activity we intend to make the students remember what they studied or know about drugs. We will use simple questions such as:

- Have you ever heard about drugs?
- What do you know about drugs?
- Do you know anybody who uses or used drugs?
- Have you ever seen anyone using it?
- What do they look like?

During this activity they can also share experiences or personal information. It is not about making the students feel stressed and nervous because they have to say something by heart, but to make them feel comfortable because they are free to express their way of thinking.

In this activity the teacher will be in front of the class. Of course this activity will be carried out in a way that foments order and organization. To achieve this, the students will have to raise their hands and wait to be pointed out. Likewise, they will have to listen to and pay attention to their partners' comments with the purpose of not repeating them.



After the students have brainstormed, we will play a short tape recording to recall their knowledge. This tape recording tells a short story about a young boy who started using drugs and the tragic effects it had on himself and his family. By listening to this recording, students might feel part of it because of the music, voices, and sounds it has. In the same way the vocabulary used in this recording is not sophisticated but easy and familiar for the students. This story is short because we do not want the students to get distracted or bored; instead, it will be used with the idea of motivating the students. We say it can motivate the students because it can be the case that while they are listening to the story, new ideas may come to their minds. While the students listen, the teacher will be walking around to monitor the students.

After listening to this story, they can give their comments or opinions. At this time, the teachers can exploit the students' oral production to the fullest. The teacher can ask the students how they felt when listening to the story; or if this situation is familiar to them; or what the story is trying to tell us. With this kind of questions, the students will be exposure to use the language in real life situations. We will also recall the sounds that the students could have heard from the background. For example, if they hear the cry of a person, perhaps they will say this person is crying because he/she suffers to see a close relative or friend in that situation. Actually, this reflection moment will open the opportunity for the students to come into contact with the language.

Now, based on the visual aids or pictures that will be posted on the classroom walls, the students will describe the consequences of using drugs.



When describing the consequences, the students unconsciously will use modal verbs and perhaps they will say something like “using drugs could cause.....” As we said in the first chapter, that visual aids can motivate students to participate. In this case, we expect these visual aids liven up the students to speak. The pictures will show not only the physical effects using drugs can produce, but also how it affects emotionally to the consumer and his/her family. The images presented on the pictures can arise their interest. We will ask the students to come up possible consequences of using drugs by asking questions such as:

- What effects do you think using drugs can have?
- How does it affect your body?
- Do you think your family will suffer if you use drugs?
- How does consuming drugs affect you in school?
- Do you think it will affect your friends?

By asking this type of questions, we feel we can help quiet or shy students to pluck up their courage to speak.

Then the students will be asked to make suggestion and give advice. It is important to say that every comment the students will make will neither be judged nor criticized. We as teachers and the students will have to respect and consider as valuable the other’s opinions. The students will have the opportunity to exchange information with their classmates and suggest ways to help people



in that situation. During this activity the teacher will also ask questions to foster participation. We will formulate questions such as:

- What would you do if a member of your family was using drugs?
- What would you do if a friend of yours is a drug addicted?
- What should parents do to prevent their children using drugs?
- What must the authorities do about it?
- How can you help a consumer change his/her mind and get help?
- Where would you recommend these people to go to get help?

After having discussed the possible solutions to this problem, the students will come up with a/some final resolution(s) by being critical and by analyzing what is/are the best option(s). Students will write down this/these resolution(s) on a poster. This poster will be stuck on the wall; and it can be left there for the use of future classes.

Finally, the students will make a suggestion box which will have a sign "SAY NOT TO DRUGS". For this activity we will hand out pencils and sheets of paper to the students. They will be asked to write down their comments and suggestions in the piece of paper and then put it in the suggestion box. Since this box will be left in the classroom, it can be checked periodically for new comments.

The evaluation process will be carried out during the round table takes place. To evaluate the students we will take into account their behavior, participation, attention, attitude, cooperation, and mainly how students make



use of the language. Undoubtedly, we want the students to improve their oral communicative competence, but that does not mean we expect perfection from the students. Our intention is not to focus on the mistakes they might make or to keep track of their failures. Our objective is to get the students use the language.

It is also necessary to emphasize that this evaluation process will not be only focused on the students' performance but also on the effectiveness the application of this lesson plan had. We will realize if this lesson plan proposal worked or not by observing the students' interest and participation. To check the effectiveness of this lesson plan we will analyze if the students felt comfortable with the way the class was carried out, if they liked the topic, if they were bored, if it was very difficult for them to speak, if they understood what they had to do, if they were able to mainly use English, if there were discipline problems, if the teacher could control the class, among others. By answering these questions, we want to see how advisable or not, is using these kind of activities in the classroom.

With this lesson plan, our objective is to contribute the students learn communicative competence. So at the end of the application of this lesson plan, we will be able to see if the current situation of the students improves; or if, on the other hand, it gets worse.



CHAPTER 3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 RESULTS

According to the results of the lesson plan application, we could prove that through the use of oral interactive activities, the communicative competence of the senior students from "UNE" high school improved. This was reflected in the following aspects:

- The students were no longer afraid to speak. They were willing to participate; even the shy students put heart into giving their opinion.
- The lack of vocabulary was not a big obstacle, and from this, we could pick a very positive aspect. When the students did not know a certain word, they used mimes to make themselves understood. This showed us their eagerness to participate.
- The use of oral activities allowed the students feel more confident with their speaking. At the end of the class, we could see they evaluated their performance themselves, and most of them were really happy to see their fluency improved.
- The time used for this lesson plan application was just the necessary for achieving their participation as well as their attention. The round table neither took too long for the students to get bored nor too short to leave the students confused because of the rushed activities.
- At the end of the class, the students told us they really enjoyed the class. They also told us that it was the first time they had English



classes where they had to speak only English; and that they would like to have this kind of classes more often.

- The use of visual aids turned out to be very useful. They helped the students to come up with new ideas. While looking at the pictures, one student said “besides affecting you physically, using drugs affects your integrity and reputation, because being under the drugs’ effects can make you behave inappropriately”
- The students hardly appealed to their mother tongue when participating in the activities. They tried very hard to speak in English all the time. To express their ideas they used words they already knew.
- Students were mentally relaxed, open to the learning experience. Contrary to feeling tense because of speaking, the students felt involved with the language. They said the class was like having a conversation with a good friend.

3.2 CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, we can say that much of our time as language teachers is taken up teaching particular features of phonology, structure such as grammar. But when our students have learnt the structures, we have a problem of getting them to use their knowledge for actual and purposeful verbal communication. For that reason, we recommend that some sort of dynamic and meaningful oral practice should be included in English lessons right from the beginning, and it would be much better if they are included in, at very early stages.



Getting students to speak, to use the language they are learning, is of vital importance. Students are the ones who need the practice, in other words, not teachers. In general terms, oral presentations give room to maximize students' talking time. Of course, the oral activities teachers decide to use in the classroom should provoke students' interest and involvement in the subject. The topic, content, dynamic of the activities, and the teachers' attitude and enthusiasm may highly motivate students. The most important thing, however, is for teachers to be sensitive to students' needs and interests, and do something regarding this issue.

According to the obtained results, and in order to improve students' communicative competence, the oral activities teachers implement in the classroom should take into account the following aspects:

- Foster students' communicative competence
- Prepare students to communicate in real-life situations
- Provoke students' interest and involvement in the subject
- Be enjoyable and fun
- Use material that catches students' attention
- Motivate students to participate and take part in class
- Generate a relaxed atmosphere
- Help students to develop self-confidence



3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the main findings from the lesson plan application and after concluding, the recommendations to improve communicative competence of the senior students from “UNE” high school are the following:

- To create a comfortable atmosphere is very important. Teachers are the main responsible for creating this environment; however, students' attitude is also important. We recommend to work keeping in mind that it is easier to learn under a pleasant atmosphere.
- To recognize that students of the same level have different strengths and personalities. Teachers should not expect everybody to progress at the same pace.
- To let students know that learning a foreign language demands time, effort, and practice in order to reach their goals.
- To introduce alternative activities from time to time: games, pair work, group work, problem solving.
- To select activities that help students to improve their knowledge, skills and performance.
- To make the classroom turn into a dynamic place. The lessons should be lively, varied and involving experience.
- To encourage students be in contact with the language by watching TV, listening to the radio, or reading a book or magazine, or surfing the net in order to achieve communicative competence
- To be flexible to what happens in class, even while attempting to follow a prearranged plan.



- To be realistic about difficulties, and to avoid undermining their confidence by remarking their failures all the time.
- To elicit rather than instructing. That means that there are many opportunities in a lesson for eliciting knowledge and information from students rather than simply telling them it. In that way, teachers will provide students with more opportunities to speak.

For all that has been exposed, we can conclude that the use of oral presentations, such as debates and round tables, helps students improve their communicative competence. On the other hand, teachers should take into account how students respond to the activities used in class in order to introduce alternative activities that contribute to a useful and effective learning.



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ANNEX



APPENDIX 1

Suggested topics to use in debates and round tables:

DEBATES:

- *How was the universe created?
- *what is most important: love or money
- *women are equal to men
- *going to college or getting a job
- *internet and watching TV is prejudicial
- *to abort or not to abort
- *cool weather is better than hot weather
- *marriage or cohabit
- *to date or not to date at an early age

ROUND TABLES:

- *keeping healthy
- *what can we do to save the planet?
- *teen parenthood
- *pregnancy and abortion
- *how to prevent car accidents
- *how to help alcoholic teens
- *how to improve our study habits
- *recommendations to have safe and fun vacations



APPENDIX 2

Visual aids used during the lesson plan application.



HEROIN



COCAINE



LSD



