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Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

The Effects of Ludic Activities as a Motivational Strategy to Increase and Use English Vocabulary in Sixth Level Learners at "Asunción" Elementary School

Tesis previa a la obtención del grado de: Magíster en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

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Resumen

El principal objetivo de este estudio fue determinar la influencia de la aplicación de actividades lúdicas en los niveles de motivación y adquisición de vocabulario en los estudiantes de Sexto Año de Educación Básica de la Escuela "La Asunción". Un diagnóstico fue previamente detallado a través de un análisis de métodos mixtos el cual hizo posible determinar que lo que los profesores y estudiantes quieren para sus clases de inglés no es lo que sucede en realidad. Además, los resultados cuantitativos de la prueba de vocabulario previa a la intervención nos permitieron determinar una necesidad de refuerzo en el mismo para que los estudiantes aprendan significativamente, lo cual les servirá para aprendizajes posteriores y resolver problemas en el futuro. Una intervención de 32 horas se llevó a cabo en las clases de inglés. El propósito central fue incluir actividades lúdicas como parte principal de la clase y no sólo como actividad previa o extra usada cuando hay un tiempo libre dentro de la clase. Esto se hizo para determinar si la aplicación de las actividades lúdicas dentro de las clases de inglés tiene una influencia positiva en los niveles de motivación y adquisición de vocabulario de los estudiantes. El análisis posterior a la intervención permitió decir que estos niveles presentaron un cambio favorable debido a que se vio mejoras en uso de vocabulario y la percepción misma de los estudiantes mostró ideas positivas acerca del uso de las actividades lúdicas.

*Palabras Clave***:** motivación, actividades lúdicas, aprendizaje significativo.

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to determine how ludic activities impact students' levels of motivation and vocabulary acquisition. A situational diagnosis was detailed through a mixed methods analysis where it was possible to see that what teachers and students want their classes to be like is not what happens in reality. Additionally, the quantitative results of the vocabulary pre-test let us determine the necessity of reinforcement in vocabulary for students to learn meaningfully, which is meant to be useful for further learning and solving future problems. A 32-hour intervention took place within the English class. The central purpose was to include ludic activities as a main part of the class, not only as a warm-up or an extra activity used whenever there is some time left. This was done in order to determine whether or not the application of ludic activities within the English classes has a positive influence in the students' motivation levels and vocabulary acquisition. The post-intervention analysis allowed us to say that students' vocabulary learning and motivation levels presented favorable changes since vocabulary results had been improved and students' perceptions of themselves and their English classes presented positive ideas about the use of ludic activities.

Key words: motivation, ludic activities, meaningful learning.

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents who have been there for me throughout this Master's program. Their dedication and supporting words have given me the strength I have needed in moments of discouragement and despair. To my dear husband, whose patience has allowed me to achieve many goals; to my son Julián, whose time I have stolen, though he has always been so patient and willing to help his mom; to my little angel Santiago, who has allowed his mommy to work on her thesis as she waits for him to come into her life.

DIANA

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Introduction

Asunción School is a well-known private institution whose project is ruled by the curricular references and norms given by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education. The average number of students per class is forty and the hours designated per week to impart English decreased from 5 to 4. An annual planning has to be covered in order to accomplish the subject's objectives; however, this does not really ensure that students are acquiring the meaningful learning capable of being used by students.

The area of this research work relates to the use of ludic activities within the English classes in order to see their influence on students' motivation and vocabulary acquisition levels.

The second chapter establishes the basis upon which this study is supported in order to determine the motivation and vocabulary acquisition levels before and after the application of ludic strategies as a main part of the English classes. David Ausubel's Meaningful Learning Theory determines the relationship that must exist between the previous knowledge and the new one. Dörnyei considers motivation as one of the main facts that defines a second language acquisition. This author developed a list of the components of motivation divided into three main dimensions: the language, the learner, and the learning situation levels. Some authors, such as Cao (2014) and Mubaslat (2012) consider ludic activities as an effective elicitation technique where students feel interested and motivated to participate and take part in the class.

In the third chapter both qualitative and quantitative methods allowed us to diagnose the current situation within the class in terms of motivation and vocabulary levels. The results of

these analyses became the starting point to design and apply ludic activities as a 32-hour intervention, which is described in the fourth chapter.

The fifth chapter evaluates the proposal by analyzing the results after the intervention took place. It led us to determine and describe a positive influence of ludic activities on students' motivation and vocabulary acquisition levels.

The sixth chapter includes conclusions and recommendations for further research on this topic.

Finally, the appendix section includes samples of the material used in this research.

CHAPTER I

THE STUDY

1.1. Background and Rationale

Is it possible to insure that our students are motivated enough to put into practice what they have learned in class? Some studies consider that meaningful learning is based on more than what teachers transmit; it promotes the construction of knowledge from learners' experiences, feelings and exchanges with other learners (Sharan, 2015). The meaningful learning theory developed by David Ausubel indicates that significant learning depends on the previous cognitive structure which is related to the new information. So, what can teachers do in order to engage their students and make them part of their own learning in an active way? For example, Cao (2014) states that students feel more interested, engaged, and excited to participate in class when they play games, which is an effective elicitation technique used by teachers.

Ten-year old students are always willing to play games, but we as teachers sometimes focus our classes on fulfilling the annual planning by applying other techniques not interesting enough for the students. This lack of motivation from the teachers ends up in a short-term vocabulary acquisition by the students. As result, they are less likely to use this knowledge to construct new learning afterwards. Da Silva (2004) emphasizes the contribution of ludic activities to facilitate a child's personality progress and the improvement of his / her ethical, psychological and intellectual functions. This author concludes that ludic activities, such as: songs, projects, role-plays, and games, increase students' motivation to pursue and fulfill an objective because they are more interested in participating within the class. Mubaslat (2012) pointed out the

effectiveness of using games for increasing students' attention and for language acquisition. He asserts that effective and interactive experiences in the class are needed to motivate and actively engage our students in their learning process. However, when thinking about games in the class we tend to presume it is a waste of time but, is it so? Foreign language educators need to seek alternatives to traditional instruction. Over the years, there have been many studies about the influence of motivation in language learning. Dörnyei (1998) asserts that if there is not enough motivation, it is not possible for a person to achieve long-term goals. He considers motivation as one of the most remarkable features that defines a second language acquisition. Huyen et al. (2003) concluded that games help students to learn vocabulary when they take place in an enjoyable surrounding after the application of games in their own classes. They also point out that a new way of teaching vocabulary is expected by students.

Most of the authors explain the benefits of playing games within the class. Furthermore, their investigations detail the importance of these activities. However, it has been possible to see that the use of these games is aimed at filling time, rewards for finishing work, or to introduce a lesson. Foreign or Ecuadorian studies where games are used as legitimate tools to work in class and its importance as a teaching strategy were not found.

This proposal focuses on the practice of content through ludic activities to investigate if there is an increase in the students' vocabulary acquisition whenever the teacher uses them.

1.2. Problem Statement

EFL students may lack motivation to remember vocabulary after a content unit is over. Many studies about the influence of motivation for language acquisition have been found. According to Dörnyei (2005), motivation is crucial in defining the achievement or not of any learning

situation. "99 per cent of language learners who really want to learn a foreign language (i.e. who are really motivated) will be able to master a reasonable working knowledge of it as a minimum, regardless of their language aptitude" (Dörnyei, 2005, p.11).

This author is aware of the teachers' reality where they are supposed to teach the curriculum instead of motivating students. As well as the fact often ignored that learning the curriculum cannot happen without motivation.

When a person learns a second language, internalization of vocabulary and grammar structures is required so he or she will use them somehow in the future for farther learning Dörnyei (2005). With young children, motivation to learn may be increased through physical activities which may be involved in ludic activities.

In Asuncion school, the number of hours for teaching English has decreased from 5 to 4. This time pressure causes teachers to rush their teaching strategies in order to accomplish a plan and to have written evidences from their classes not taking into account the learning results of their students. In this case, the application of practical and efficient ludic activities such as songs, projects, role-plays, and games, could get students to learn the target language meaningfully since they will be involved in their own learning. These activities will motivate and challenge the students to use what they have learned in order to solve problems or win the games. This may assure their comprehension and learning of vocabulary in a more competent way.

The purpose of this study is to determine if a variety of ludic activities as a legitimate tool to work in class can increase the motivation of children to retain English vocabulary by using a mixed methods design with both qualitative and quantitative data.

1.3. Research Questions

- To what degree do ludic activities increase students' motivation level?

- To what degree do ludic activities help students to improve their productive English vocabulary learning?

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. General Objective

To determine the effectiveness of ludic activities as a strategy to improve English vocabulary acquisition through motivation

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

- To determine the motivation and vocabulary level of students.

- To apply ludic activities to increase English vocabulary.

- To compare the motivation level after the application of ludic activities.

- To compare the vocabulary level after the application of ludic strategies.

1.5. Research Methodology

This proposal concurs with the characteristics of an embedded mixed method study (Creswell, 2013). It seeks to determine if the application of ludic activities in the class positively influences vocabulary learning through motivation. Motivation and vocabulary acquisition are embedded within a major design of application of ludic activities.

This is a descriptive and correlational research study. The descriptive level is based on the contents and the ludic activities that will be applied to a better vocabulary acquisition. The purpose of the correlational level consists in defining a relationship among the application of ludic activities and the motivation and vocabulary level of the students.

Asunción Primary School and High School have been serving the community of Cuenca since 1963. Throughout this time it has become one of the most relevant educational centers in the city and in the country thanks to the implementation of the pedagogical and methodological strategies it has adopted. It is a private institution belonging to the University of Azuay. There are 2,890 students total and its institutional project is ruled by the curricular law and norms given by the Ministry of Education.

As mentioned previously, by following the ministry's suggestions for the curricular distribution of hours, the subject of English would have 4 hours a week of class, however, one of these hours was meant to be covered under the subject of physical education on the playground. This curricular distribution occurred during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. The latter being the one where this investigation took place.

This study corresponds to a participatory action research with the role of the teacher as a researcher. According to Burns (2009) an action research is meant to explore the teacher's own setting in order to determine an actual situation which could be done better, or may present difficulties, and develop alternatives to this process. Students were told that they would be part of their teacher's thesis development for acquiring her Master's degree and that their classes would be different during a period of time since more ludic activities would be used. They did

not know that they would be observed through their reactions or answers in depth. This way of procedure intended to ensure that students not to be aware of their own behavior so the teacher/researcher would get to see their actions in a natural way.

From two hundred and eleven children of sixth level, the convenience sample consists of the forty-two students of Sixth Year of Basic Education "A". This group was chosen because it had an equal number of boys and girls and its four hours of English were divided into four different days.

The researcher first assessed the motivation level of the students by collecting and analyzing qualitative data. In order to do this, a survey with open-ended questions was applied to each student. At the same time, from the very beginning, the researcher kept a journal with the corresponding perceptions of the motivational level of the students and the teacher as well as the application of each ludic activity. At the same time, a questionnaire was asked to the English teachers of the school in order to find out the teachers' personal motivation level and the students' motivation according to their perception. The application of this questionnaire to the mentioned teachers is because the students have had six different teachers along their school years and therefore their English knowledge up to date has depended on different teaching styles and motivation perspectives of each teacher.

The qualitative data was complemented by collecting and analyzing quantitative data which is the vocabulary level of the students. Vocabulary patterns were coded and analyzed as speech units. In order to obtain this information, a pilot pre-test was to be applied to another class in order to

validate the mentioned instrument. After the instrument was validated, it was applied to the convenience sample.

The analyses of these two kinds of information were the starting point to apply the corresponding intervention which was the application of ludic activities to the selected group.

The intervention lasted thirty-two hours within two months. It consisted on changing the methodology for teaching classes and practicing structures through the application of ludic activities. Each activity had a different structure and different instructions to be followed by the students. The students worked on their own, in pairs, groups of three or four, depending on the activity that was applied.

It is important to state that each of the ludic activities administered during the intervention were chosen on the basis of their utility with large groups just as the one that is going to be studied. They demand students' participation and have been previously utilized within the English classes.

After the intervention, a vocabulary post-test was applied to the students as well as a questionnaire to measure their motivation level. These results were compared to the previous ones in order to make the corresponding conclusions.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL CONCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH TEACHING

2.1. Literature Review

According to some authors, whenever students participate in ludic activities they feel more interested, engaged, and excited to participate in class. This is what makes these activities an effective elicitation technique that could be used by teachers to increase students' attention and motivation to reach the objective of language acquisition. However, when thinking about games in the class we tend to presume it is a waste of time. Foreign language educators need to seek alternatives to traditional instruction. Ludic activities may offer a good addition to be implemented in class. In order to find specific information corresponding to this knowledge area, trustful sources for finding academic articles and authors were used, such as *Google Scholar, Microsoft Academic Search, ERIC*, *Scielo*, among others. Many studies have been found, however, several facts were considered in order to use those articles or not in this study. Particulars as the publication year, whether they worked with children or not, or if the study belonged to the English area were the selecting points for including them or not in this thesis. However, some authors were considered to be important to be mentioned given their significant conceptions along time in education and theories.

Ushioda states that whenever a person is motivated, there is a change in his/her attitude towards learning, as cited in Lasagabaster *et al.* (2014). This is reflected in some important aspects such as: a vision of what the person wants, the person's willingness to pursue a goal, and

the person's determination to struggle for achieving this goal. Motivation levels can help us understand why a person learns or does not want to learn a second language.

Students' previous experiences define their motivational levels. These experiences can include participating in a lesson, fulfilling a task, or receiving corrective feedback from their teacher. These experiences may have been positive or negative and their mixture and assimilation is the one that promotes and defines if the learner is motivated or not. This is called the L2 Learning Experience.

Huyen and Nga (2003) concluded that games help students to learn vocabulary when they take place in an enjoyable surrounding. They also point out that a new way of teaching vocabulary is expected by students. Dörnyei (2005) states that language learning achievement is given by the levels of motivation a person has. It does not matter the person's aptitude for learning languages, what really counts is his/her willingness to learn the new language.

When a person learns a second language, internalization of vocabulary and grammar structures is required so he or she will use them in the future for further learning Dörnyei (2005). With young children, the motivation to learn may be increased through physical activities which may be involved in ludic activities.

As a teacher, I am aware of teachers' reality where they are required to impart the curriculum instead of focusing on motivating students. However, learning the curriculum cannot happen without motivation.

As was previously mentioned, Ausubel's meaningful learning theory indicates that significant learning depends on the previous cognitive structure which is related to the new information.

Thus, what can teachers do in order to engage their students and make them part of their own learning in an active way? Cao (2014) states that students feel more interested, engaged, and excited to participate in class when they play games, which is an effective elicitation technique used by teachers. Da Silva (2004) asserts that the contribution of ludic activities to facilitate a child's personal progress and the improvement of his or her ethical, psychological and intellectual functions be emphasized. According to Fisher *et al.* (2011), playful learning is a constructivist approach which is a developmentally appropriate alternative to didactic instruction. This approach may imply free or guided play. In this case, an adult controls and directs the game. It is learner centered, encourages self-esteem and is practical. It can involve fantasy but does not necessarily do so. With guided-play it is possible for teachers to decrease their students' apprehension by giving positive comments about their findings, participation in the game or asking questions to the students. Avedon and Sutton-Smith (1971) point out that a ludic activity is an educational task designed to stimulate fun, laughter, and joy to motivate and involve students in doing things out of the routine. Mubaslat (2012) highlights the effectiveness of using games at the primary stages for language acquisition and the fact that it also increases students' attention. He indicates that effective and interactive experiences in the class are needed to motivate and actively engage our students in their learning process. Da Silva (2004) concludes that ludic activities, such as: songs, projects, role-playing, and games, increase students' motivation to pursue and fulfill an objective because they are more interested in participating within the class. These ludic activities are described below in more detail:

Songs: the use of songs is highly encouraged in English teaching. Music is a very useful, motivating tool to remind a person of any material more easily (Sevik, 2011).

Projects: Students are motivated by a project since they work on things that capture their attention. This develops students' communicative abilities through group work and it requires exchange of information. Two important features of projects are the establishment of learner's autonomy and the rise of self-confidence and independence in the learners (Bas, 2008).

Role–Playing: is playing the role of another person or character. Students are free to invent and create within an inhibitions-free environment. Role-play involves communicative advantages. It can enable the student to construct social skills and brings joy from imaginative play (Liu and Ding, 2009).

Games: Deesri (2002) analyzed the use of games in the ESL and EFL classes and found that it helps students acquire knowledge while they have fun. Richard-Amato postulates that games have pedagogical importance because they motivate, decrease students' stress, and make it possible for students to have real communication, as cited in Deesri (2002). Broussard (2011) states that a ludic strategy or practice involves a natural problem-solving feature that may potentially reveal the natural creative ability of students which is frequently obstructed by more traditional strategies of teaching and learning such as memorization.

The use of games is very convenient in obtaining better results in language learning. Byrne conceptualizes games as "a form of play governed by rules which should be enjoyable and fun" (as cited in Deesri, 2002, p.1). The person who is part of the game uses the target language in order to participate. A game is composed of rules, competition, relaxation, and learning. Deesri thinks that in a game a person is stimulated and encouraged in order to compete against others and try to win the game. She says that "when playing games, students use the new language

more naturally and use a wider variety of cognitive, metacognitive, affective, compensation, and social strategies more in the games than in traditional classroom activities" (Deesri, 2002, p.2).

After analyzing these studies, it can be said that ludic activities have been used for motivating students to learn a second language. Authors are aware of their importance as elicitation techniques, for capturing students' attention at the beginning of a class, or for using them in the end of the class as time fillers; however, it has not been found any studies where these activities have been used within an English class for learning purposes as legitimate tools to work with in class. This study will consider ludic activities within a complete lesson as the main part of the classes to determine if their use brings students benefits in learning a second language meaningfully or not.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

A teacher's main objective should be to have his/her students practice and use in real life situations what they have learned in class. However, teachers' reality consists on many facts that make classes to be imparted in a hurry based on isolated concepts rather than focusing on motivating and integrating students in their own learning process. Teachers need to engage their students and make them part of their own learning in an active way. According to Dörnyei (1998) motivation makes it possible for a person to achieve long-term goals. In this case, motivation is considered to be one of the most significant characteristics that determines second language acquisition.

This thesis will be based on formal aspects of theories that will help us describe and analyze the practice of content using ludic activities. It aims to examine whether there is an

increase in the students' vocabulary acquisition and motivation levels when the teacher uses ludic activities in class.

2.2.1. Constructivism

The constructivist approach points out that learning is increased if the person actively establishes the relationship between the material and his/her personal experiences. Knowledge is actively constructed by the person and not passively received from the outside. Brown (2007) asserts that the constructivist approach recommends more participation of students within the classroom so they are actively involved in their own learning process. It asserts that a person is the one who constructs meaning from the very minute he or she is born, so the person is the one who constructs his/her own representation of reality. This means, each person's experiences influence what he or she understands individually. Learning is functional, that is, you learn about something for a reason. Knowledge comes from socializing activities and the student is the protagonist of his/her own process (Coll, 1993). Constructivism is divided into two branches, the cognitive and the social, both of which are described below:

2.2.1.1. Cognitive Constructivism. Jean Piaget is one of the main figures within this branch of the constructivist field. This subdivision puts more effort in understanding the process of learning rather than on what the person learns. Piaget's theory suggests that a person learns something as a direct consequence of his or her personal experiences (William and Burden, 1997). According to Piaget, "learning is a developmental process that involves change, self-generation and construction, each building on prior learning experiences" (Kaufman, 2004, p.304).

2.2.1.2. Social Constructivism. Vigotsky is one of the most important authors in this field. Vigotsky highlights the significance of social interaction and cooperative learning for a person to construct cognitive and emotional descriptions of reality (Brown, 2007). Vigotsky states that "children's thinking and meaning-making is socially constructed and emerges out of their social interactions with their environment" (Kaufman, 2004, p.304).

2.2.2. David Ausubel's meaningful learning

As described in Vásquez (2012), David Ausubel was born in 1918 in New York, United States. He was influenced by Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory, and his theories are very important for educators. David Ausubel published several books on developmental and educational psychology, and he based his work on verbal learning.

Ausubel describes a *cognitive structure* as a set of notions and thoughts that a person has about a certain topic. Previous cognitive structures need to be linked to the incoming new information so students will learn.

Knowledge is a representing and combined structure where all the ideas are related to each other in order. Thus, there are logical directions that the human mind follows in order to organize the information in different categories (Ausubel *et al.*, 1976).

As cited in Vasquez (2012, p.31), "the learning principles given by Ausubel permit us to design metacognitive tools considering the students' organizational cognitive structures. By doing this, students' experiences and previous concepts are being taken into account in the teaching process which is of benefit for their own learning".

There are two important concepts given by Ausubel: rote learning and meaningful learning:

2.2.2.1. Rote Learning

One of Ausubel's (1963) beliefs is that rote learning occurs whenever a person memorizes information in a literal and indiscriminate way. This type of learning happens when there is no connection between the new knowledge and the previous information within the cognitive structures as a result of little or no effort by the learner to see a relationship between these kinds of information. Knowledge does not last in the long-term memory since it is not related to the person's larger cognitive structure and, as result, learning becomes mechanical, easy to forget and may not be useful in future situations.

2.2.2.2. Meaningful learning

Meaningful learning occurs when the person identifies a relationship between two or more concepts, the previous and the new ones (Ausubel *et al*., 1976). This type of learning occurs when information, abilities, ideals and behaviors become part of the cognitive structure. The learnt concepts can be used in different situations and circumstances that may happen in the future of the person increasing their ability to solve problems. Meaningful learning will help students to stimulate their critical thinking as well as to better understand and decipher more aspects of their own reality.

Ausubel *et al.* (1976) consider that the teaching process should be based upon three important characteristics: the achievement of meaningful learning, comprehensive memorization of the classroom content and functionality of learning.

To summarize, it is important to state that rote learning is the connection between the previous information and the new, as simple and arbitrary as it sounds. On the other hand, meaningful learning requires adapting existing knowledge in the light of new knowledge and these become part of the cognitive structure as part of the learning process.

2.2.2.2.1. Types of Meaningful Learning

Ausubel and Sullivan (1983) distinguish three types of meaningful learning: representations, concepts, and statements.

2.2.2.2.1.1. Learning of Representations

Of the three types of learning, this is the most basic one. It happens when the person gives meaning to certain symbols. Ausubel and Sullivan (1983) think that this type of learning happens when the person links a symbol to a reference and comes to have real meaning to the learner. This happens mostly among children. It is important to say that the learner makes these connections in a practical, non-arbitrary manner relating their equivalence with important concepts that already exist in their cognitive structure.

2.2.2.2.1.2. Conceptual Learning

Ausubel and Sullivan (1983) define concepts as items, occasions, circumstances or possessions that have common standard properties and are represented by a symbol or a sign. There are two processes needed to acquire concepts: formation and assimilation. A person learns the features of the concept criteria through direct experience and during several encounters with the concept and its different forms e.g. learning the word "chair" and then its meaning.

2.2.2.2.1.3. Learning of Statements

The learning of statements requires comprehension of articulated ideas within a concept. Several words are combined and related to each other and this relationship becomes a unit referent whose resulting idea produces a new concept that is assimilated within the cognitive structure (Ausubel and Sullivan, 1983).

2.2.2.2.2.   Advantages of the Meaningful Learning

According to Ausubel *et al.*, (1976) the main advantages of meaningful learning are the following:

- New information is easily related to prior knowledge because whenever the cognitive structure is clear, it is simpler for the person to retain information. Hence, it is stored in the long-term memory

- It is based upon the assimilation of the learning events to which the student is exposed. This is what makes it an active type of learning.

- Meaningful learning is personal because it depends on each learner's cognitive structure.

2.2.2.2.3.   Requirements to Achieve Meaningful Learning

Ivie (1998) suggests three important aspects that must be taken into account in order to promote meaningful learning. These features are described as follows:

2.2.2.2.3.1. Coherent Importance of the Material: What the teacher proposes to the students must be significant and possible to be linked by them. Teacher must be aware of his/her students'

previous knowledge which is necessary for further learning. The material needs to provide information in a logical order so students are able to demonstrate what they have learned.

2.2.2.2.3.2. Psychological Significance of the Material: Previous knowledge and important ideas are connected to the new information by the student who is capable of understanding it. This is important to ensure the adaptation of the new knowledge within the learner's cognitive structure.

2.2.2.2.3.3. Positive Attitude of the student: The student must collaborate by having a favorable attitude towards learning. Learner's interest in comprehending new material is very important since there must be an intention to link the new information to the previous.

By analyzing these features it is possible to conclude that no matter how involved the student is in his own learning process, if the material presented to him/her is not meaningful or cannot be appropriately linked to the cognitive structure, it is not possible to achieve a significant learning. Likewise, if the student's attitude is not aiming to understand but to memorize the material, the learning process and the final results will end up being mechanical.

2.2.2.2.4. Contributions of Ausubel's Theory

2.2.2.2.4.1. Expository Teaching

Maheshwari (2013) relates expository teaching to direct instruction. This means that students take notes on what the teacher says in front of the class. Nevertheless, introducing students to facts is not the only feature of expository teaching since information must be introduced in a meaningful manner so students are able to make connections from one concept to another. The teacher gives examples and illustrates the rules of the subject. These examples give contextual meaning and help students distinguish different points of view on the subject.

Expository teaching can be related to rote learning; however, the teacher has to present meaningful and rich material to his/her students so students can acquire knowledge in a significant way.

2.2.2.2.4.1.1. Procedure for Expository Teaching

Maheshwari (2013) details the procedure for expository teaching to happen within a lesson. It consists of having the teacher present the topic and guide his/her students during the lesson. The teacher introduces a rule by using examples and then provides a practice. Students' attention is directed to the key aspects of the subject by using graphics, diagrams, or other representations. In most cases, an introduction and general idea of the topic are delivered so students are prepared for the more specific and detailed information that comes afterwards. This procedure permits learners to understand more advanced explanations and connect them to previous information.

The teacher presents information in a certain order so students are focused and able to use it afterwards. Generally, after all the information is presented to the students, a summary with all the key points will help students remember it (Maheshwari, 2013).

To summarize, expository teaching is very useful for learning concepts and principles. Teachers introduce key aspects in a focused manner that help learners link new information to previous concepts already learned.

2.2.2.2.4.2. Advance Organizers

One of the most important aspects proposed by Ausubel within a teaching process is the use of advance organizers. These tools organize information and they are presented to the learners

before a new topic is introduced so students can link previous knowledge to the new concepts that are about to be taught. Some examples are: pictures, stories titles, a grammar rule, a short video segment, etc. Ausubel stresses the difference between advance organizers and summaries. He believes that the latter only highlights key aspects which are presented as abstract and general to the rest of the topic. Meanwhile, organizers act as a bridge between the new information and what the person already knows (Ivie, 1998).

Maheshwari (2013) asserts that after an advance organizer is presented, a distinction of the new ideas is related to the previous knowledge already presented. The objectives of using advance organizers are:

- To highlight the important parts of the material that is presented to the students.

- To determine the relationships between previous ideas and the incoming information.

- To recap important information that students already know so new concepts are more easily related and acquired.

Teachers must be aware of the importance of having a relationship between the current cognitive structure and the new information that is intended to be taught.

Ausubel *et al.* (1976) classify the advance organizers into two types:

2.2.2.2.4.2.1. Comparative Organizers. Their main objective is to make students remember previous concepts and the differences or similarities they may have with the new information.

2.2.2.2.4.2.2. Explanatory Organizers. Their aim is to offer the learner new information that will be needed in order to comprehend subsequent concepts. They are helpful for students to comprehend new topics, especially when they are difficult, unfamiliar or complex.

The following table was created by Hassard (2003) who separates Ausubel's meaningful learning theory into three phases which are:

Table 1. *Ausubel's Meaningful Learning Theory*

PHASE ONE Advance Organizers	PHASE TWO Presentation of Learning task or material	PHASE THREE Strengthening Cognitive Organization
Clarify aim of the lesson	Make the organization of the new material explicit	Relate new information to advance organizer
Present the lesson	Make logical order of learning material explicit	Promote active reception learning.
Relate organizer to students' prior knowledge	Present material in terms of basic similarities and differences by using examples, and engage students in meaningful learning activities.	

Note: Retrieved from Hassard J. (2003). Concept mapping – Backup of meaningful Learning. Georgia State University.

Whenever a teacher realizes the importance of having students acquire knowledge in a meaningful way, he or she will try to develop new methods and strategies that involve students more in their own learning process. These methods have to be carefully planned so students can

link previous knowledge to new information which is very important for acquiring a second language since every single aspect learned in the past could be used in the future for expressing and communicating ideas. If students acquire knowledge in a significant way, they will be able to use it in different situations which could be used for solving a problem or supporting future learning. Teachers must be aware of the students' needs and try to develop strategies to enable them to understand the new language, not only in theory, but also through practice.

2.2.3. Motivation

Higgins (1987) considers that, for learning issues, we must take into account the two types of possible selves, the *ideal* self and the *ought to be* self. The first one being the future self-image of characteristics a person considers he or she would like to have, for example his/her representation of hopes, aspirations or wishes. On the other hand, the *ought to be self* includes the characteristics a person believes he or she should have. Within this category a representation of someone's sense of personal or social duties, obligations or responsibilities can be found.

Dörnyei (2009) proposes the L2 Motivational Self System based on the possible selves theory. Within his proposal, this author relates the possible selves theory to second language education by considering them to be an important part of the learners' motivational experience. In this case, the *Ideal L2 Self* refers to the Second Language side of a person's *ideal self*. This is what the person believes he or she would like to know of the second language according to his/her plans for the future. This ideal second language self is very important in motivating a person to learn another language since it is necessary to decrease the difference between the actual and the ideal selves. On the other hand, the o*ught to be L2 Self* refers to the attributes a

person thinks he or she has to have so there are no possible negative results which do not represent what the person desires or wishes.

It is necessary to consider that the task of accommodating and maintaining motivation involves, not only effort in advancing and arousing a person's skills and competence in the language, but also includes the capacity to respond successfully to the difficulties, challenges and impediments that are frequently part of the progression along the second language learning timeline. The demotivating aspects may involve experiences such as poor test performance, boredom and monotonous tasks, difficulties in comprehending a text or feelings of frustration and failure whenever trying to communicate an idea. That is to say that motivation levels in a person depend on his or her past and ongoing experiences. Good experiences will have a positive effect on motivation, whilst a negative experience's effect on motivation will mainly depend on how the person reacts to it and the actions he or she decides to take after that bad experience. Some people will decide to put more effort into learning, while other people may let their feelings of disappointment lead their learning by thinking they are not able to do it (Ushioda, 2014).

Dörnyei (2005) addresses motivation as the explanation of why people are willing to do something, how much effort they apply to pursue it, and the time they will spend doing the activity. He stresses that the responsibility of motivating students is upon the teachers and that they should keep in mind the long-term development of their students. Dörnyei presents the components of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom, which are:

Creating the basic motivational conditions

- Appropriate teacher behaviors
- A pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom
- A cohesive learner group with appropriate group norms

Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation

- Promoting motivational attributions
- Providing motivational feedback
- Increasing learner satisfaction
- Offering rewards and grades in a motivating manner

Motivational teaching practice

Generating initial motivation

- Enhancing the learners' L2-related values and attitudes
- Increasing the learners' expectancy of success
- Increasing the learners' goal-orientedness
- Making the teaching materials relevant for the learners
- Creating realistic learner beliefs

Maintaining and protecting motivation

- Making learning stimulating and enjoyable
- Presenting tasks in a motivating way
- Setting specific learner goals
- Protecting the learners' self-esteem and increasing their self-confidence
- Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image
- Creating learner autonomy
- Promoting self-motivating strategies
- Promoting cooperation among the learners

Figure 1. *The main components of Dörnyei's (2005) framework of motivational teaching practice in the L2 classroom.*

Dörnyei (1998) asserts that if there is not enough motivation, it is not possible for a person to achieve long-term goals. He considers motivation to be one of the most remarkable features that define second language acquisition. Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals. Dörnyei established that motivation is built upon integrative motivation, linguistic self-confidence and the appraisal of the

classroom environment. At the same time, Dörnyei developed a list of the components of motivation dividing them into three main dimensions, the language level, the learner level and the learning situation level. He stated that the Ten Commandments for a teacher to motivate language learners are:

1. Set a personal example with your own behavior

2. Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom

3. Present the tasks properly

4. Develop a good relationship with the learners

5. Increase the learners' linguistic self-confidence

6. Make the language classes interesting

7. Promote learner autonomy

8. Personalize the learning process

9. Increase the learners' goal-orientedness

10. Familiarize learners with the target language culture

These macro strategies could be used by teachers to enhance motivation in their classes. The application of practical and efficient ludic activities such as songs, projects, role-playing, and games in the class would have some of these features implicitly incorporated and could get students to learn the target language meaningfully since they will be involved in their own learning. Research then, has apparently found that the use of these activities will motivate and challenge the students to use what they have learned in order to solve problems or win the games. This could assure their comprehension and learning of vocabulary in a more competent way.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Aim

The aim of this thesis is to determine if the application of ludic activities in the class positively influences vocabulary learning through motivation. Motivation and vocabulary acquisition are embedded within a major design of application of ludic activities.

3.2. Methodology

This thesis utilizes the methodology of an embedded mixed method study (Creswell, 2013). This is a descriptive and correlational research study. The descriptive level is based on the contents and the ludic activities that will be applied to a better vocabulary acquisition. The purpose of the correlational level consists in defining a relationship among the application of ludic activities and the motivation and vocabulary level of the students.

The role of the teacher as a researcher allows us to determine this study as a participatory action research. The main purpose is to explore the teacher's own setting in order to determine an actual situation which could be improved, or may present difficulties, and develop alternatives to this process (Burns, 2009). Participating students were told that they would be part of their teacher's thesis development for acquiring her Master's degree and that their classes would be different during a period of time since more ludic activities would be used. They did not know that they would be observed through their reactions or answers in depth. This procedure aims the

students to remain unaware of their own behavior so the teacher/researcher would get to see their actions in a natural way.

3.2.1 Quantitative Method

In quantitative research, the researcher collects and analyses measures of key variables of interest across a sample of individuals in a systematic manner. The individual data points can be turned into summary measures and presented as percentages and other statistical measures, as well as graphical representations. We can gain insight from this descriptive analysis adding evidence on which characteristics are potentially important for vocabulary acquisition. The systematic recording of the methodology and presentation of summary measures makes the research more transparent, and allows us to compare the results with other similar studies (Mackey and Gass, 2015).

3.2.2 Qualitative Method

Regalado (2001) states that qualitative research consists in detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions and behaviors that are observable. It also incorporates what the participants say, their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, thoughts and considerations in the way they are described by themselves.

The systematic registry of this methodology is the essential element that, confronted by statistical data, permits one to obtain trustworthy information about the research objective (Castro, 2003). Its aim is to try to discover the triggering aspects that characterize the study sample according to the influence of ludic activities to motivate the vocabulary acquisition of students.

3.3 Participants

As explained in chapter I, the Sixth Year of Basic Education "A", with forty-two students was chosen to be the convenience sample for carrying on this study.

The school's English teachers also participated in this study. Their information was considered to be important and valuable because the sample of students have had different teachers during their school years and therefore their English knowledge has depended on the different teaching styles and motivation perspectives of each teacher.

3.4. Instruments

Students were asked to answer a questionnaire with nine open-ended questions. Spanish was the language chosen. Given the students' age and limited knowledge of English, they are likely to feel more comfortable responding to a Spanish questionnaire. These answers were translated by the author of this thesis. The questionnaire was applied by a different teacher so students would not feel pressured in any way to answer positively to the questions. Students were told that there were no correct or wrong answers and that they could express their feelings and opinions without fear. The questions were as follows:

1. Do you like learning English? Why?
2. Do you pay attention to what your teacher explains and reinforces on the board?
3. Would you like to speak and understand English better?
4. How often do you participate in the English class?
5. What do you prefer doing during the English hour?

6. Do you like the book's activities?

7. What kinds of activities do you like the most?

8. What would you ask your teacher to do more in the class?

9. Do you consider ludic activities help you learn English better?

In order to analyze the effects of ludic activities on vocabulary acquisition, a pre-test and a post-test were applied to the students. Due to a lack of formal tests that could be used to measure the students' vocabulary according to their age, level, and reality, a pilot pre-test based on the textbook's contents by Express Publishing Editorial and adapted to these facts was applied to a class with similar characteristics in order to validate the aforementioned instrument. After the instrument was validated, it was correspondingly applied to the convenience sample. This vocabulary pre-test allowed us to determine the students' vocabulary level before the application of the ludic activities. This questionnaire is annexed at the end of this thesis and was applied to the forty-one students who were present during the evaluation day.

Additionally, the school's English teachers answered a questionnaire with nine open-ended questions in order to find out their perception of their students' motivational level and their own. The language used for asking and answering the questions was English. It helped us know some of the opinions and techniques used by the teachers during their classes and some reasons why they do so. The questions and answers were written in English. The nine questions were the following:

1. Do you like teaching English?

2. Do you believe your students like learning English?

3. Do you believe that your students pay attention during your explanations and reinforcements in class?

4. How often do you think your students tend to participate?

5. What do you like doing the most during your English classes?

6. *Do you believe the textbook activities are enough for your students to learn?*

7. Do you use ludic activities in class? If yes, could you name them and explain the use of them?

8. When do you use games?

9. In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of using games.

3.5. Diagnosis before the application of ludic activities

Brown (2014) suggests that, in order to analyze qualitative data, it is necessary to find patterns and check for predominant outcomes within the gathered information. This is why, after considering some detected tendencies and patterns in the answers, the information obtained from the students' and teachers' answers have been classified into four categories. The groups of information have been contrasted and compared between teachers' and students' responses in order to understand the lived experiences of the English classes seen from both perspectives. The categories are the following:

A. Levels of interest in learning English

B. Levels of Students' Participation in Class

C. Methodologies preferred by students and by teachers

D. Own opinion about playing/using ludic activities

3.5.1. Diagnosis of the Way of Teaching and Learning

Of the forty-two students of the class, one of them was absent during the day the questionnaire was applied. Besides, another student did not hand-in the informed consent form that was sent home for students' parents to sign. This latter was an important requirement in order to consider this student's results, however, she participated in every activity as part of the whole class. These two cases made the sample size forty answers (40/42, response rate 95%). All teachers responded to the questionnaire (6/6, response rate 100%).

It is important to state that the information obtained from both questionnaires, students' and teachers', was analyzed in a mixed form: quantitative and qualitative. The analysis of each category is described below:

3.5.1.1. Levels of Interest in Learning English

Table 2. *Classification of students/teachers' opinions about learning/teaching English*

	Students (40)		Teachers (6)	
	Tokens	Percentage	Tokens	Percentage
Yes	37	92.5	6	100
Sometimes	1	2.5		
No	2	5		
Total	40	100	6	100

As it is possible to see in Table 2, the great majority of students liked learning the target language. It also can be said that all the teachers like teaching English. This is a positive aspect since it shows us that there is an intrinsic motivation level in the teachers' thinking. Expressions like *"Yes, I love teaching English!"* allow us to see that these teachers like what they do for a living and therefore, they can transmit that feeling to their students when they teach their classes. As Dörnyei (1994) describes amongst the *teacher-specific motivational components* is the importance of a teacher's role as a model in the class, which means that he/she is the group leader whose attitudes will model his/her students' attitudes in terms of effort expenditure and orientations of interest in learning the subject.

The positive opinions from the students about learning English have been classified into six categories. Table 3 belongs to the list of these categories, the number of learners' opinions that correspond to each category and their corresponding percentage. For example, consider the first category, *likes to learn other languages.* This opinion was mentioned 13 times and represents 32.5% of the 40 students.

Table 3. *Categorization of the positive opinions of the students*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	Percentage
Likes to learn other languages	13	32.5
English is necessary for traveling	9	22.5
English is useful for communicating	6	15
English is fun	4	10
English is important for the future	4	10
Considers the teacher is good	2	5
Total	38	

As can be seen in Table 3, most of the students have a preference for learning other languages and they are aware of its importance whenever they want to travel and communicate in other countries. This can be observed in students' expressions such as the following:

"Yes, because I want to learn several languages"   (Student 6)

"Yes, because it is nice to learn another language that we don't know" (Student 39)

"Yes, because whenever I get to travel abroad, I will know how to speak their language"

(Student 24)

There are two negative opinions about learning English: they consider it ugly and difficult. It is important to consider these students' opinions so the teacher can look for different strategies to teach the classes in order to motivate all of the students and not only the great majority.

Teachers were asked if they think their students like learning English. Three teachers answered affirmatively. However, the other three teachers are aware that not all the students demonstrate that they like what they are learning. In their study, Azamat and Ugur (2013) determined that a majority of the students find learning English interesting and important; however, there is a minority who consider it boring and less important than other basic subjects. This consideration affects students' attitudes towards the new language and the fact that the teachers' perceptions may be influenced by these attitudes.

Table 4. *Classification of opinions about students paying attention in the class*

	Students			**Teachers**	
	Tokens	**Percentage**		**Tokens**	**Percentage**
Yes	29	72		2	33.3
Sometimes	9	23		4	66.7
No	2	5			
Total	40	100		6	100

Twenty-nine students out of 40 affirm that they pay attention to the teacher's explanations and the reinforcements done on the board. However, there are nine students who express that they sometimes pay attention (see table 4) whilst another two gave a negative answer to this question.

The same table reveals that 2 teachers believe that all of their students pay attention to their explanations; however, there are 4 teachers who are aware that not all students do so

consistently. Some of the teachers explained why they think this happens which is shown in the following answers:

"Most of them do but our reality is that there are too many students per class and that makes it impossible to keep asking them to listen and pay attention"   (Teacher 2)

"Some students pay attention and some others don't. I don't really think we have much time in class to keep asking them not to be distracted"   (Teacher 4)

"Some of them pay attention; it depends on the type of activity I bring to the class"

(Teacher 5)

From these answers, it is possible to say that although some teachers are aware that not every student pays attention, they do not think they can do anything about it. They describe the reality of the classes (amount of students, lack of time) and they believe these facts are the reasons and excuses for not searching for different strategies to have more students involved in the class. Bangkok (2006) opines that teaching large classes should be considered a challenge, not a problem, where the teaching skills need to be further developed but most importantly, that this has to be accepted by the teachers.

Students have given reasons as to why they pay attention in the English classes; there were 29 positive answers that have been classified and exhibited in Table 5.

Table 5. *Reasons for students to pay attention*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	Percentage

Wants to learn the language	8	20
English is interesting	7	17.5
So he/she can understand	5	12.5
To improve grades	5	12.5
Does not give reasons	4	10
Total	29	

The most common reasons for paying attention is that they want to learn the new language and they consider English interesting and fun. Vallerand (1997) determined that intrinsic motivation has three subdivisions: a) to learn, which refers to the person's interest in being involved in an activity and looking forward to get a satisfactory comprehension of something new; b) towards achievement, this is the participation of a person in an activity to deal and overcome challenges in order to surpass him/herself; and c) to experience pleasant sensations.

"Yes. Learning it is fun" (Student 18)

"Yes because it is interesting" (Student 36)

On the other hand, 11 students who do not pay attention say that they get distracted whether with their friends or with other things. Some others get bored or do not understand the subject (see table 6).

"Not so much because I talk with my friends" (Student 3)

"Not much because I get bored" (Student 25)

"I don't understand because she speaks in English and I have to ask somebody to explain it to me"   (Student 9)

Table 6. *Reasons for students not to pay attention*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	**Percentage**
Gets distracted	5	12.5
Does not give reasons	3	7.5
Gets bored	2	5
Does not understand	1	2.5
Total	11	

Even if it is not the majority of students who give answers, such as the ones in Table 6, teachers should try to find other methodologies which could involve all of the students in different ways so that they are part of their own learning process. Some conclusions of a longitudinal study that took place in Sweden could be considered in order to explain these answers. The findings revealed that students feel that the activities in the English classes were predictable and not very challenging for them (Henry, 2014). This is also supported by Ushioda (2013) whose study in different countries in Europe asserts that learners find English classes to be boring and so do not put much effort in their activities. These studies indicate that this situation is not unique to Asuncion School, but elsewhere too.

Table 7. *Intentions to speak and understand English better*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	**Percentage**
Likes the language	13	32.5
Interested in traveling	11	27.5
For better understanding	6	15
To communicate with more people	4	10
Considers it necessary for movies and songs	2	5
Wants to help their parents to translate what others say	2	5
Total	38	

The great majority of students are interested in speaking and understanding English better. In Table 7 the students' opinions have been classified into categories according to their answers, counted and given percentages for the forty students. Most of the learners like the language and are interested in traveling so they know it is important in order to understand and communicate with more people. Crookes and Schmidt (1991) described motivation in the language classroom based on four categories: interest, relevance, expectancy, and satisfaction. The first two categories coincide with the students' answers since *interest* is related to intrinsic motivation which is focused on the person's natural curiosity and willingness to know more; and *relevance* denotes the connection the learner has to the instruction and his/her personal needs, values, and goals:

"Yes because this way I could understand and be understood by foreigners" (Student 14)

"Yes, so when I go to the USA I can translate everything they say to me" (Student 1)

"Yes, because I think I could be able to talk to almost everybody" (Student 23)

3.5.1.1.1. Discussion of the Level of Interest of Students and Teachers Category

By analyzing this category's answers to both teachers and students, it has been possible to determine different aspects that are affecting the levels of interest in teachers and in students. These aspects are described below:

Students are interested in learning English and teachers like teaching it. However, teachers must cover an annual lesson plan and finish the textbook's tasks. In this case, there is little time to apply different kind of activities which could be more pleasant for the children and could also rouse their attention more. This reality decreases the motivation level of the students, who sometimes end up thinking of this subject as a boring and not interesting-one which lasts throughout their lives since poor teaching methods can negatively affect the students' levels of interest in a subject (Dörnyei, 2005).

Even if teachers like their profession, the amount of students per class and the lack of time to impart the target language make it difficult to put into practice other kinds of activities besides covering a lesson plan and completing the book's activities. This goes against what Sulistyowati (2012) maintains, which is that teaching English in a large class demands more effort from the teacher who should bring engaging tasks into the classroom so students are more interested in participating and learning. This author also believes that young learners learn things holistically

such as when participating in games like role-playing instead of sitting down and doing an activity for a long time.

When teachers manifest that not all of their students pay attention in class, they do not really provide a solution for this. They could look for other techniques and strategies that could help them have more effective classes that could involve all of their students. As was said in the previous chapter, motivational factors are the ones that explain the willingness of a person to engage in an activity or not (Dörnyei, 2005). This same author also places the responsibility of students' motivation levels upon the teachers who should look for activities that make knowledge last meaningfully on into the long-term memory.

3.5.1.2. Levels of Students' Participation in Class

Table 8. *Frequency of students' participation in class (according to students' and teachers' perceptions)*

	Students			Teachers	
	Tokens	Percentage		Tokens	Percentage

Usually	12	30	Always	1	16.7
Sometimes	11	27.5	Usually	3	50
Almost never	11	27.5	Sometimes	2	33.3
Never	6	15			
Total	40	100		6	100

Most of the students express that they do participate in the English classes. On the other hand, a minority of students declare that they never participate (see Table 8). From what Krashen (1982) says, the Affective Filter is based on the emotional effects that occur depending on a person's environment that do not allow him/her to develop proper second language acquisition. One of its manifestations is that the learner does not speak due to several environmental impacts such as: peer pressure, the possibility of being considered unintelligent, or the nervousness which can accompany speaking in front of a group. This could explain why some students have considerations that do not allow them to participate and feel involved in the English class. Some students' expressions allow us to see their perception of English classes. Here are some examples:

"Usually, because the teacher gives us exercises on the board and we solve them"

(Student1)

"Sometimes because I'd rather not ask so I can learn from my classmates"

(Student 24)

"Almost never because I am not sure of what to say" (Student 16)

"Never, because I don't understand" (Student 17)

Table 8 also shows us that half of the teachers observe that their students usually tend to participate in their classes. Some of their expressions were the following:

"Students always want to participate because they want to be the actors of learning."

(Teacher 3)

"They usually participate, but it depends on the group" (Teacher 4)

"They are too many and there are always some students who don't participate or are not able to participate because there is no time to make them practice. Sometimes"

(Teacher 5)

3.5.1.2.1. Discussion of the Level of Participation Category

The application of these questionnaires made it possible to widen our understanding of the students' perception of them within the class and how the teachers feel their students tend to participate in the English hour.

Not all the students feel motivated enough to participate in the class. Teachers are also aware of this fact; however, they keep using strategies that do not involve all of the students along the teaching/learning process. Doiz *et al.* (2014) assert as one probable reason for learners' demotivation in the English classes the different opinions that teachers and students have about the better and more motivating activities to improve results in learning the target language. Yu (2004) finds that large classes promulgate problems that make the environment worrisome, such

as the individuality of each student which is ignored and the limited chance for students to practice English.

Some students express their lack of confidence in using English in front of the class. This made us see that they do not know how to use previous knowledge that they might have. Instead, they prefer to remain silent and not to risk themselves in making errors in front of their peers. Horwitz *et al.* (1986) define *fear of negative evaluation* as the nervousness a person has when considering other people's evaluations (real or imagined). It includes a prevention of evaluative circumstances and the probability of being negatively evaluated by others. According to Krashen (1982), the teacher should apply comprehensible strategies immersed in low anxiety situations in order to diminish the Affective Filter and be an effective language teacher. Additionally, the Ten Commandments for motivating language students described by Dörnyei (1998), defined in the previous chapter, should also be considered by teachers.

Teaching in Asunción School involves having large groups of students and the teachers have few hours of class. These are important reasons why teachers cannot say that their students always participate in class. This is another proof that a different technique should be applied within the classes in order to have more students participating in their own learning process. Sulistyowati (2012) considers that when children learn English, they need two important things to improve their learning: social interaction with their peers and the teachers' motivation. He also expresses that the size of a class is not a valid excuse for not enhancing our teaching method through the use of other approaches besides the traditional ones. This could help the teachers have just as effective a class with larger and smaller classes.

3.5.1.3. Methodologies preferred by students and teachers

In order to identify the most frequent answers from students and teachers, Table 9 has been built based on the 5th and 7th open-ended questions asked of the students. Moreover, these answers have been contrasted to the teachers' preferences that they do in the class. Since they were open-ended questions, students and teachers could mention more than one activity in their answers. The number of times each activity mentioned is represented by the tokens and the percentage is the overall total of students (40) and total of teachers (6) respectively.

Table 9. *Most preferred activities to be done in the English class*

	Students (40)			Teachers (6)	
	Tokens	%		Tokens	%
To play games	24	60	Games	6	100
To watch movies/videos	17	42.5	Songs	2	33
Activities on the board	5	12.5	Warm-ups	1	17
To do classwork	5	12.5	Grammar exercises	1	17
Grammar exercises	5	12.5	Movies	1	17
Listening activities	3	7.5			
Speaking exercises	2	5			
Total	61			11	

The great majority of students prefer playing games and watching English movies or videos. Students express that they enjoy these activities and they also think they are able to learn better with these activities as can be seen in the following students' statements from the survey:

"Games because they help us to reinforce"   (Student 5)

"English movies to learn pronunciation better"   (Student 15)

"Movies because we learn English words that we don't know"   (Student 1)

Table 9 also let us see that all of the teachers mention playing games as one of the activities they like doing the most in their classes. Huyen and Nga (2003) suggest through their study that whenever games are used in the class, it not only includes a fun feature but that it is also useful to practice and review vocabulary of the lessons. From answers such as the ones below, we can conclude that these teachers are aware of the advantages of using other kinds of activities besides the traditional ones and those suggested by the book:

"Playing games for practicing and learning better"   (Teacher 1)

"Teaching English through games and songs"   (Teacher 2)

When students were asked if they liked the textbook activities, the majority of students expressed positively about them. Some of these answers suggest that students consider the book's activities to be interesting and fun reinforcement:

"Yes because it is a reinforcement and the tasks are easy"   (Student 12)

"Yes because it is fun and I learn"   (Student 27)

Teachers were asked if they considered the textbook activities enough for their students to learn. In this case, five teachers answered negatively. They feel that besides these tasks, they need to do reinforcement in other ways. Some of their testimonies are copied below:

"No, I consider they need to practice through games, notebook activities, role-plays, etc."

(Teacher 2)

"No, because I think students have to receive input through real conversations, and it's important to use more methods during the learning process to make the students understand better." (Teacher 3)

"No, because they don't do much reinforcement" (Teacher 5)

The eighth question addressed to the students proposed to identify suggestions to their teacher as to what should be done within the classes. Students could have written various suggestions however, each student just mentioned one. As it is possible to see in Table 10, most of the students recommend that their teacher use more games or contests and show them more movies or videos in English.

Table 10. *Students' suggestions to their teacher*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	**%**
Games / contests	23	57.5
Movies /videos	8	20
Teacher should speak Spanish more	2	5
More questions	2	5
Pronunciation /speaking exercises	2	5
To read books	1	2.5

More hours of English	1	2.5
Writing exercises	1	2.5
Total	40	

3.5.1.3.1. Discussion of the Category-Methodologies Preferred by Students and Teachers

After the analysis of this category, it is possible to say the following statements:

Teachers and students coincide in their preferences for using and playing games in the class correspondingly. However, students ask teachers to have more games than what they do normally. This contrast allows us to know that even if teachers say that the use of other strategies apart from the book's tasks is beneficial for the students learning and motivation level, they do not use them much in reality. Uberman (1998) suggests the use of games as a complete part of a lesson. She believes that it provides more opportunities for practice whereas teachers and students have a great time in class.

Students like the book's activities. This does not mean that they learn English significantly by doing only these tasks. The innate motivation level that students have for learning English should be reinforced by using other kinds of activities which are also suggested by the students such as games, movies, etc. Besides, the teachers manifest that these activities are not enough for their students to learn.

Time is a limitation that teachers consider to be important based on the authorities and parents requests. At the beginning of the school year, Asunción's teachers must present to the authorities

and to the Ministry of Education an annual lesson plan which states, among other things, the contents and objectives that should be followed and achieved throughout the year. Authorities tend to require teachers to fulfill this annual plan and the parents measure the students' English acquisition based on whether they finished the book or not.

3.5.1.4.Students' and teachers' own opinion about playing/using ludic activities

The great majority of the students think that ludic activities help them learn English better. The 38 affirmative answers have been sorted and classified in Table 11 where it is possible to determine in a clearer way the students' opinions of ludic activities in the English class.

Table 11. *Students' opinions about ludic activities*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	**%**
They are fun	16	40
Reinforcement	12	30
Students learn from other students	5	12.5
Students get to practice	2	5
They make ss. try harder to have a correct answer	2	5

They make them analyze information	1	2.5
Total	38	

In this case, the majority of students manifest that ludic activities are fun and useful for reinforcement. Some of the students' expressions are the following:

"Yes because this way we have fun as we learn"   (Student 21)

"Yes because I understand more and can speak and write well"   (Student 12)

"Yes because when we compete the brain receives the information better"   (Student 6)

These expressions coincide with Chen (2005) who tells us that when playing games, students get to practice the language and also use it as a way of persuasion in order to obtain a desired result, by doing this, students use productive and receptive skills at the same time.

After analyzing the teachers' answers about their use of ludic activities and their opinion it can be stated that all of them use these activities within their classes however, the only reasons given for doing so were for warm-ups and to practice vocabulary. The activity they referred to the most is *memory games* and few teachers mention such games as bingo, role-playing, and hangman.

When teachers were asked when they use games, there were several answers; the most relevant were the following:

"At the beginning or at the end of a class. Depending on the activity I have planned"

(Teacher 5)

"I use games to motivate my students at the beginning of the class"   (Teacher 3)

"Usually in the middle of the lesson"   (Teacher 1)

By analyzing these answers, teachers express that games help their students to practice vocabulary and to produce it. However, as it was said before, time issues, annual planning, and amount of students within the classes make the use of ludic activities hard to be used as part of every class and during the whole hour.

Table 12. *Teachers' opinion about ludic activities in the classroom*

	Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Teacher 1	"The students practice, learn and enjoy the class a lot"	"The student tend to make a lot of noise and it is sometimes considered as a way of indiscipline"
Teacher 2	"When children or students are motivated, they learn easily"	Does not answer
Teacher 3	"Students feel comfortable when they learn something through the use of games. The use of games arises motivation and students want to participate"	"When there are too many students, the teacher has to create an atmosphere where problems among students cannot happen"

Teacher 4	"Help students to improve their knowledge. Reinforces their vocabulary and structures. Practice their speaking and listening skills"	"Disorder"
Teacher 5	"Students get motivated and practice what they know"	"Students think it's time to misbehave, there is not much space in the class. Sometimes it's a cause for disorder in the class
Teacher 6	"They learn and pay attention"	Does not answer

These answers permit us see that teachers are aware of the benefits of playing games in the class however, it is also possible to have a general view of some reasons why they have to think twice before they apply ludic techniques in their classes. One of the most important is that they could be considered a cause for misbehavior in the class. This may involve learning, but the authorities or the class teacher may not consider it in that way. In this case, the easier way to avoid having a problem as a teacher is to have students do writing or grammar exercises in the book or in the workbook. In other words, whatever activity that may not involve students moving around, talking loudly, or even celebrating or complaining if they won the contest or not may be considered more useful to have students in silence and well-behaved.

3.5.1.4.1. Discussion of Students' and Teachers' own opinion about playing/using ludic activities.

Whatever their age (around ten-years old), these students are aware of the importance of their own learning. Asunción School is an important institution in Cuenca where students learn the significance of acquiring knowledge for their own good. Teachers should consider their students' expectations of the classes since most of them are disposed to learn. Besides, they consider that ludic activities help them learn better.

Students' expressions permit us to see that they do not consider ludic activities as a waste of time. They actually see the advantages of having them in their English classes.

Students and teachers are aware that ludic activities facilitate the teaching-learning process in terms of practice and reinforcement.

Teachers should take advantage of the good predisposition of the students towards ludic activities so the classes are not monotonous or boring to them. Instead, they could become interesting and useful for the teaching-learning process.

3.5.2 Vocabulary Pre-test. Quantitative Data

This research aims to determine the influence of a change of methodology based on ludic activities in the teaching-learning process, based on students' motivation levels and vocabulary acquisition.

In order to analyze each question of the vocabulary pre-test, it was necessary to consider the qualitative and quantitative grading scale provided by the Ministry of Education based on Article 194 of the Reforms to the General Regulation to the Organic Law of Intercultural Education.

This scale governs the evaluation system in Asunción School. Each student's answer was quantified according to this scale, which is the following:

Table 13. *Grading Scale*

Qualitative Scale	Quantitative Scale
Masters the required learning	9.00 – 10.00
Reaches the required learning	7.00 - 8.99
Is about to reach the required learning	4.01 – 6.99
Does not reach the required learning	≤4

Note: Retrieved from the General Regulation to the Organic Law of Intercultural Education. Art.194

It is important to specify that this evaluation system states that the minimal grade a student needs to obtain is 7 out of 10 which corresponds to *Reaches the Required Learning* in the qualitative scale. In case a student does not reach this minimal grade, the teacher has to do a reinforcement activity with the learner. This will be the impetus to analyze the quantitative results of each question of the vocabulary pre-test. During the day of the vocabulary pre-test application, 41 students were present. Their results were analyzed as follows:

3.5.2.1. Results of the Vocabulary pre-test

Question1. Read and match the ordinal numbers

Table 14. *Question 1. Vocabulary Pre-test*

Category	n	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	14	34.1
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	17	41.5

|		
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	6	14.6
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	4	9.8
Total	41	100.0

Read and Match the Ordinal Numbers
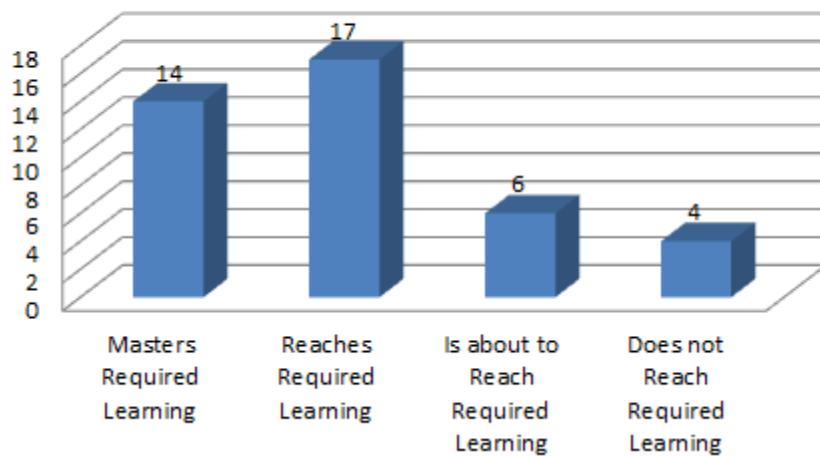
Figure 2. *Classification of students' results in question 1- Vocabulary Pre-test*

As can be seen in Figure 2, there are ten students whose answer's grade is lower than the minimum required. This represents 24.4% of the students.

Question 2. Read and complete with the corresponding verb-form

Table 15. *Question 2. Vocabulary Pre-test*

Category	**n**	**%**
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	1	2.4
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	3	7.4
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	14	34.1

|		
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	23	56.1
Total	41	100.0

Read and complete with the corresponding verb-form
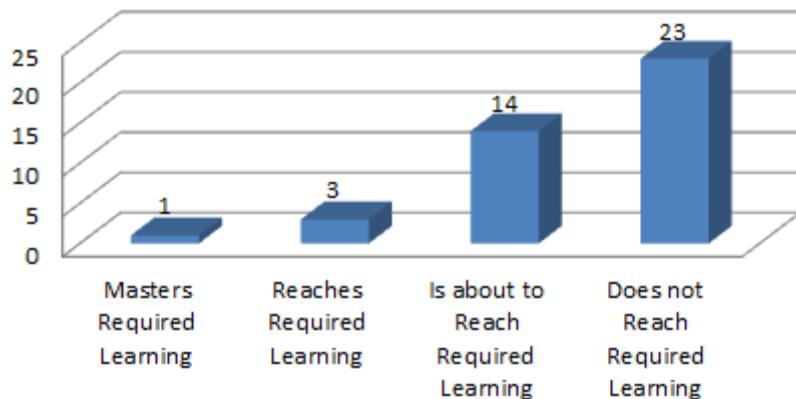
Figure 3. *Classification of students' results in question 2- Vocabulary Pre-test*

There are 37 students whose answers are below the minimum required. This represents a 90.2% of the class, compared to the 9.8% of students who do not have a problem in answering this question (see Figure 3).

Question 3. Write the Months of the Year where they correspond

Table 16. *Question3. Vocabulary Pre-test*

Category	n	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	6	14.6
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	16	39.0
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	10	24.4
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	9	22.0

	41	100.0
Total		

Write the Months of the Year where They Correspond
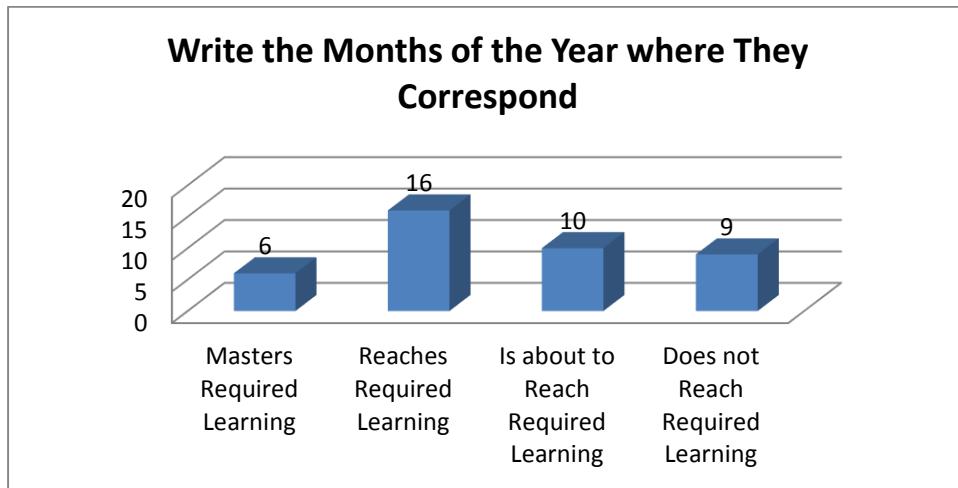
Figure 4. *Classification of students' results in question 3- Vocabulary Pre-test*

Out of 41, 22 students had acceptable answers. On the other hand, 19 students did not reach the minimum grade required (see Figure 4). It is possible to determine a necessity to reinforce this content learning.

Question 4. Look and complete with the corresponding action

Table 17. *Question 4. Vocabulary Pre-test*

Category	n	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	7	17.1
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	17	41.5
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	13	31.7
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	4	9.8
Total	41	100.0
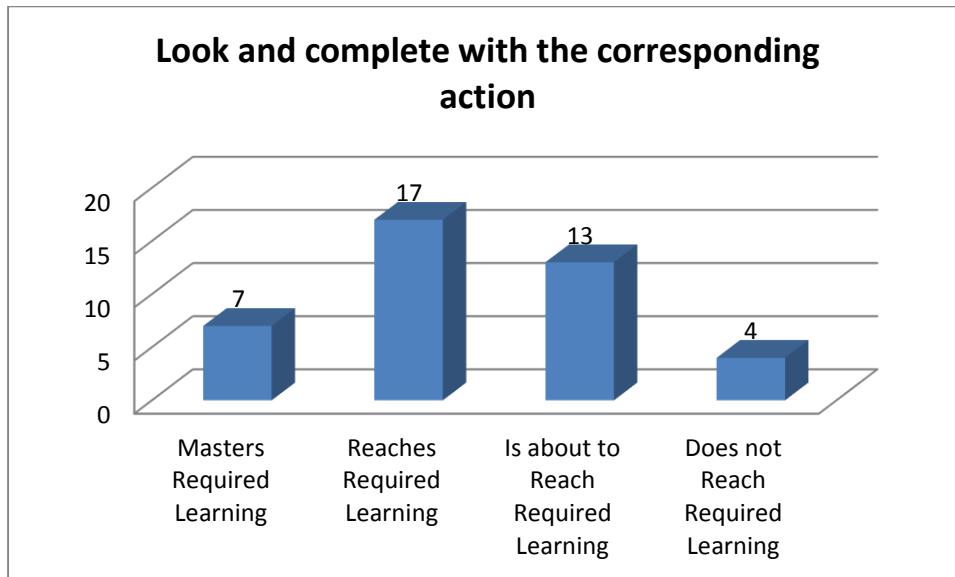
Figure 5. *Classification of students' results in question 4- Vocabulary Pre-test*

There are 17 students whose grade did not reach the minimum required; this represents 41.5% of the class. Contrastingly, 24 students (58.5%) obtained a grade of 7 or higher.

Question 5. Look and answer the questions about his future

Table 18. *Question 5. Vocabulary Pre-test*

Category	n	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	3	7.3
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	7	17.1
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	1	2.4
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	30	73.2
Total	41	100.0

Look and answer the questions about his future
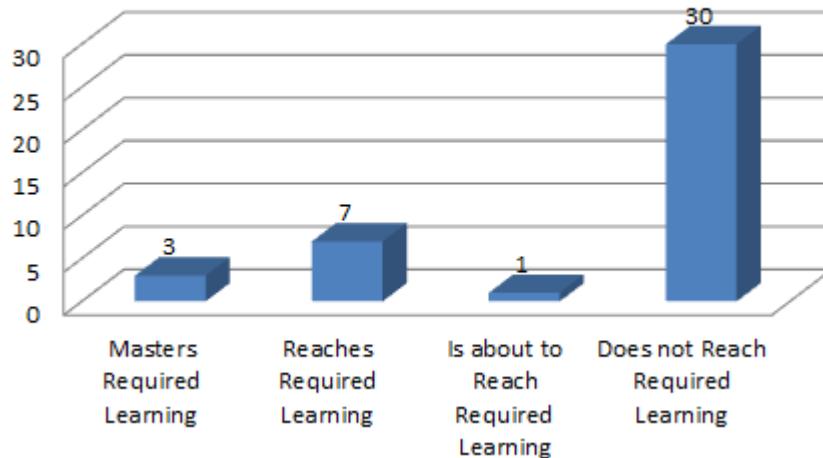
Figure 6. *Classification of students' results in question 5- Vocabulary Pre-test*

There are 31 students who need reinforcement since their grade is below the minimum (see Figure 6). This represents 75.6% of the students.

3.5.2.1.1. Analysis of Results

From the obtained information in this vocabulary pre-test, it is possible to state that there are topics whose average grade could be improved, specifically in the vocabulary of verbs and their use.

The analyses of the qualitative and quantitative data are the starting point that allows the design of ludic activities to be used in the convenience sample that afterwards will be evaluated to determine the incidence of them for improving motivation and vocabulary levels in students.

3.5.2.2. Vocabulary Pre-test Statistical Analysis

A statistical analysis permits us see a general aspect of the whole class based on the final grade of each student's vocabulary pre-test. The measure of central tendency that has been

calculated is the mean which will provide us accurate quantitative information about the typical behavior in the grades of the students. This analysis is described as follows:

3.5.2.2.1. Sample Mean. It is also called the arithmetic average (Mackey and Gass, 2015). This is an estimate of central tendency that indicates the average grade of the class.

$$\bar{x} = 6.16$$

3.5.2.2.2. Standard Deviation. This measure of dispersion is a quality control for measures of central tendency. It helps us see how concentrated or spread out the data are around the sample mean, "the smaller the standard deviation, the better the mean captures the behavior of the sample" (Mackey and Gass, 2015, p.303)

$$S = 1.81$$

3.5.2.2.3. Interpretation. The average grade of the vocabulary pre-test is 6.16/10 that is between a maximum value of 9.1/10 and a minimal value of 2.3/10. The variation of closeness or distance towards the central value is 1.81.

3.5.2.2.4. Confidence Interval. With a level of confidence of 0.05, this represents a 95% probability of error.

$$5.61 \leq \mu \leq 6.71$$
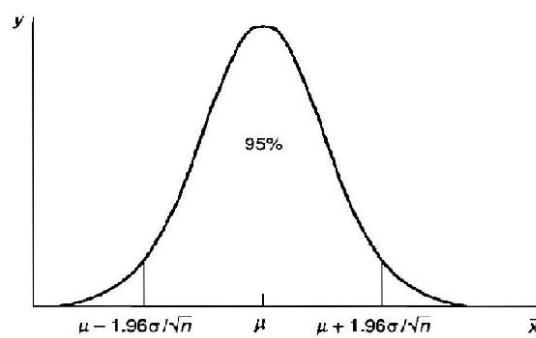
Figure 7. *Confidence interval representation*
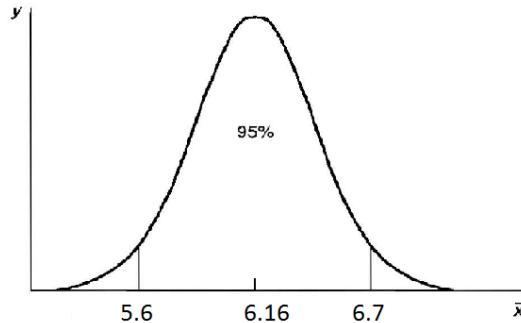
Figure 8. *Confidence interval of the vocabulary pre-test results*

3.5.2.2.5. Interpretation. The 95% confidence interval suggests that the population mean of the vocabulary pre-test results in Sixth grade is between 5.6 and 6.7, before the intervention of the study takes place.

3.5.2.2.6. Hypothesis Testing. Statistical hypothesis testing allows us to make a decision between rejecting and not rejecting a null hypothesis on the basis of a set of observations. In this case, we need to see if the sample mean is the same as the population mean:

3.5.2.2.6.1. Null Hypothesis (H₀) and Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

H₀ $\bar{x} = \mu$ Null hypothesis: the sample mean is the same as the population mean.

H₁ $\bar{x} \neq \mu$ Alternative hypothesis: the sample mean is not the same as the population mean.

3.5.2.2.6.2. Significance level ($\propto$) the probability of error that the study may have when announcing the hypothesis.

$\propto = 0.05$ Confidence level $= 0.95$

3.5.2.2.6.3. Normal Distribution Z. Since the sample number of students is higher than 30, a Z normal distribution has been selected to analyze data. For a 95% confidence level, a critical z value corresponds to 1.96.

3.5.2.2.6.4. Decision rule statement

Null hypothesis: ($\bar{x} = \mu$)

$$cz_1 = 1.95 \quad < \quad \text{critical z} = 1.96$$

$$cz_2 = 1.95 \quad < \quad \text{critical z} = 1.96$$

3.5.2.2.6.5. Interpretation: The critical z value is cz = 1.95. This is below the 1.96 standard, so the result is statistically significant. This means we decide to accept the null hypothesis; hence the sample mean is the same as the population mean.

The minimal grade accepted for students not to need reinforcement classes and make-up exams is a grade lower than 7 out of 10. What percentage of students may have grades below 7/10?

$Z = \dfrac{0.84}{0.28} = 2.98$ This value corresponds in the normal distribution z to: 0.4986

0.4986 x 2 = 0.998 x 100 = 99.8%
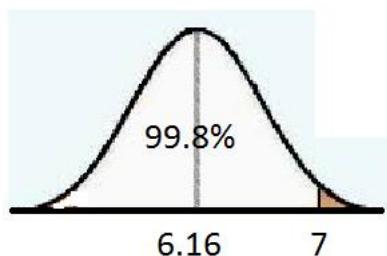
Figure 9. *Probability of grades lower than 7*

In the class, 99.8% of the students have the probability of getting a grade lower than 7/10. This demonstrates the necessity of an intervention to improve the students' average grade.

CHAPTER IV

DESIGN AND APPLICATION OF LUDIC ACTIVITIES

The ludic activities that are presented in this chapter aim to motivate ten-year old students in the Sixth Year of Basic Education "A" at Asunción School to use their English vocabulary in order to communicate, express ideas and to improve their English vocabulary acquisition as part of their language learning process. By promoting motivation, meaningful learning of vocabulary could be more easily reached. This kind of learning should become part of the students' cognitive structures in the long-term memory which is very important for further learning (Ausubel *et al*., 1976).

The theoretical conceptions that were described in Chapter I have been the basis upon which these ludic activities have been decided to be applied according to Asunción School's reality

(described in Chapter II). The most important facts are the number of students, classroom space for the activities and the students' discipline control within the class.

The main objective is to determine if there is a positive, negative, or null incidence of ludic activities in the classes to increase the students' vocabulary acquisition and their motivation levels.

4.1. Development of the proposal

First of all, it was necessary to ask for permission of the students' parents through the signing an informed consent letter. Only one of the forty-two students did not hand in this document, so she participated in everything but the tests and questionnaires were not answered by her.

Another important aspect is that each of the games administered during the intervention were chosen on the basis of their utility with large groups just as the one where the study took place (Qiang and Ning, 2011).

The plan of activities was based on the contents and skills that had been specified in the corresponding annual lesson plan of the subject. In order to reach these objectives, eight ludic activities have been designed and applied to the students. Each of them is presented by describing their objectives, resources and methodological orientations.

4.1.1. Song: She'll be coming round the mountains

4.1.1.1. Aims

- To listen and identify vocabulary within a song.

- To write a different ending for the song.

- To draw their ideas for a different ending.

4.1.1.2. Resources

4.1.1.2.1. Human Resources: Students and teacher

4.1.1.2.2. Technological Resources: speakers, computer, retro-projector

4.1.1.2.3. Material Resources: Cardboards, colored pencils, pencils.

4.1.1.3. Methodological Orientations

   The main purpose of this activity is to have students identify vocabulary within the lyrics of a song as they listen to it. This constitutes a challenge for students since they make an effort to distinguish some words among others in order to complete the lyrics and understand the songs' meaning.

Figure10. *Song: She'll be coming round the mountains.* Retrieved from:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yLxqRax8mTA

4.1.1.4. Development of the Activity

Students first listen to the song as many times as the teacher considers it necessary. The class tells the teacher some words and expressions understood in the song. Then students are given a worksheet and try to fill in the blanks as they listen to the song again.

After that, students are shown the song video without the lyrics. By looking at it, students try to relate the images to the words they listen to. These strategies are used by the students in order to fulfill the objective of the activity which is to fill in the blanks. After the lyrics are completed, students sing along and practice the song.

Students draw the scenes from the song. After that, they are asked to think of a different ending to the song, draw and describe it by using the structures of the song and the words they already know (see Figure 11).

Finally, students present in front of their classes their song scenes and their ideas of different endings for the song.
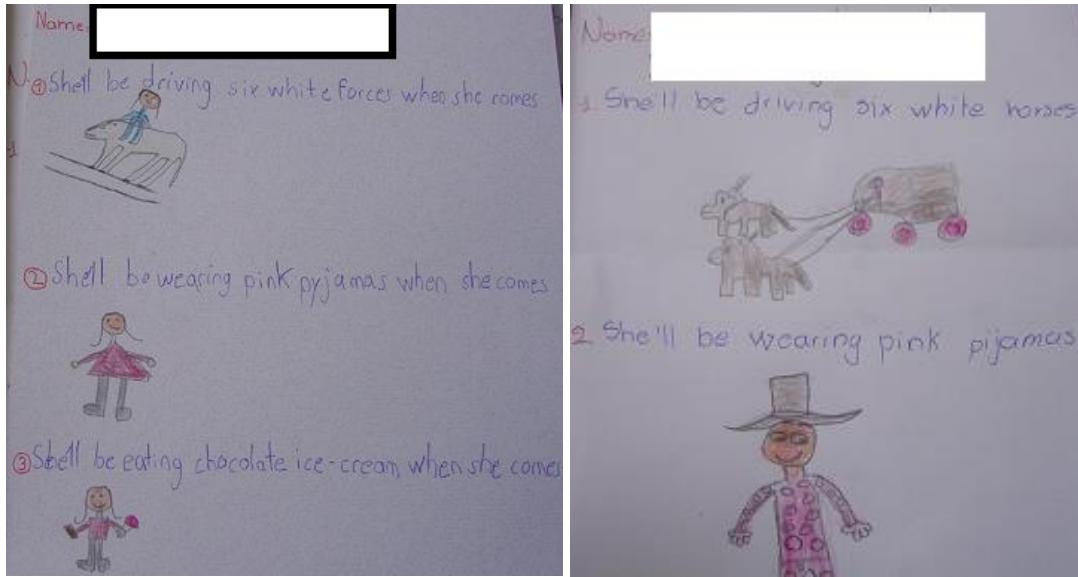
Figure 11. *Examples of the students' work.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

4.1.1.5. Teacher's Notes about the Activity

Dörnyei (1994, p.281) describes a list of strategies to motivate language students. Among the *Language level* category, he suggests that teachers "include a sociocultural component in the L2 syllabus" which refers to promoting positive practices in the class by exposing students to movies or videos, listening to music and inviting native guest speakers. In order to do this activity, students were taken to the English lab, which is equipped with a retro-projector and good quality speakers. Students really like leaving their traditional classroom to go to this place. They arrived very motivated and curious to see what activity they were about to develop. When they realized they had to complete song lyrics, at first they felt kind of anxious because they wanted to see the video of the song, not only to listen to it. When they realized they could identify some words, they got very happy and started filling in the blanks. Some of them asked their peers for help or confirmation. Others started to say the answers out loud so their friends

would know they could distinguish the words. As expected, some students were faster than others, but it was possible to see a collaborative environment among the students. They did not consider the activity to be a measurement of knowledge. Instead, they could see that some simple words they had learned before were used in different types of sentences and structures.

Once the lyrics were written, students were shown the video or the song. They started singing along and asked the teacher to play it over and over. Most of the students inferred the meaning of the song lyrics before they saw the video; some others understood the words better when they got to see the video. The following procedure meant to have students draw the sequence of the song in images and write the sentences.

After that, students had to draw, create and write a different ending for the song. In this case, some students tried to find the words and to be accurate, some others asked their friends or the teacher for help and others repeated what some of their friends did. The teacher's position in the class was not that of an evaluator; her role was to see the students' reactions. In this case, it could be said that even if the students have been taught structures and vocabulary to produce new ideas, some of them do not feel capable of doing it. It should not be considered as a total lack of confidence or a negative feeling toward the task from some students. The teacher noticed that some students were expecting the answers on the board. This tells us that they were used to being told what to write and how to do it. This final part of the activity indicates that students are not often asked to create and write on their own. They are used to doing general activities that do not ask them to think beyond what is presented in the book or in grammar exercises done in the notebook. However, this activity involved different aspects and options that allowed the teacher to awaken the students' attention in different ways, taking into consideration that among

students, each of them must have different learning styles as individuals (Alqunayeer and Zamir, 2015).

4.1.2. Role-playing: Who will do what?

4.1.2.1. Aims

- To plan free-time activities with friends

- To say what they have to do in order to achieve their objectives.

- To work in groups cooperatively

4.1.2.2. Resources

4.1.2.2.1. Human Resources: Students and teacher

4.1.2.2.2. Material Resources: Students' supplies

4.1.2.3. Methodological Orientations

The main purpose of this activity is to have students think of the activities they need to do in order to make plans with their friends. Students organize themselves in groups of three, four or five. Each group decides on the activity they want to plan from among the options given them. The students organize the activities and each member of the group is going to collaborate with the activity completion.

4.1.2.4. Development of the Activity

Students first listen to a conversation where a class is organizing a picnic. They open their books to page 46 and match what each person will do to their names, depending on the dialogue (see Figure 12).

After the students have completed the task, the teacher refers to the dialogue and asks some questions about it to confirm understanding by the students. Then the students work in pairs and ask and answer questions about who will do what for the picnic, as in the example:

 Student 1: Who will buy the cola?

 Student 2: Robert will

Figure 12. *Textbook's activity.* Reprinted from Fairyland US6 (p.46), by J. Dooley & V. Evans7, 2011, Newbury: Express Publishing. Copyright 2011 by Express Publishing

The teacher asks students to give more ideas for fun activities they can do in groups in the afternoons. The most commonly mentioned options were:

- Watching a movie

- Going on a picnic

- Going to the movies

- Having a barbecue

- Having a sleepover party at somebody's place

Students are asked to work in the group of their choice. They decide on the activity they want to plan and do. They are asked to use simple future tense structures and questions with *who* for their group plans.

Finally, students present in front of the classes their activities. To do this, they used their imagination to elaborate the setting of their activity and represent their ideas with actions.
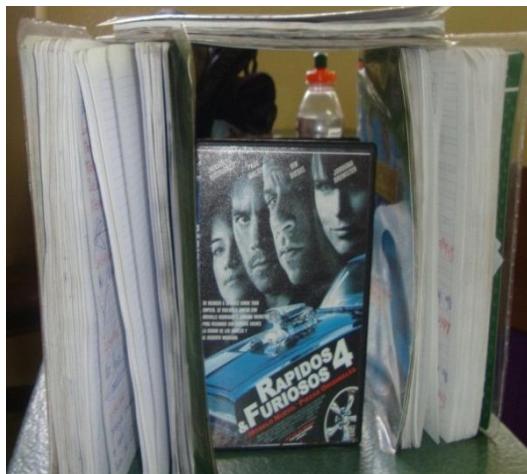

Figure 13. *Examples of students' work: Going to the movies.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

Figure 14. *Examples of students' work: Going on a picnic.* Retrieved from what students did

during the intervention

Figure 15. *Examples of the students' work: Watching a movie at somebody's place.* Retrieved

from what students did during the intervention

Figure 16. *Examples of the students' work: Having a sleepover party.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

4.1.2.5. Teacher's Notes about the Activity

When students were asked for different activities they use to do in the afternoons or weekends with their friends, they gave many options which were then written on the board. In some cases, the teacher had to help them to express their ideas correctly. When they were told what the activity was going to be about, they got really excited to know that they could choose the option and the group of friends with which to work. According to Dörnyei (1994) a motivation strategy is to design or select different activities adapted to the students' interests, considering that there should be some details which are new or different for the learners. In this case, the class became a different setting for the students since they could think of it as place where they would organize an activity for fun. This activity also coincides with Dörnyei's suggestion to discuss with students alternative materials for the course. Students had time to organize in groups what each person would do and say in front of the class. They were also told

to be prepared for some teacher's questions when presenting their project. In this case, students helped each other and they also asked the teacher some questions in order to express their ideas. It was possible to see that some of their questions were very basic, so when they got the teacher's answer, they realized that they had already learned those expressions. This shows us that some contents they have learned before have not had the chance to be related to simple and real facts of the language use. Ausubel (1976) suggests making connections between the new information and the previous. By doing this activity, the students get to connect what they learn to real situations more tangible than just completing isolated exercises in the book.

Students took the presentation of their groups very seriously. They were very enthusiastic and there was a lot of imagination in their presentations. They brought toys, clothes or self-made objects to represent their plans. They were not afraid to talk in front of their peers. The teacher asked some questions to establish a conversation with them and also as a way of feedback and elicitation technique, just as Dörnyei (1994, p.281) suggests: "to promote positive self-perceptions of competence in L2 by highlighting what students can do in L2 rather than what they cannot do". Students felt confident when presenting their work in front of the class. They could feel that they were not there to be judged but to have fun with their group when using their English.

4.1.3. Project: The Wishing Well

4.1.3.1. Aims

- To practice vocabulary and structures orally
- To describe wishes for the future

4.1.3.2. Resources

4.1.3.2.1. Human Resources: Students and teacher

4.1.3.2.2. Material Resources: Pieces of cardboard, a container

4.1.3.3. Methodological Orientations

The main purpose of this activity is to have students use their knowledge in order to express their own wishes. Each student has the opportunity to think and express their feelings by asking for wishes from a wishing well.

4.1.3.4. Development of the Activity

Students listen to a song and look at the picture (see Figure 17). The teacher asks students for ideas about what is happening and what the person is doing. Then, students read some of the options given by the book for wishes (see Figure 18) and give more ideas which are written on the board. The teacher gives each student a minimum of 3 pieces of cardboard and tells the students they have the chance to make wishes and throw them into a well. Each student presents a wish to the class and "throws" it into the well.

Figure 17: *Textbook's activity.* Reprinted from Fairyland US6 (p.50), by J. Dooley & V. Evans, 2011, Newbury: Express Publishing. Copyright 2011 by Express Publishing
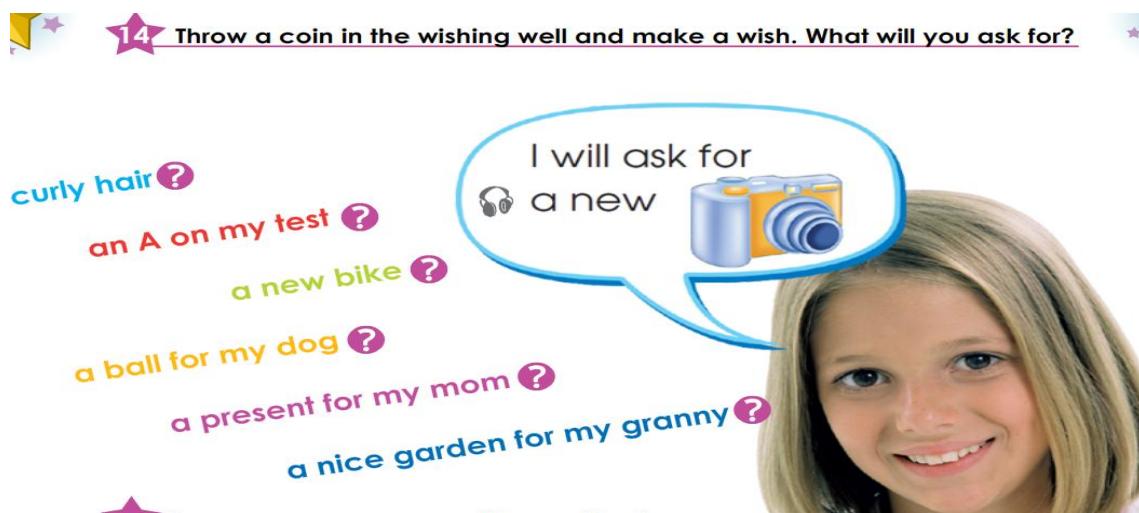

Figure 18: *Textbook's ideas for wishes.* Reprinted from Fairyland US6 (p.50), by J. Dooley & V. Evans, 2011, Newbury: Express Publishing. Copyright 2011 by Express Publishing

4.1.3.5. Teacher's Notes of the Activity

Students' imagination has no limits. This activity allowed us to have students share some ideas and hopes they have in their lives. Students were given a minimum of 3 pieces of cardboard upon which to write down their most desired wishes. Some students took it very seriously and it was possible to see that they put a huge hope in the well when throwing their wishes into it. There were many questions for the teacher in order to express their ideas in the way they wanted. Some students wished for material things and others felt very hopeful to ask for more personal wishes for their families, e.g. to have a baby brother, or to have peace between their parents. Some students wrote their wishes and drew them if possible. They were motivated to participate and to let their friends know one of their wishes, the rest of the students just put them into the well. This activity touched students' deep feelings and that is why it got them involved more closely because they felt they could express ideas that had never been asked of them before. Dörnyei (1994) proposes to us as teachers to personalize the activities by engaging students in significant exchanges such as personal information and interacting with friends in order to increase students' interest and involvement in the class. In this activity, students felt very motivated and happy to share their feelings and ideas (see Figure 19)
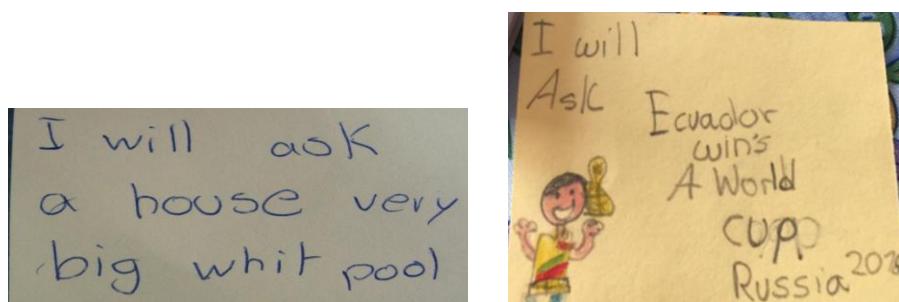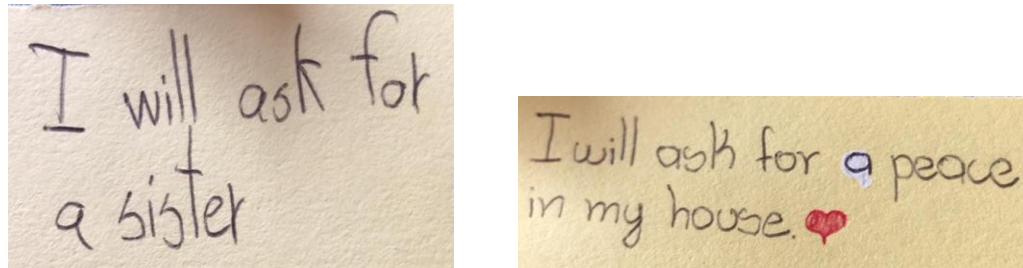
Figure 19: *Examples of students' wishes.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

4.1.4. Game: Tic-Tac-Toe

4.1.4.1. Aims

- To practice vocabulary and structures orally

- To describe future events

4.1.4.2. Resources:

4.1.4.2.1. Human Resources: Students and teacher

4.1.4.2.2. Material Resources: Flashcards, board, markers, textbook

4.1.4.3. Methodological Orientations

The main purpose of this activity is to have students use their knowledge in order to express ideas and describe other people's actions orally. Each team takes turns speaking and, depending on their answer, they get their team's symbol (an X or an O) or not.

4.1.4.4. Development of the Activity

Students open their books to page 47. The teacher asks them to say what is happening in each picture. After it has been explained that the second picture represents the child's future, they are asked to answer the questions orally (see Figure 20). The teacher draws a 3x3 tic-tac-toe game on the board and each square is defined with a number (up to 999) or an ordinal number (up to the 31st). Only one student is given the word. He/she has to choose a square by saying a number (cardinal or ordinal, depending on the case) correctly (see Figure 21). Then, a picture is shown to the class and the student is asked to describe it or to answer a question about it accurately so he/she gets the team's symbol in the chosen squares. Dörnyei (1994) states in his list of suggestions to motivate L2 learners that a teacher should promote the students' attention and immersion in the activities by choosing different and challenging tasks according to the students' interests, considering that they should include game-like characteristics such as problem-solving so students get involved emotionally. This game is always challenging for students, since they do not know what the teacher is going to ask them, so they develop self-confidence awareness since they think they will be able to win a symbol for their team. There are many options to apply this game for different structures to be practiced. For example, the teacher can ask questions to the student about the pictures, or can ask the students to say what the other person will not do (negative form of the structure) as well as the affirmative form. It is also possible to practice other verb tenses with this activity so it does not become boring for the students. The first group to achieve 3 of their symbols in a row wins a point for the team (see Figure 21).

Figure 20: *Textbok's examples.* Reprinted from Fairyland US6 (p.47), by J. Dooley & V. Evans, 2011, Newbury: Express Publishing. Copyright 2011 by Express Publishing
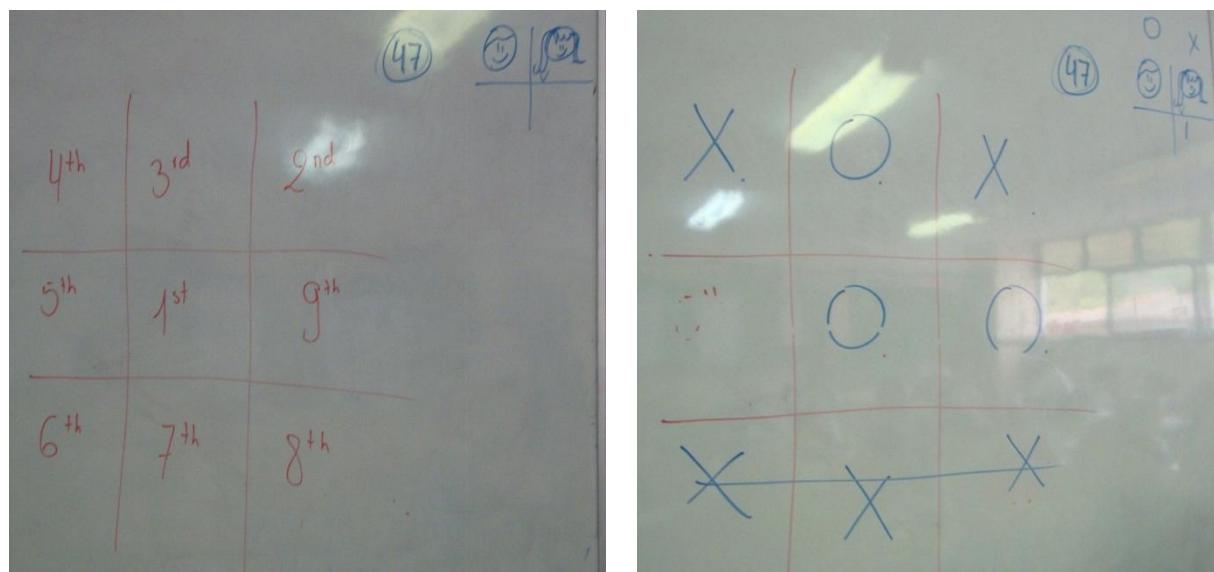

Figure 21: *Table of squares drawn in the class board.* Retrieved from the classroom board during the games

4.1.4.5. Teacher's Notes of the Activity

The characteristics of this game allow the teacher to expand upon ideas as to how to use it. It is up to the teacher to decide which groups that are going to compete or the content or topic he/she wants to practice. These students had already played this game but just as a way of warm-up or ending the class. In this case, they played the game in different manners so it did not become monotonous or boring to them. They were eager to participate and get the symbol for their teams. It was possible to see that they enjoyed most when the contests against the other gender (boys versus girls). The teacher used the textbook for students to see pictures about another person's future. They could also see some examples of the structures and started using them for answering other types of questions asked by the teacher. After this, the teacher used other flashcards with actions which should be used for the game. As it is possible to see in Figure 21, the teacher does not need to have sophisticated tools for this game. It is very simple and the students really enjoy it. This game constitutes a very good eliciting tool for students to apply what they know orally. They self-correct themselves and it was also possible to see that once they made a mistake (which would leave the team without its symbol) they would try to do it again and that mistake would not happen anymore. In this case, the teacher's role is very important because his/her way of correcting the students will influence the class's reaction towards the student and his/her answer. Dörnyei (1994) suggests the teachers decrease learner's anxiety by promoting support and acceptance in the learning environment. When competing, the students were very engaged and willing to use English in order to win the game so they listened to the instructions carefully and wanted to participate more.

Four more activities have been applied in this intervention. Each of them belongs to a particular category (songs, role-playing, projects, and games). The methodology and conclusions are similar to the ones described above. This is why their lesson plans are attached at the end of this thesis.

4.2. Post-intervention Results

After the intervention took place, students answered a questionnaire with one closed-ended question and seven open-ended ones. Spanish was used to ask and answer the questions. The corresponding answers were translated by the author of the thesis. This questionnaire was applied by a different teacher, so students wouldn't feel any kind of pressure when giving their opinions. The questions were the following:

1. Check three activities that you liked the most during the English classes:

   ☐ Tic-tac-toe   ☐ Make plans with friends. Who will do what?

   ☐ Submarine (Battleship)   ☐ Future profession
   ☐ Songs   ☐ Gadget invention
   ☐ The wishing well

2. What is your opinion about these activities?

3. Would you like to have more of these activities in your English class and not only having to work in the book?

4. Did you pay attention to your teacher's explanations and reinforcements done on the board?

5. Do you consider there were more opportunities to participate in the class?

6. Do you consider you could express yourself in English more easily when doing this kind of activities?

7. How did you feel when sharing your ideas in the class to your classmates and teacher?

8. Would you like your teacher to continue applying this kind of activities in the English class? Why?

In addition, a vocabulary post-test was applied to the students in order to see if there were changes in their English vocabulary acquisition.

The main objective of these analyses is to determine if the application of ludic activities have a positive, negative, or null effect on students' motivation towards English learning and vocabulary acquisition.

4.2.1. Analysis of Results after the Application of Ludic Activities

4.2.1.1. Post-intervention questionnaire

On the day of the questionnaire application there were forty students in the class. The analysis is described in two parts: the first question allowed us to quantify the activities students liked the most during the intervention and the second part belongs to the qualitative analysis of the seven remaining questions.

4.2.1.1.1.   Students' Favorite Activities

Table 19. *Description of students' preferences*

	Students (40)	
	Tokens	**Percentage**
Tic-tac-toe	28	70
Gadget invention	24	60
Submarine	19	47.5
Future profession	18	45
Make plans with friends	14	35
The wishing well	12	30
Songs	5	12.5

Students' answers enabled us to conclude that their favorite activities done in the class were the tic-tac-toe game and the gadget invention. The least mentioned activities were the songs. As it is possible to see, students like to be challenged and to be creative while using the new language. When playing tic-tac-toe, students felt very excited to get a symbol for their team after they describe or answer something accurately according to the teacher's requests. This influences their mood greatly and their willingness to learn more so that they are able to beat the other team. In the case of the future gadget, there were many ideas from the students that show how much they got involved in this topic. Inventions like a cloning machine, a suitcase capable of transporting their house wherever they wanted, a paintbrush that transforms a person's face into another one, etc. and their interest in learning vocabulary related to these inventions allowed us

to see that the children's imagination is beyond limits and that this should be considered within the classes to promote learning. According to Hattie (2008), a teacher should establish class goals based on challenge levels. These should be high enough to encourage and motivate students to learn since, as this author conceives, the more challenging the goal, the clearer the notion of success. In this case, it is crucial to combine the challenging goals with thoughtful practice and feedback. As Dörnyei (1994) states, a teacher should give informational feedback instead of a controlling one. Indicating what was accomplished and not exaggerating the errors. This author also says that the difficulty of the activities has to be in accord with the students' abilities in order to expect to be successful if they dedicate the effort. This is when the activities should challenge students in a way that is neither too easy nor too difficult for them. The latter would have a negative and disappointing effect on students' motivation levels.

4.2.1.1.2. Students' opinions and considerations about the activities

When students were asked for an opinion about these activities, the majority of students thought that they were fun and also entertaining and that they had learned better because of them. As mentioned before, in spite of their ages these students realize the importance of acquiring knowledge. An adult would generally feel that children only think of playing and not learning, but in this case, it is possible to see that they liked both; they had fun and also considered it a better way to learn the target language. The following quotes illustrate their opinions:

"They are good for improving my English"   (Student 9)

"They are very good, we didn't get bored. The class became more fun and easier to learn"

(Student 25)

"They were good and helped us with pronunciation and spelling" (Student 35)

All of the students suggested that we include more activities like these within their English classes in addition to the textbook. They feel the book's activities are necessary but that they should not be the only thing used by the teacher. Expressions such as the following permit us to understand their beliefs:

"I don't like learning only with the book. Learning by playing is a good idea"

(Student 11)

"I would like more of these activities to learn better than when using the book only"

(Student 33)

"If it is only the book, the classes become boring" (Student 35)

Every student is of the opinion that there should be more activities like these in the classes. Their words demonstrate that it is a way of helping students to like English more. Fisher *et al*. (2011), assert that learning through games is an alternative to didactic instruction that encourages esteem and practice in students. These students think it is an opportunity to find the new language easier to learn and understand and their anxiety levels decrease when they are asked to participate:

"Yes, it is a better idea to encourage children to like English more" (Student 9)

"Yes, because it helps me to consider English an easier subject" (Student 15)

"Yes, because it is very funny and we strive, and without realizing we get to practice and learn" (Student 37)

The students' opinions of themselves as to paying attention to their teachers' explanations and reinforcements on the board were the following: The great majority (32) answered positively, some others said "sometimes" and only one student answered negatively. Students' expressions allow us see that they paid attention in order to understand, to follow the rules, and to avoid mistakes when doing the activities. Some examples of students' reactions are the following:

"Yes because otherwise I didn't know how to do the activities"   (Student 21)

"Yes so I could explain it to my friends"   (Student 22)

"Yes, so I would not be mistaken in front of my friends"   (Student 29)

In the case of students who said sometimes or no, there were several answers that expressed that they did not pay much attention because they knew their friends would explain it to them afterwards. As it was possible to see in the previous example, a student expresses his idea of having to explain to his friends. This case shows that these students learn in a collaborative environment. The explanations from some students to others were in Spanish, given their age, English level and testimonies such as: *No. I preferred when my friend explained it to me in Spanish"* (Student 19). Even if their explanations were in Spanish, this could have become a way of learning for those students and the important thing is that after those explanations these students presented their tasks or participated in front of everybody with more confidence than before. Dörnyei (1994) suggests as part of the teacher-specific motivational components to encourage learner autonomy by promoting peer-teaching and including projects where learners have responsibilities and authority positions. He also suggests using cooperative learning

techniques by having group work in class. In this case, these students see their peers as a source of knowledge who are willing to help whenever they need it.

The great majority of students think that there were more opportunities to participate in the class. Their expressions let us see that even if students made mistakes they could be corrected and they learned from their errors. Some others noticed that even the shyest students participated in the classes. According to Krashen (1982), an effective way to keep low affective filters is when the teacher has a positive role in the class; this is, to be a facilitator instead of a judge or tester. In this case, students feel confident enough to participate and express their ideas, even if they know there is a risk of being wrong:

"Yes, I don't like to participate but I actually like the games"   (Student 21)

"Yes, there were more opportunities. Everybody participated and it was nice"

(Student29)

"Yes, because each time I was wrong, they corrected me and I learned" (Student 34)

Most of the students feel they could express themselves in English more easily when using these activities. Their answers allowed us see that they considered English less difficult. They were not nervous or worried about making any mistakes in the class since they were playing just like the others. These expressions let us see that their affective filter has been lowered by the way they consider the activities proposed in the class and their classmate's corrections do not affect them since they consider everybody in the class may be mistaken too. Examples of students' comments are the following:

"Yes, they helped me a lot"   (Student 15)

"Yes, because they were games and it was not a problem to be mistaken" (Student 33)

"Yes, because since they were games, I didn't get nervous"   (Student 35)

By considering students' answers about their feelings when sharing ideas in the class, it is possible to establish that almost all of the students had a positive opinion about this aspect. Several answers, such as the following give us a wider perspective of the student's feelings:

"I felt I could do it better in English"   (Student 6)

"I felt good because I am learning and I get to express my ideas"   (Student 10)

"I felt great because they listened to me"   (Student 17)

These answers show us that the affective filter has been diminished since the situations presented to the students were not stressful for them; therefore, they were willing to participate and speak in front of their class with no fear of being judged by the teacher or their peers.

4.2.2. Results after the application of ludic strategies (post-test)

A vocabulary post-test was applied to the students after the intervention took place. The parameters for measuring the results are the same as those in the vocabulary pre-test analysis. On the day of the pre-test application, 41 students were present. The results are the following:

Question1. Read and match the ordinal numbers

Table 20. *Question 1. Vocabulary Post-test*

Category	F	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	32	78.1
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	8	19.5
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	1	2.4
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	0	0.0
Total	41	100.0
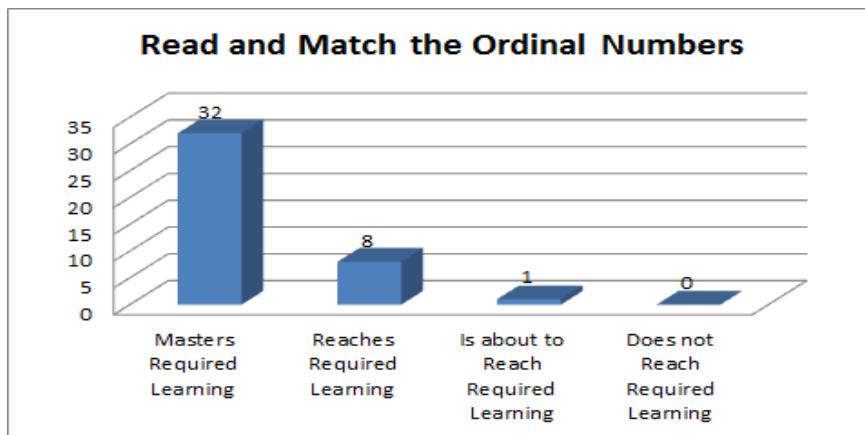
Figure 22. *Classification of students' results in question 1- Vocabulary Post-test*

As we can see in Figure 22, the great majority of students (40) obtained a higher grade than the minimum required. This represents a 97.6% of the class.

Question 2. Read and complete with the corresponding verb-form

Table 21. *Question 2. Vocabulary Post-test*

Category	F	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	7	17.1
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	15	36.5
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	7	17.1
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	12	29.3
Total	41	100
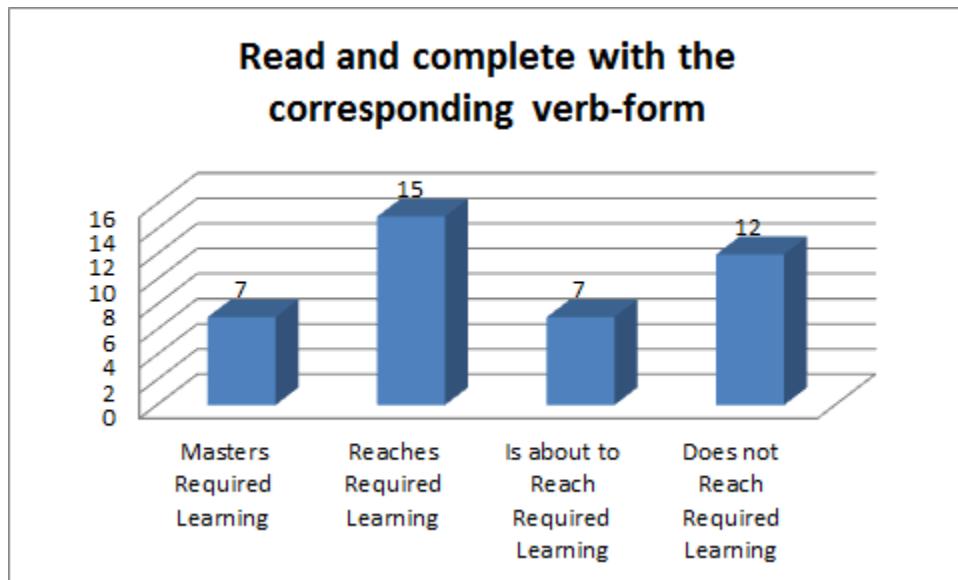
Figure 23. *Classification of students' results in question 2- Vocabulary Post-test*

Out of 41 students, 22 of them had answers above the minimum requested. This represents 53.6% of the class. This percentage represents a majority of students.

Question 3. Write the Months of the Year where they correspond

Table 22. *Question3. Vocabulary Post-test*

Category	F	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	22	53.7
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	10	24.4
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	7	17.0
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	2	4.9
Total	41	100
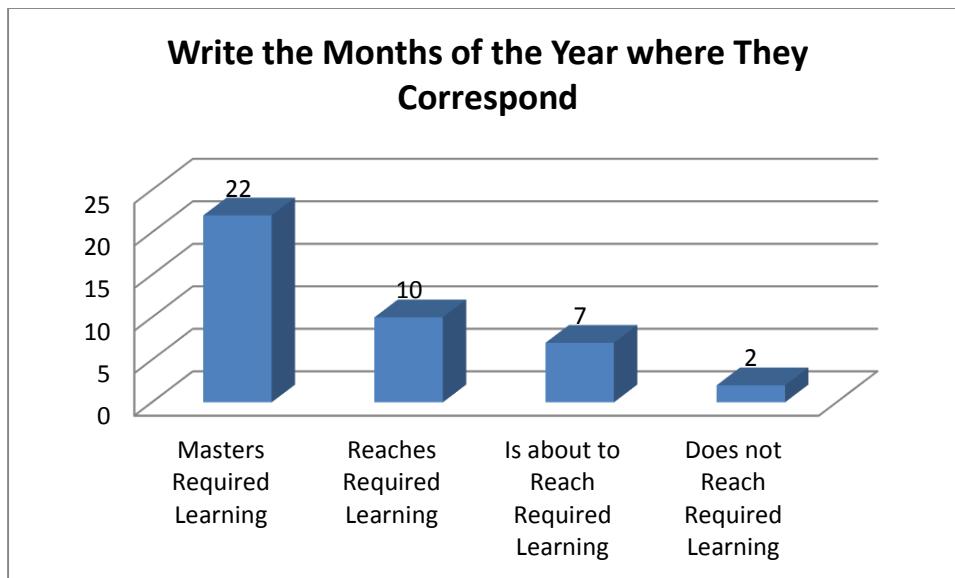
Figure 24. *Classification of students' results in question 3 - Vocabulary Post-test*

The majority of students got grades above the minimum required in order not to request a reinforcement. This represents 78.1% of students, compared to the 21.9% of students who did not reach the minimum 7 out of 10.

Question 4. Read and complete with the corresponding action

Table 23. *Question 4. Vocabulary Post-test*

Category	F	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	5	12.2
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	24	58.5
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	9	22.0
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	3	7.3
Total	41	100
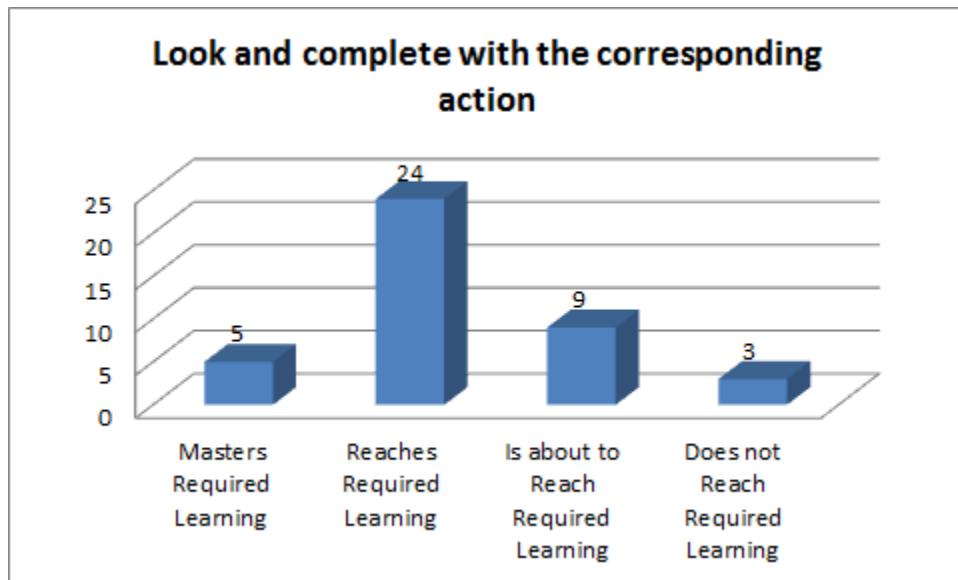
Figure 25. *Classification of students' results in question 4 - Vocabulary Post-test*

There are 29 students whose grade reached the minimum requested. This represents a majority with 70.7% of the class.

Question 5. Read and answer the questions about his future

Table 24. *Question 5. Vocabulary Post-test*

Category	F	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	24	58.5
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	5	12.2
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	7	17.1
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	5	12.2
Total	41	100.0
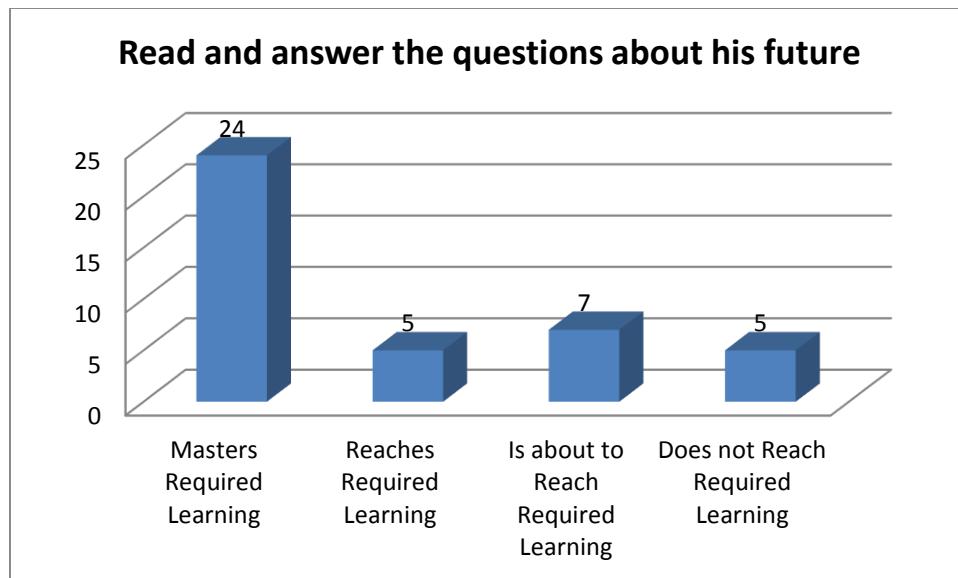
Figure 26. *Classification of students' results in question 5 - Vocabulary Post-test*

There are 29 students who obtained a higher grade than the minimum 7 out of 10. This

belongs to a 70.7% of the students (see Figure 26)

4.2.3. Vocabulary Post-test Statistical Analysis

4.2.3.1. Sample Mean.

$$\bar{x} = 7.89$$

4.2.3.2. Standard Deviation.

$$S = 1.44$$

4.2.3.3.Interpretation. The average grade of the vocabulary post-test is 7.89/10 which is between a maximum value of 10/10 and a minimal value of 4.1/10. The variation of closeness or distance towards the central value is of 1.44.

4.2.3.4. Confidence Interval. With a level of confidence of 0.05, this represents a 95% probability of error.

$$7.45 \leq \mu \leq 8.33$$
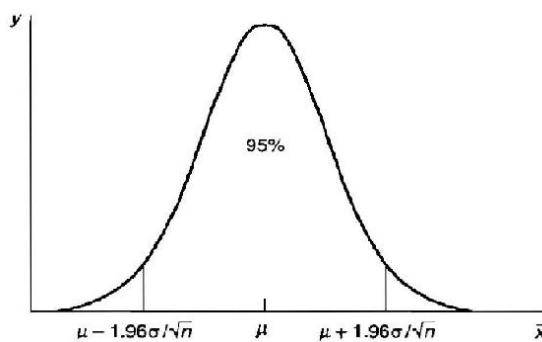
Figure 27. *Confidence interval representation*
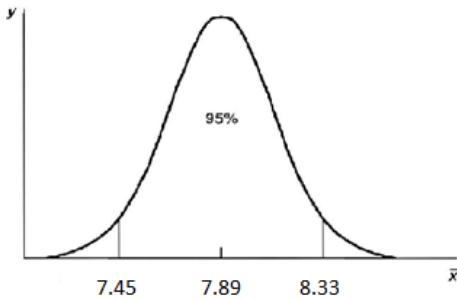
Figure 28. *Confidence interval of the vocabulary post-test grades*

4.2.3.5. Interpretation. The 95% confidence interval suggests that the population mean of the vocabulary post-test grades of students in Sixth grade "A" is between 7.45 and 8.33 after the intervention of the study took place.

4.2.3.6. Hypothesis Testing

4.2.3.6.1. Null Hypothesis (H_0) and Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)

H_0 $\bar{x} = \mu$ Null hypothesis: the sample mean is the same as the population mean.

H_1 $\bar{x} \neq \mu$ Alternative hypothesis: the sample mean is not the same as the population mean.

4.2.3.6.2. Significance Level ($\propto$)

$\propto\ = 0.05$ Confidence level $= 0.95$

4.2.3.6.3. Normal Distribution Z. For a 95% confidence level, a critical z value corresponds to 1.96.

4.2.3.6.4. Decision Rule Statement

Null hypothesis: ($\bar{x} = \mu$)

$$cz_1 = 1.95 \quad < \quad \text{critical z} = 1.96$$

$$cz_2 = 1.95 \quad < \quad \text{critical z} = 1.96$$

4.2.3.6.5. Interpretation: The critical z value is cz = 1.95. This is below the 1.96 standard, so the result is statistically significant. This means we decide to accept the null hypothesis; hence the sample mean is the same as the population mean.

CHAPTER V

PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1. Evaluation of the Proposal

The data obtained from the vocabulary pre and post-tests have been contrasted with each other in every question in order to see if there were changes in the students' English vocabulary acquisition. The results are the following:

Question1. Read and match the ordinal numbers

Table 25. *Question 1. Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

Category	Pre-test	%	Post-test	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	14	34.1	32	78.1
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	17	41.5	8	19.5
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	6	14.6	1	2.4
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	4	9.8	0	0
Total	41	100	41	100
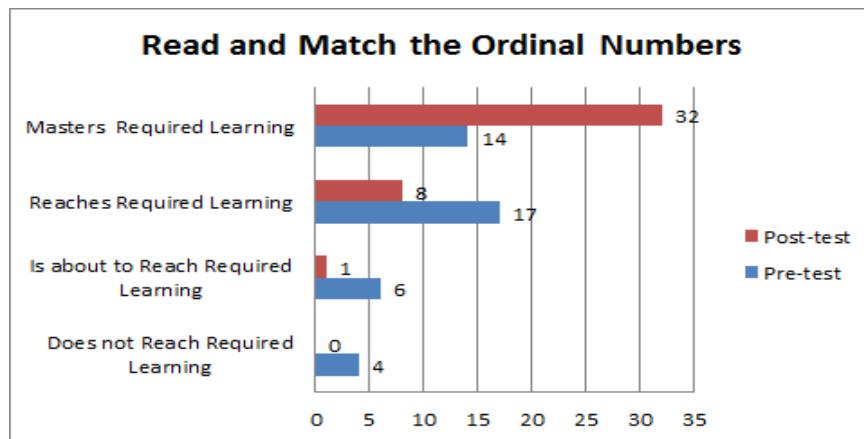
Figure 29. *Comparison of students' results in question 1- Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

As seen in Figure 29, after the intervention took place, the number of students who master the required learning has increased considerably since it was 14 in the pre-test and it became 32 in the post test. There is also an important change in the other categories which demonstrates better results from students' answers.

Question 2. Read and complete with the corresponding verb-form

Table 26. *Question 2. Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

Category	Pre-test	%	Post-test	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	1	2.4	7	17.1
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	3	7.3	15	36.6
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	14	34.2	7	17.1
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	23	56.1	12	29.2
Total	**41**	**100**	**41**	**100**
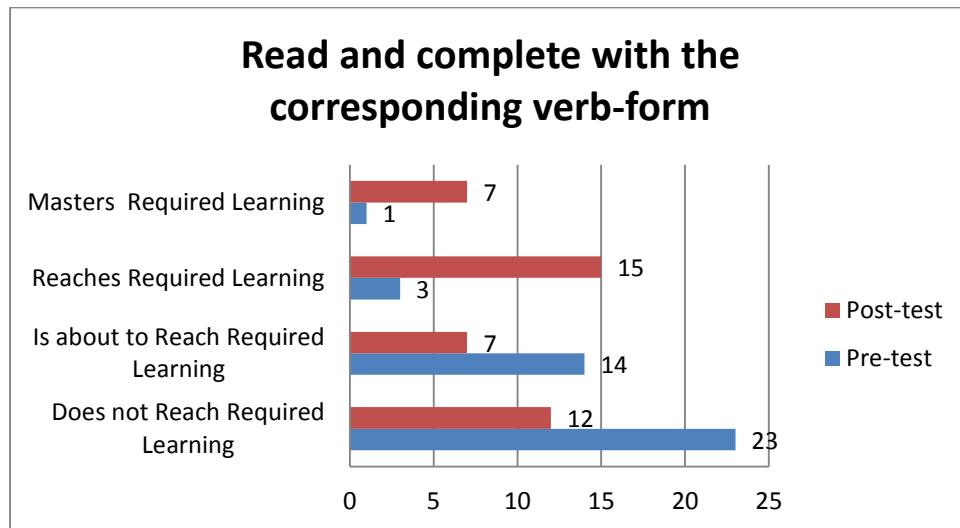
Figure 30. *Comparison of students' results in question 2- Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

The results of the analysis of this question indicate a significant change in the students' responses. After the intervention, 22 students have grades above the minimum required which is much better than 4 students in the pre-test (see Figure 30).

Question 3. Write the months of the year where they correspond

Table 27. *Question 3. Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

Category	Pre-test	%	Post-test	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	6	14.6	22	53.7
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	16	39.0	10	24.4
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	10	24.4	7	17.0
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	9	22.0	2	4.9
Total	**41**	**100**	**41**	**100**
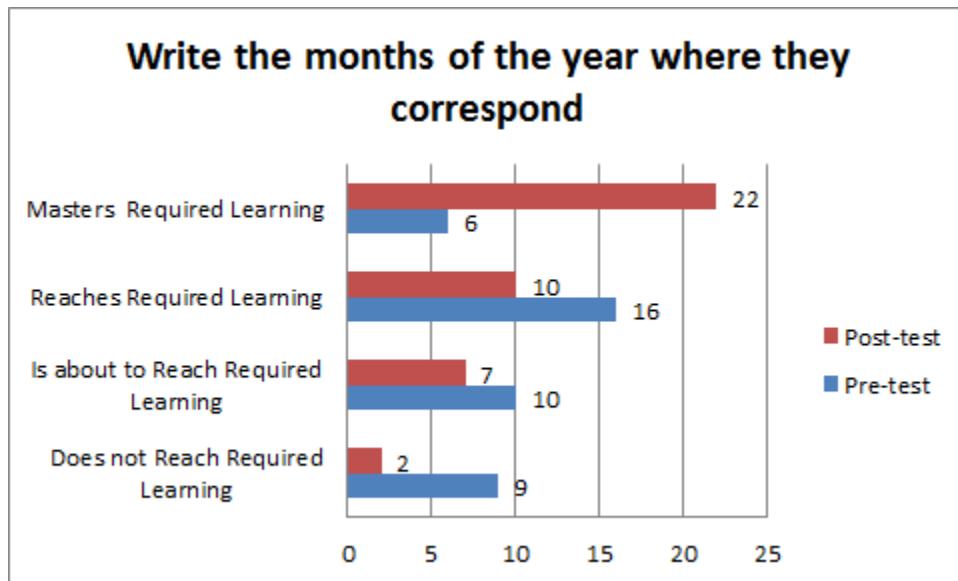
Figure 31. *Comparison of students' results in question 3- Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

By comparing both tests, it is possible to say that the number of students whose answers are below the minimum required has decreased. There are 32 students whose grade is above 7 in the post-test.

Question 4. Read and complete with the corresponding action

Table 28. *Question 4. Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

Category	Pre-test	%	Post-test	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	7	17.1	5	12.2
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	17	41.5	24	58.5
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	13	31.7	9	22.0
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	4	9.7	3	7.3
Total	**41**	**100**	**41**	**100**
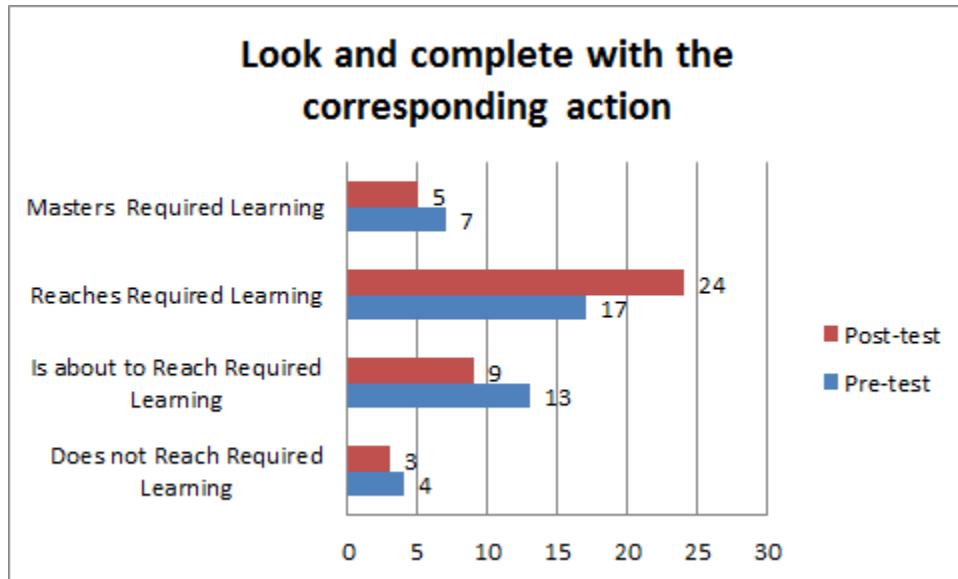
Figure 32. *Comparison of students' results in question 4- Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

It is possible to see in Figure 28 that the majority of the students' grades (29) reach the minimum required which represents 70.7% of the class.

Question 5. Read and answer the questions about his future

Table 29. *Question 5. Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

Category	Pre-test	%	Post-test	%
Masters the required learning (9.00-10.00)	3	7.3	24	58.5
Reaches the required learning (7.00-8.99)	7	17.1	5	12.2
Is about to reach the required learning (4.01-6.99)	1	2.4	7	17.1
Does not reach the required learning (≤ 4)	30	73.2	5	12.2
Total	**41**	**100**	**41**	**100**
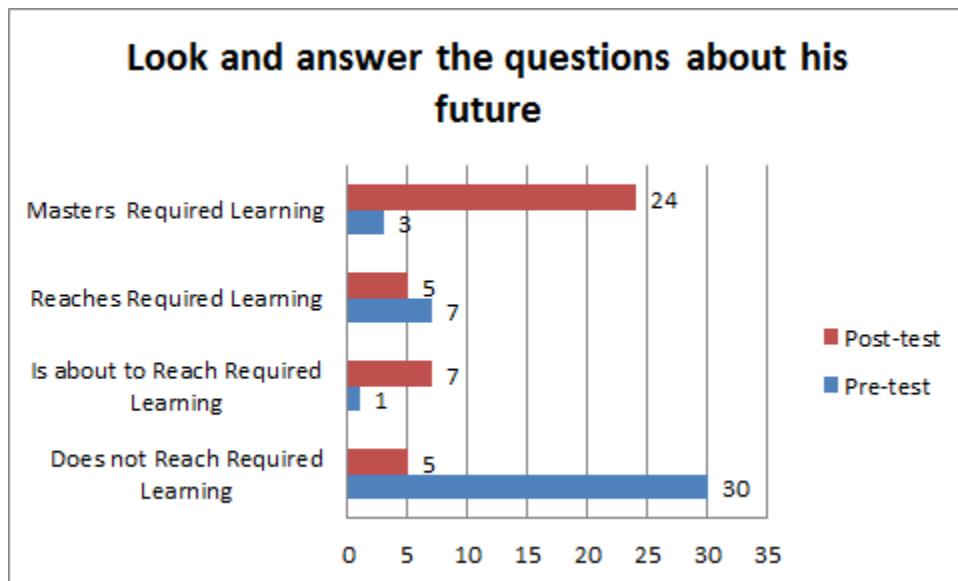
Figure 33. *Comparison of students' results in question 5- Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

The results of this question led us to determine a great change in students' answers. After the intervention took place, the number of students whose grade is above the minimum requested is 29 compared to 10 students in the pre-test answers.

5.2. Analysis of Results

Table 30. *Comparison of the Vocabulary Pre and Post-test*

	Pre-test	**Post-test**	**Improvement (d)**
Read and match the ordinal numbers	75.6%	97.5%	21.9%
Read and complete with the corresponding verb-form	9.8%	53.7%	43.9%
Write the Months of the Year where they correspond	53.6%	78.1%	24.5%
Read and complete with the corresponding action	58.6%	70.4%	11.8%
Read and answer the questions about his future	24.4%	70.7%	46.3%

5.2.1. Hypothesis Testing with Paired Data

$H_0 : \mu_d = 0$	There is no favorable incidence in vocabulary acquisition after the application of ludic activities in the English classes

$H_1 : \mu_d > 0$	There is a favorable incidence in vocabulary acquisition after the application of ludic activities in the English classes

$\bar{d} = 29.68$ gl $= 3$

$S_d = 14.9$ $\alpha = 0.01$ $t_c = 4.54$

$$t_m \frac{\bar{d} - \mu}{\frac{S}{\sqrt{n}}} = \frac{29.68 - 0}{\frac{14.9}{\sqrt{5}}} = 4.46$$
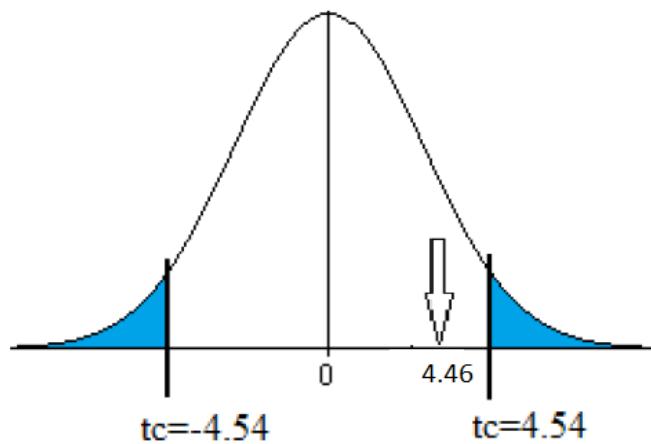
Figure 34. *Hypothesis Testing with Paired Data*

With this result, we accept the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a favorable incidence in vocabulary acquisition after the application of ludic activities in the English classes.

5.3. Discussion

After the analysis done in the diagnosis, it was possible to determine the contrast between what the teachers would like to impart in their classes and what they actually do. On the other hand, we could also see the differences between what the students would like the classes to be like and what their real perception of what happens in the class is. Students' opinions should be taken into account in order to understand their learning process. In this way, it is possible to lower the probability of students' experiencing learning problems, frustration, anxiety and absence of motivation (Kern, 1995). Nevertheless, from the previous analysis it is possible to determine that there are many facts that involve Asunción School's reality that affect the methods and techniques used by the teachers. All these facts, such as the teacher's influence, the curriculum, materials and their group of peers may affect students' motivation levels since they are influenced by their direct learning settings and experiences (Dörnyei, 2010).

Qiang and Ning (2011) mention some difficulties found in teaching large classes in China which allow us to see that what has been found in this study also happens in other realities. The difficulties mentioned were the following: to keep control of the class, to consider every students' needs, to plan well-organized classes (considering time and space constraints), to let every student participate and practice equally and to provide feedback and evaluation effectively.

In her study, Uberman (1998) concluded that using games as techniques for presenting and revising vocabulary had positive results. She mentions the benefits of using games since they motivate and entertain students whilst they help them to remember vocabulary.

In their study, Stojković and Jerotijević (2011) determined lack of time to be the main obstacle for teachers to use games, as well as the most commonly mentioned reason for not using them is the concern for having a mess in the EFL class. Locastro (2001) thinks that managing a large class requires more effort from language teachers than those who manage smaller ones. The following findings of Hayes (1997) coincide with the problems described by teachers when teaching large classes: a) Discomfort: Classrooms are small and therefore there are physical constraints due to the number of students. Teachers feel it is not possible to encourage interaction amongst students since it is difficult to move around. b) Control: Discipline is an important concern since teachers feel they are unable to control everything that happens in the class which can sometimes become too noisy. c) Individual attention: Teachers are worried about not being able to attend to every student's needs as individuals. d) Evaluation: Teachers know they need to check all of their students' works but they are concerned when it is not possible to do so all the time. e) Learning effectiveness: Every teacher's aim is to have students learn but they are worried if they do not know whether their students are learning or not.

Students feel that it is easier to acquire knowledge through ludic activities since they forget their feelings of shame or frustration for not knowing academic answers in front of the class. This fact was possible to be observed in the post-intervention results of the students' levels of motivation and vocabulary acquisition. Huyen and Nga (2003) concluded that learners consider games within their classes as a way to promote a relaxed atmosphere, plenty of competitiveness and motivation. Besides, intrinsic motivation goes hand-in-hand with conquering challenges which should have an ideal level so students do not get bored from an overly simple task or too disappointed if the activity is too difficult for their level (Busse, 2014)

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Conclusions

The completion of this study allows us to conclude that students' vocabulary learning and motivation levels presented favorable changes since vocabulary results had been improved and students' perceptions of themselves and their English class presented positive ideas about the use of ludic activities.

Students tend to participate more in their classes when ludic activities take place since they have a better predisposition to learn the target language which they consider fun and interesting. There are also some students who do not enjoy these classes. In these cases, ludic activities are a good alternative to be used in order to catch most of the students' attention and have them involved in their teaching-learning process.

Students learn and practice vocabulary and structures by using the target language in a relaxed manner where their learning anxiety is reduced (Uberman, 1998). The use of ludic activities gives students a positive atmosphere where they feel amused and relaxed (Huyen and Nga, 2003). These characteristics decrease the fear of negative evaluation in students which is the fear of being negatively evaluated or judged by others.

Students manifest that they pay attention to their teacher's explanations and concentrate more so that they can participate in ludic activities more effectively; this shows an increase in their motivational levels to learn which unconsciously improves the acquisition of knowledge. Locke

and Latham (1996) say in their goal-setting theory that human actions need goals to be established and pursued. The commitment level of the person is higher when he/she considers the objective important and something which is attainable. In this case, goals have effects upon a person's performance by directing attention, effort and persistence towards their corresponding achievement.

Ludic activities facilitate the creation of meaningful contexts for language use. Learners like these activities due to the competitive elements that make them interesting and motivating for them. As can be seen in this research, students are encouraged by being part of the activities through games. They want to participate and, by doing so, they feel the necessity to pay attention to their teacher and peers. This is similar to what Chen (2005) found in his study about using games to promote communicative skills in language learning.

The application of ludic activities allows the teacher to offer less predictable classes which are more attractive to the students. Dörnyei (1994) suggests, as a motivating strategy, to increase and withstand curiosity and attention of learners by presenting new, unanticipated and surprising actions. In this way, lessons would not become a predictable routine.

The teacher's role as a researcher made this study part of an active research which demanded complete veracity about the findings and results. It was very important students to be asked about their perceptions by a neutral person so they would not feel any kind of obligation to answer in a certain way.

Having students know that they are being part of their teacher's study may imply a limitation. In terms of giving their own opinion about the English classes, students' reactions and responses

may be affected by their teacher's presence. In order to minimize this constraint, a different teacher was in charge of applying the corresponding questionnaires so students would not feel any kind of pressure to give certain answers.

A limitation of the qualitative part of this study is the unequal power relation when giving final interpretations of the results. It is necessary to consider the power relation between the researcher and the researched as a determined interaction and not as a relation of power. By considering this interaction it will be possible to see its influence in the final interpretation of the qualitative results which is influenced by the complete research process (Almlund, 2013).

6.2. Recommendations

The comparison of results obtained in this study before and after the application of ludic activities in motivation levels and vocabulary acquisition permits us to recommend the use of ludic activities within English classes. It is important to state that the activities proposed must be correctly planned and addressed by the teacher so students can participate and seize the advantages of learning through these kinds of tasks.

Ludic activities should not be considered time-fillers, warm-ups or prizes only. They can be used throughout a complete lesson so students practice the target language in a different way—something which could be more effective in motivational and vocabulary aspects. Kim (1995) states that games should be the main part of foreign language teaching. Therefore, it should not be considered an extra task to be done to fill-in class time when there is nothing else to do by the teacher or the students. For games to be effective within the classes, they must be carefully chosen, taking into consideration that they can also be used for revision and reinforcement.

There must always be positive feedback whenever a teacher uses these kinds of activities. Thus, students will feel engaged in a stress-free environment where their only concern is to participate and not to be judged by others. The teacher must use correction strategies that do not affect the students' self-esteem or that could cause peer judgment within the class.

English teachers should warn teachers and the authorities that the use of these activities may result in louder classes which does not necessarily mean they are not learning. It is important to attain a new conception where silence does not always involve high-level learning, so teachers would not have to give explanations all the time or be concerned of having problems because of others' reactions of indiscipline.

The experience acquired by this study allows us to invite other teachers not to develop their classes based on the textbook activities alone, but to come up with engaging options according to their students' needs and requirements which could become much more effective than just fulfilling an annual lesson plan.

It is possible to recommend the use of these activities in other levels of this institution since they are easily adjustable to any vocabulary, grammar structure or need that a teacher may present.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

Cuenca, 21 de Enero del 2016

Licenciada
Estrella Sarmiento
Directora de la Escuela "La Asunción"
Su Despacho

De mis consideraciones,

A través de la presente yo, Diana Vázquez Paredes, estudiante de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera en la Universidad de Cuenca, me permito solicitar muy comedidamente se me autorice la realización y aplicación de mi trabajo de investigación final cuyo título es: "The Effects of Motivation through Ludic Strategies to Increase English Vocabulary in Elementary School Sixth Level"

Este trabajo de investigación pretende determinar si la aplicación de estrategias lúdicas permite mejorar la adquisición de vocabulario en inglés en el Sexto Año de Educación Básica "A". Este estudio se lo llevará a cabo durante treinta y dos, y tendrá como principal objetivo lograr un aprendizaje más significativo del inglés en los estudiantes.

Por la favorable acogida que se digne dar a la presente, anticipo mis más sinceros agradecimientos.

Atentamente,
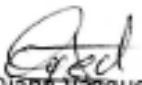
Lic. Diana Vázquez Paredes
Profesora de Inglés

ANNEX 2

INFORMED CONSENT
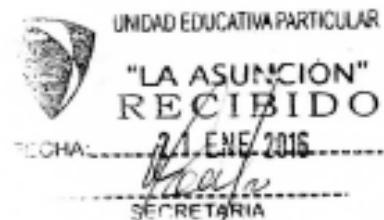
Participación Voluntaria en el Proyecto de Investigación de Inglés

Sr. Representante

La Profesora Diana Vázquez Paredes, docente de Inglés de la Escuela La Asunción y estudiante de la Universidad de Cuenca en la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés como Lengua Extranjera, está desarrollando una investigación de acción, cuyo título es: Los efectos de las actividades lúdicas en los niveles de aprendizaje de vocabulario y motivación . Estudio a través del cual se pretende entender si la estrategia de la aplicación de juegos digitales permite o no a su niño mejorar su adquisición de vocabulario. El objetivo es propiciar momentos de aprendizaje en donde su niño logre, a través de juegos, mejorar su vocabulario en inglés.

A través del presente, invitamos a su representado a participar de este proyecto, el cual se llevará a cabo durante dos semanas en las clases de inglés. Los resultados se presentarán protegiendo la identidad del estudiante.

La participación en esta actividad es voluntaria. Su representado es libre de negarse a ser entrevistado y observado. Así también, su niño puede cambiar de decisión acerca de su participación en esta actividad en cualquier momento. Es necesario informar que la participación de su representado en este trabajo no influirá en su calificación.

Si está de acuerdo con la participación de su representado en este proyecto, por favor, sírvase autorizar con su firma.

Yo, ……………………………………. representante del estudiante ………………………… estoy de acuerdo en que mi representado participe en el proyecto de investigación de inglés.

ANNEX 3

	STUDENTS QUESTIONNAIRE	

Año de Educación Básica:_____

1. **¿Te gusta aprender Inglés? ¿Por qué?**
    _____
    _____

2. **¿Qué es lo que más te gusta hacer en la hora de Inglés?**
    _____
    _____

3. **¿Te gustan las tareas que realizas en los libros de inglés?**
    _____
    _____

4. **¿Prestas atención a las explicaciones y refuerzos que tu profesora realiza en el pizarrón?**
    _____
    _____

5. **¿Qué tan seguido participas en las clases de Inglés? ¿Por qué?**
    _____
    _____

6. **¿Te gustaría poder entender y decir más cosas en Inglés?**
    _____
    _____

7. **¿Qué clase de actividades te gustan más en Inglés? ¿Por qué?**
    _____
    _____

8. **¿Qué le pedirías a tu profesora de Inglés que realice más dentro de las clases para aprender mejor?**

_____
_____

9. **¿Crees que aprendes mejor Inglés cuando hay juegos y concursos en la clase?¿Por qué?**

_____
_____

DONE BY	CHECKED BY
TEACHER: Lic. Diana Vázquez P.	**AREA DIRECTOR:** Ing. Mónica Jerves
Signature:	**Signature:**

ANNEX 4

	VOCABULARY PRE-TEST	

Name: _____ Class: _____

1. Read and match the Ordinal Numbers: /10

twelfth	1st	ninth
	2nd	
first	3rd	twenty-first
	4th	
second	5th	fifth
	9th	
third	12th	fourth
	15th	
twentieth	20th	fifteenth
	21st	

2. Read and complete: /6

• go • stand • come • eat • sit

One day Harry, Mona, and Emma **1)** _____ on a picnic in the forest. They **2)** _____ near a big tree and **3)** _____ their sandwiches. Suddenly, it started to rain so they **4)** _____ and **5)** _____ under the big tree.

"Welcome to the Magic Forest," a voice said. It was Willow! Then Alvin and Erlina **6)** _____ to say *hello*. The children were very happy to meet their new friends. And that's the story of how they all got together!

3. Write the <u>Months of the Year</u> where they correspond: /12

1st		**5th**	
4th		**7th**	
3rd		**9th**	
11th		**6th**	
8th		**10th**	
2nd		**12th**	

4. Look and complete: /12

a. _____ down	b. _____ up	c. _____ an email	d. _____ a match
e. _____ down	f. _____ to school	g. _____ a shower	h. _____ homework
i. _____ pizza	j. _____ some juice	k. _____ a cake	l. _____ the guitar

5. Look and answer the questions about his future: /4

a. Will he be a mechanic?

_____

_

b. Will he have a mustache?

_____

_

c. Will he travel around the world?

_____

_

d. Will he fly a plane?

_____

DONE BY	CHECKED BY
TEACHER: Lic. Diana Vázquez P.	**AREA DIRECTOR:** Ing. Mónica Jerves
Signature:	**Signature:**

ANNEX 5

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Date:_____   **Age:**_____   **Gender:** _____

Number of years as an English Teacher:_____

1. **Do you like teaching English?**
   _____
   _____

2. **Do you consider your students like learning English?**
   _____
   _____

3. **What do you like doing the most within your English classes?**
   _____
   _____

4. **Do you consider the textbook activities are enough for your students to learn? Why?**
   _____
   _____

5. **Do you consider your students pay attention during your explanations and reinforcements?**
   _____
   _____

6. **How often do you consider your students tend to participate in class?**
   _____
   _____

7. **Do you use games to work in class?**_____
   If yes, could you name them and explain the use of them?_____
   _____ _____

8. **When do you use games?**
   _____
   _____

9. **In your opinion, describe advantages and disadvantages of using games?**
    _____
    _____

10. **Would you please describe some of the reasons for not using games in the class?**
    _____
    _____
    THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

ANNEX 6

Formulae and Calculations

Vocabulary Pre-test Statistical Analysis

Sample Mean: $\bar{x} = \dfrac{\sum x_i}{N}$ $\qquad$ $\bar{x} = \dfrac{252.6}{41}$

Standard Deviation: $\qquad$ $S = \sqrt{\dfrac{\sum(x_{i-\bar{x}})^2}{n-1}}$ $\qquad$ $S = \sqrt{\dfrac{\sum(x_{i-\bar{x}})^2}{n-1}}$ $\qquad$ $S = \sqrt{\dfrac{129.64}{40}}$

Confidence Interval: Critical t value = 1.96

$c.i. = \bar{x} \pm z\dfrac{s}{\sqrt{n}}$ $\qquad$ $c.i. = 6.16 \pm \dfrac{1.96(1.81)}{\sqrt{41}}$ $\qquad$ c.i. = 6.16 $\pm$ 0.55

Limit inferior = 5.61

Limit superior = 6.71

$$\mu = \frac{l_i + l_s}{2} \qquad \mu = \frac{5.61 + 6.71}{2} \qquad \mu = 6.16$$

Decision rule statement

$$cz_1 = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu}{\dfrac{s}{\sqrt{n}}} \qquad cz_1 = \frac{6.16 - 5.61}{\dfrac{1.81}{\sqrt{41}}}$$

$$cz_2 = \frac{6.16 - 6.71}{\dfrac{1.81}{\sqrt{41}}}$$

$$z = \frac{x - \bar{x}}{\dfrac{s}{\sqrt{n}}} \qquad z = \frac{7 - 6.16}{\dfrac{1.8}{\sqrt{41}}}$$

ANNEX 6

Lesson Plan 1

Song: Listen, write, and act out

Level: Beginners

Age: 10-11 years old

Materials: Song: Action Words. Talking Flashcards.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=action+words+talking+flashcards

Aims:

- To listen and identify vocabulary

- To write down the words they distinguish

- To sing along

- To act out the actions

Warm up:

The teacher presents some actions by using flashcards. Students describe what they see in each of them. The teacher asks questions to reinforce vocabulary and to check understanding.

Class Activities:

- Students listen to the song several times.

- They are asked to write down the words they can distinguish (see Figure 35)

- Students get to see the song video and confirm the words they wrote down.

- They are asked to stand up and act out

- Sing along
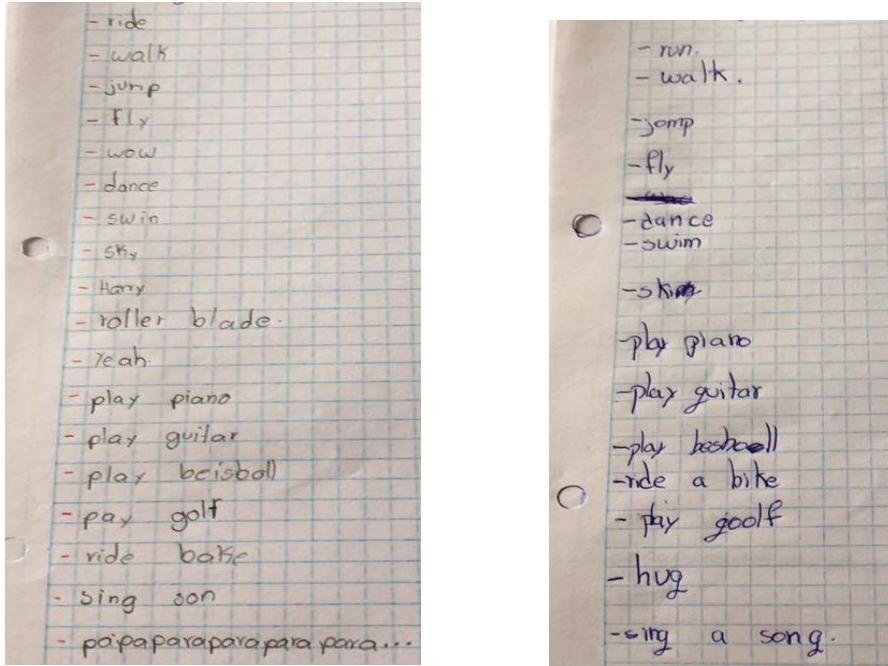
Figure 35: *Examples of students' work during the song.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

Post-activity:

Students are told to sing in groups as they act out the song. The teacher challenges each group to do it better than the other group. This intensifies their willing to sing and demonstrate what they know and how they do it.

ANNEX 7

Lesson Plan 2

Role-play: What are you going to be?

Level: Beginners

Age: 10-11 years old

Materials: Cardboard, colored-pencils, clothes to represent the chosen profession

Aims:

- To describe the profession students want to be in the future

- To draw themselves as professionals

- To tell the class what they want to be and do in the future

Warm up:

The teacher presents some professions by using a poster on the board. Students give ideas of what each profession does. Students' answers are written on the board. The teacher asks questions to reinforce vocabulary and to check understanding.

Class Activities:

- Students are asked about their future: What are you going to be / do? These questions are written on the board and students are told how to answer them.

- Students draw on an A4 cardboard how they imagine their future will be as professionals (see Figure 36).

- They are asked to write sentences about their future (I am going to be a….; I am going to …., etc.)

- Students work in pairs and talk about each other.
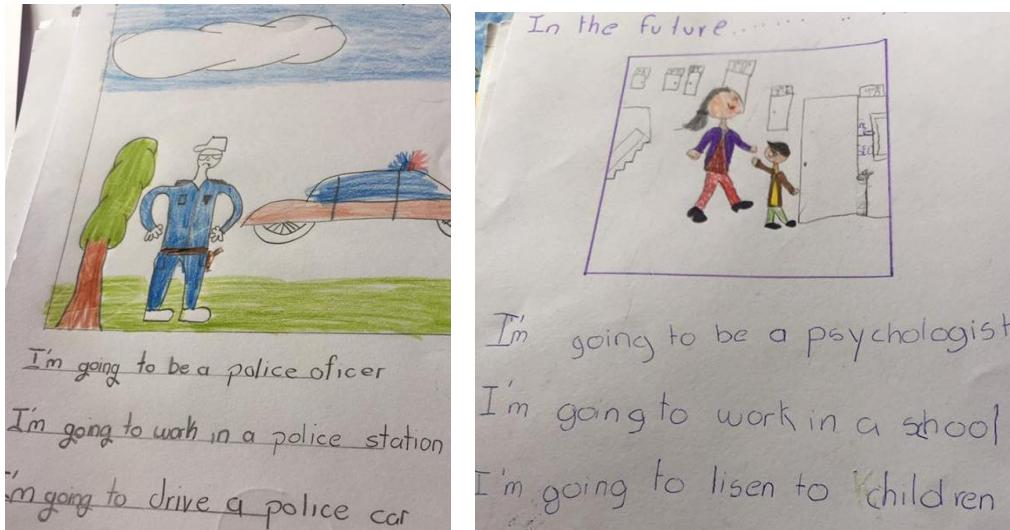
Figure 36: *Examples of students' future professions.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

Post-activity:

- Students are asked to represent their future by wearing the clothes they think they need in that profession. They describe their future in front of the class (see Figure 36).

- The teacher asks questions to the students and to the class about their future.

Figure 37: *Students' performance of their future.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

ANNEX 8

Lesson Plan 3

Project: Invent a future gadget. What will it be used for?

Level: Beginners

Age: 10-11 years old

Materials: Cardboard, colored-pencils

Aims:

- To describe a necessity

- To invent and draw a gadget for that necessity

- To describe the uses of the gadget

Warm up:

The teacher shows some pictures of inventions that will work in the future. Students make comments and add some other ideas from what they have heard or seen on TV.

Class Activities:

- Students open their books to page 51. They read the descriptions of some inventions made by other kids. The teacher asks questions to check understanding

- Students are asked to think of a necessity for the future

- Students draw and decorate an invention made for that necessity (see Figure 38)

- Students describe their gadget features and uses in a written way
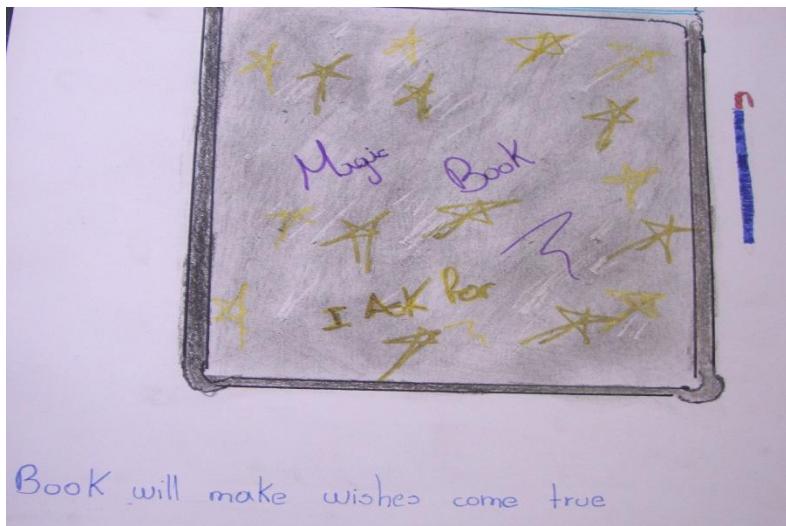
Figure 38: *Examples of students' gadgets: cars will fly; skateboards will fly; books will make wishes come true*. Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

Post-activity:

- Students describe in front of the class the gadgets created by them.

- The teacher asks questions to the student for more details.

ANNEX 9

 Lesson Plan 4

Game: Submarine

Level: Beginners

Age: 10-11 years old

Materials: Sheet of paper, pen /pencil

Aims:

- - To use the target language

- - To practice vocabulary

- - To ask and answer questions in future tense

- - To say affirmative and negative statements in future tense

Warm up:

   The teacher shows some flashcards and students describe them orally. The teacher asks some

questions about the pictures and asks students to do the same to the class.

Class Activities:

- - Students are paired up and given a chart of the game.

- - They have to draw 6 submarines in their paper being careful not to let the other person

  see where he/she drew them. One submarine goes in one space of the chart (see Figure

  39).

- Students take turns to use the coordinates to make a complete statement or question, depending on the teachers call, to their friend.

- The other student has to track the coordinates in his paper and check if he drew a submarine in that place or not. He confirms it or denies it by using the correct structures (see Figure 40).

- Students keep playing until one of them has "sunk" all of the other person's submarines.

Post-activity:

- Students work with different partners and with different structures according to what their teacher asks to the class.
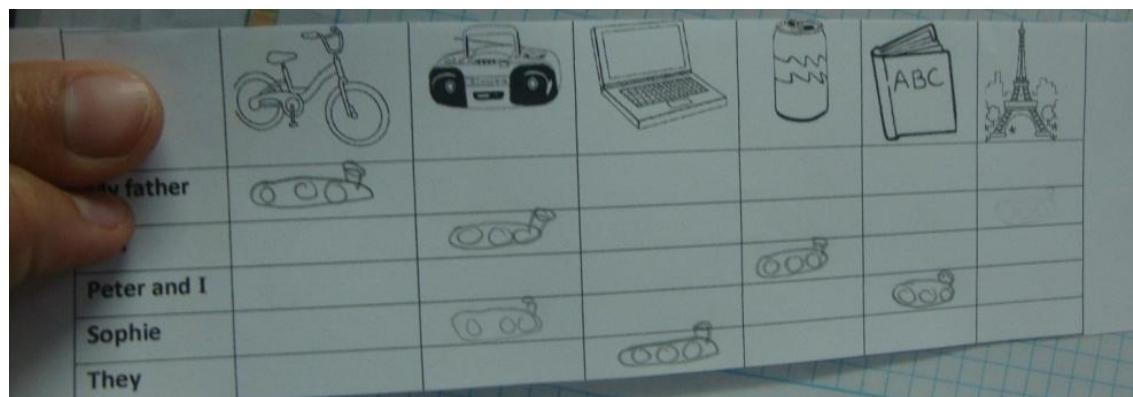
Figure 39: *Example of the game chart.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

Figure 40: *Picture of students when playing the game.* Retrieved from what students did during the intervention

ANNEX 10

	S T U D E N T S P O S T - Q U E S T I O N N A I R E	

Año de Educación Básica:_____   **Edad:** _____   **Sexo:**   **M   F**

1. **Señala las 3 actividades que más te gustó realizar durante las clases de inglés:**

   ☐ **Tres en raya**   ☐ **Planes con los amigos. Quién hará qué?**
   ☐ **Submarino (Batalla naval)**   ☐ **Su profesión futura: Yo seré/haré….**
   ☐ **Canto de canciones**   ☐ **Proponer un invento del futuro.**
   ☐ **El pozo de los deseos**

2. **¿Qué opinas de estas actividades ?**
   _____
   _____

3. **¿Te gustaría que haya más actividades de este tipo y no regirse únicamente al libro?**
   _____
   _____

4. **¿Prestaste atención a las explicaciones y refuerzos hechos por tu profesora en el pizarrón?**
   _____
   _____
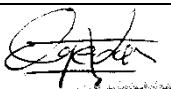
5. **¿Consideras que hubo mayor oportunidad de participar en la clase de inglés con estas actividades?**
   _____
   _____

6. **¿Consideras que te pudiste expresar con mayor facilidad en inglés con el uso de este tipo de actividades?**
   _____
   _____

7. **¿Cómo te sentías cuando compartías tus ideas dentro de la clase con tus compañeros y profesora en inglés?**

_____
_____

8. **¿Te gustaría que se sigan aplicando este tipo de actividades en las clases de inglés? ¿Por qué?**
_____
_____

DONE BY	CHECKED BY
TEACHER: Lic. Diana Vázquez P.	**AREA DIRECTOR:** Ing. Mónica Jerves
Signature:	**Signature:**

ANNEX 11

LA ASUNCIÓN	**VOCABULARY POST-TEST**	

Name: _____ **Class:** _____

1. Read and match the Ordinal Numbers: /10

twelfth	**1ˢᵗ**	**ninth**
	2ⁿᵈ	
first	**3ʳᵈ**	**twenty-first**
	4ᵗʰ	
second	**5ᵗʰ**	**fifth**
	9ᵗʰ	
third	**12ᵗʰ**	**fourth**
	15ᵗʰ	
twentieth	**20ᵗʰ**	**fifteenth**
	21ˢᵗ	

2. Read and complete: /6

• go • stand • come • eat • sit

One day Harry, Mona, and Emma **1)** _____ on a picnic in the forest. They **2)** _____ near a big tree and **3)** _____ their sandwiches. Suddenly, it started to rain so they **4)** _____ and **5)** _____ under the big tree.
"Welcome to the Magic Forest," a voice said. It was Willow! Then Alvin and Erlina **6)** _____ to say *hello*. The children were very happy to meet their new friends. And that's the story of how they all got together!

3. Write the Months of the Year where they correspond: /12

1ˢᵗ		**5ᵗʰ**	
4ᵗʰ		**7ᵗʰ**	
3ʳᵈ		**9ᵗʰ**	
11ᵗʰ		**6ᵗʰ**	
8ᵗʰ		**10ᵗʰ**	
2ⁿᵈ		**12ᵗʰ**	

4. Look and complete: /12

a. _____ down	b. _____ up	c. _____ an email	d. _____ a match
e. _____ down	f. _____ to school	g. _____ a shower	h. _____ homework
i. _____ pizza	j. _____ some juice	k. _____ a cake	l. _____ the guitar

5. Look and answer the questions about his future: /4

	a. Will he be a mechanic?	c. Will he travel around the world?
	_____ _	_____ _
	b. Will he have a mustache?	d. Will he fly a plane?
	_____ _	_____

DONE BY	CHECKED BY
TEACHER: Lic. Diana Vázquez P.	**AREA DIRECTOR:** Ing. Mónica Jerves
Signature:	Signature:

ANNEX 12

FORMULAE AND CALCULATIONS

Vocabulary Post-test Statistical Analysis

Sample Mean: $\bar{x} = \dfrac{\sum x_i}{N}$ $\qquad$ $\bar{x} = \dfrac{323.6}{41}$

Standard Deviation: $S = \sqrt{\dfrac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$ $\qquad$ $S = \sqrt{\dfrac{83.75}{40}}$

Confidence Interval. Critical t value = 1.96

$$c.i. = \bar{x} \pm z\dfrac{s}{\sqrt{n}} \qquad c.i. = 7.89 \pm \dfrac{1.96(1.44)}{\sqrt{41}} \qquad c.i. = 7.89 \pm 0.44$$

Limit inferior = 7.45

Limit superior = 8.33

$$\mu = \dfrac{l_i + l_s}{2} \qquad \mu = \dfrac{7.45 + 8.33}{2} \qquad \mu = 7.89$$

Decision rule statement

$$cz_1 = \dfrac{\bar{x} - \mu}{\dfrac{s}{\sqrt{n}}} \qquad cz_1 = \dfrac{7.89 - 7.45}{\dfrac{1.44}{\sqrt{41}}}$$

$$cz_2 = \dfrac{7.89 - 8.33}{\dfrac{1.44}{\sqrt{41}}}$$