UNIVERSIDAD DE CUENCA

FACULTAD DE FILOSOFÍA, LETRAS Y CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN

CARRERA DE LENGUA Y LITERATURA INGLESA

Communication and Storytelling in the EFL Classroom: Legends of Cuenca to Foster the Listening and Speaking Skills of Seventh Grades at "Fe y Alegría Elementary School"

Trabajo Investigativo del Curso de Graduación previo a la obtención del Título de Licenciadas en Ciencias de la Educación en la Especialización de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa

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Cuenca – Ecuador

2013

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ABSTRACT

The need to learn English as a second language to communicate effectively has become a great challenge in "Fe y Alegría" elementary school for children of the seventh - grade. The teaching – learning process seems difficult to develop in class. It is due to the children not having enough hours of English classes and vocabulary.

Storytelling is not only a way to acquire English vocabulary, but also to promote the communicative skills using stories already known by children; in this case, these stories are legends of Cuenca. Thus, children can develop the target language in real contexts without too much trouble. Because, through storytelling, children's imagination works helping to children expand their listening attention span and promote participation during the hour - class. Children even can create their own stories; using stories that they have heard before in Spanish. In this way, they learn to express their thoughts more clearly in public. Therefore, the English teacher must take advantage of storytelling since it not just provides intrinsic motivation but also self – confidence in children.

The main goal of this project is to promote using storytelling through the legends of Cuenca in the classroom to foster listening and speaking skills in children.

Key Words:

Storytelling, Listening and Speaking Skills, Legends, Real Context, Children, Self- confidence, Intrinsic Motivation.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

RESUMEN

Esta investigación está proyectada al uso de la técnica de contar historias usando las leyendas de Cuenca como un antecedente previo para facilitar las habilidades de escuchar y hablar en inglés en los niños de los séptimos grados dentro de un contexto socio – cultural; creando un vínculo entre el aprendizaje de un lenguaje extranjero y la cultura de los estudiantes.

Además esta estrategia ayudara a que las clases de inglés sean más prácticas que teóricas lo cual guiara a que los estudiantes adquieran un vocabulario útil y memorable para poder expresar ideas simples en otro lenguaje diferente al de su lengua materna. Otra ventaja de utilizar esta estrategia en clases es la creación de confianza entre los estudiantes y el profesor permitiendo así que los estudiantes se animen a comunicarse en inglés sin miedo a cometer errores. Finalmente se puede recalcar que esta técnica ayuda a estimular el pensamiento crítico de los estudiantes mediante su imaginación para resolver situaciones cotidianas.

En conclusión, este estudio tiene como objetivos explicar la técnica de contar historia como un medio para promover la comunicación en un segundo lenguaje en los niños dentro de contextos reales lo cual de desarrollará mediante una investigación académica y la determinación, mediante una encuesta, de algunas leyendas conocidas de Cuenca que ayudaran a la creación de un folleto, el cual contendrá actividades para promover el hablar y escuchar en inglés.

Palabras Claves: Técnica de contar historias, Leyendas de Cuenca, Habilidades de Escuchar y Hablar, Estudiantes, Pensamiento Crítico e Imaginación.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

TABLE OF FIGURES, PICTURES, AND APPENDIXES

TABLE OF FIGURES

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FOLKTALES

THE APPLICATION OF STORYTELLING IN CLASS

COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS IN CLASS

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

COMPARISON BETWEEN A FABLE AND A LEGEND

TABLE OF PICTURES

CLASS OBSERVATION

TABLE OF APPENDIXES

LEGENDS OF CUENCA

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

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DEDICATION

TO

I want to dedicate this research work to my parents Luis Pañi and Rosa Molina and my siblings because they have been always supporting and encouraging me during all my life. Especially, I would like to dedicate it to God since without his protection and guidance, I cannot achieve this goal. Finally, this work goes for three special people in my life, my friends, Alejandra Parra and Mercy Fajardo and my nephews, Bryan Payana and Sebastian Arichavala.

Gabriela

TO

First of all, this project is dedicated to my God who has been with me during all my life helping to achieve success. To my parents, Luis Parra and Rocio Calle, for the encouragement and understanding they have provided during my career. To my siblings, Luis and Maria, who supported me when I wanted to give up, and my best friends, Mercy Fajardo and Gabriela Pañi, with whom I share my happy and sad moments.

Alejandra

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Today, we feel nearer to achieving one of our major ambitions; that is to get our teaching degree. It is so significant for us since it represents the key towards many opportunities in our lives. For this reason, we would like to provide our sincere acknowledgement to people who helped and guided us to develop this research.

First, we would like to express our deep gratitude to Professor Katherine Youman. Our research supervisor, for her patient guidance, enthusiastic encouragement, and useful advice concerning this research work. Also, we would like to thank Professor Sandra Cabrera, for her advice and assistance in keeping our progress on schedule. Our grateful thanks are also extended to all the professors at the English Language specialization, and all the professors at the graduation course for their knowledge support and aid in each step during the development of our project.

In addition, we would like to thank to Magister María Isabel Espinoza for sharing her experience through an interview explaining important facts to reinforce our investigation, and Magister Diana Pesantez who allowed us to carry out our investigation in Fe y Alegría elementary school.

Finally, we would like to extend our thanks to Professor Mattew Aruch for teaching us several resources which can be used in our classes in the future, and our parents for their support and encouragement throughout our study.

Gabriela and Alejandra

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

INTRODUCTION

This project will provide support for the use of storytelling as applicable and beneficial to building up listening and speaking skills to foster English as a means to communicate and express simple ideas. In addition, this technique of storytelling will help children acquire meaningful vocabulary because teachers will use legends of Cuenca as a background within a real context.

This study has two objectives. The first objective is to explain that storytelling serves as a means to nurture communication in a real context. This investigation is based on literature review, which will show the principal basis of how to improve communication skills: of listening and speaking efficiently, how to produce meaningful communication in an EFL class, how to carry out the technique of storytelling as a useful tool in the classroom, how to create a secure atmosphere, and how to combine this technique with legends of Cuenca using children´s former knowledge of them legends to foster the listening and speaking skills. The second objective is to find some key legends according to the interviewed children and to create a pamphlet based on the stories to develop increased listening comprehension, effective communication, vocabulary, and grammatical structures in the process of understanding the stories.

Primarily; however, this investigation will illustrate that teachers may take advantage of these two objectives to stimulate students to become active listeners and speakers in class. Furthermore, due to the fact that stories have to do with a social context, stories can also be used to build a bridge between the learning of the foreign language and students' native culture.

In addition, the methodology which will be applied to the quantitative and qualitative aspects of this investigation will show information which was obtained through different sources, such as interviews, literature review, questionnaires, surveys, a class observation, a pre- test, and a post- test. This information can be interpreted through charts that will demonstrate that use of storytelling encourages children to feel confident in using the English language to communicate without fear, and to make mistakes rather than to feel

14

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

frustrated. For students, English class seems to be complex and non-motivating endeavor; thus indicating the necessity of applying this storytelling technique as a solution to the lack of communication problem in the teaching - learning of English as a second language.

The questionnaires will determine the children´s problems with the language, and how to solve these problems through the use of storytelling and legends of Cuenca.

The literature review and the survey will show the reliable, transferable effects, and validity that this study proposes.

Finally, the tests will demonstrate that the technique of storytelling is applicable and efficient in building up listening and speaking skills in a classroom.

In conclusion, this research proposes to indicate that the use of storytelling as a tool is an opportunity to build up both the listening and the speaking skills at the same time without wasting time; nevertheless, the process involves following key steps patiently.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

CHAPTER I

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Topic

Communication and Storytelling in the EFL Classroom: Legends of Cuenca to Foster Listening and Speaking Skills of Seventh Graders at "Fe y Alegría" Elementary School

1.2 Purpose

Listening and speaking in English are complicated tasks for children because of the lack of the use of language in a real context. Consequently, this investigation will be oriented towards using storytelling using legends of Cuenca as a means to nurture communicative skills: speaking and listening for children of the seventh grade.

1.3 Problem

According to previous studies, children cannot communicate in English for the following reasons: lack of vocabulary and grammatical structures, unknown contents, deficiency in approach to the language in an authentic framework, lack of confidence in class, repetitive activities, and poor oral expression activities in class. Therefore, communication in English becomes complex, and not a motivating task for children. Hence, children feel frustrated trying to use the language in class or outside in a scholarly framework.

This problem can be eradicated by fostering oral expression activities in order to motivate and involve children in an active and authentic oral communication process. In order to make these activities meaningful for children, they must be based on the children´s interests and level of English.

Thus, the present research will demonstrate that listening and speaking in English can be nurtured by storytelling with legends of Cuenca using the children's former knowledge of these legends in the classroom.

16

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

1.4 Justification

This study is being made for two reasons. The first one is that storytelling serves as a means to nurture communication in a real context. The second one is to find some key folktales according to the interviewed children and to create a pamphlet based on the stories, to foster listening and speaking in class in a fun and meaningful way.

In the teaching of the English language as a Foreign Language in elementary schools, the activity of storytelling may be seen as a challenging task to teachers. Using storytelling tends to develop increased listening comprehension, effective communication in the process of understanding the stories, and fostering the speaking skills through the folktales.

This activity may be involved in two educational areas: the first one could be cultural concerns of society; that is, through this listening activity, teachers can speak to students about cultural themes; for example, about values, historical events, and people's beliefs inside a story framework. The second area may promote the listening and speaking skills in class, because storytelling is an exchange of information. This feature can be convenient because it creates an atmosphere of confidence in class, which encourages and motivates students to get and share information in the classroom.

Therefore, students could remember significant information gathered from stories and share it instead of just eliciting details from the teller. In this way, teachers can stimulate students to become active listeners and speakers in class. Moreover, due to the fact that stories have to do with a social context, stories can also be used to build a bridge between the learning of the foreign language and students' native culture.

For these reasons, storytelling with legends of Cuenca can work as a means to foster as listening and speaking skills in class.

1.5 Research Question

- How does storytelling affect communication skills on children?

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

1.6 OBJECTIVES

1.6.1 General Objective

● To analyze if the technique of storytelling fosters communication skills with children in the seventh grade in elementary schools

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

● To explore the importance of communication skills in children
● To look for the efficiency of storytelling techniques for children to foster oral expression in class
● To create a pamphlet based on key legends of Cuenca

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to give an overview of, and summary of, theories supporting this work; in order to get a comprehensible idea of the influences of storytelling to promote communicative skills, listening and speaking, in children and folktales in teaching - learning of a second language. Throughout the chapter we will provide a deeper study of using, legends and advantages of storytelling in the classroom.

2.1 Language Acquisition

The acquisition of a second language theory is one of the influential theories nowadays because it states new strategies to teach a foreign language more successfully and meaningfully to students.

In his work 'Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning', its author, Krashen, establishes five hypotheses about the acquisition of second language.

First, it is the Acquisition–Learning Hypothesis which is the most important and well-known of the rest of the hypothesis. It concerns two independent methods to get a new language. These two methods are the acquisition and the learning methods.

According to Harmer there is a difference between learning a language and acquiring it. Learning language is a conscious process where learners must know the rules of the language whereas acquiring language as subconscious process which is similar to the process when children learn their native language. In other words, acquiring language means pupils learn language to use it in communication process. As a result, the acquisition of language is easier and more significant than learning it (31).

In short, teaching a new language is more effectively if learners get it through strategies that let pupils use language to convey their ideas, thoughts, wishes, likes, dislikes, and so on instead of using the language for grammatical purposes. Also, it is a fun way of learning language since pupils interact among

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

themselves which creates self-motivation in children to play with the language without fear of making mistakes.

The second hypothesis is the Monitor, which describes the relationship between acquisition and learning and their influences of the latter on the former and vice versa. Krashen states that there is a close relationship between acquiring and learning language. The former is more significant and productive since it is the practical part of what pupils have learnt. But the latter is an editor of making mistakes produced during the communicative process. This approach says that the work of the monitor has to be minor. The monitor should just intervene to give a slight feedback and improve the speech. In this case, the role of the monitor is minor in students' communicative process.

The next hypothesis is the Natural Order, which points out that acquisition of the grammatical structures is a natural process. That means, acquisition of grammatical rules are obtained in early stages of learners whereas others are gaining latter. This acquisition does not depend on children's age but in children's previous knowledge and the amount of time that children are exposed to the new language.

This hypothesis shows the importance of children having a background in the first language to be able to base the new knowledge on it. Meaning the children's previous knowledge can facilitate teaching a second language to them.

Another hypothesis proposed by Krashen is the Input hypothesis. In this hypothesis, he explains that in the process of acquiring the second language, learners get the target language along with the natural order. Therefore, if students receive an input which is above their current level, pupils' current communicative level improves one step more. These inputs are provided by listening and reading. Among the listening and reading staffs, there is a mixture of language from the basic level to the higher one.

Finally is the Affective Filter Hypothesis which refers to the atmosphere of the classroom. Krashen argues that students can acquire a second language easily when they have a high motivation and self–confidence, a reduced

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

stressful environment in class, and a combination of other strategies so children can gain the target language. However, if students are under tension and not motivated, they will not be able to get a comprehensible input.

Thus, teachers should concentrate on their pupils using the target language to interact with others meaningfully, concerning in the message that they convey and receive (Krashen).

The best methods to teach a new language (English) are those which provide comprehensible input in a peaceful atmosphere with message that students want to hear (Krashen). A method where teachers act as architects to give concrete tasks to their students in order to compare or discuss the information which they get. In this step, teachers plan and design, but students are the ones who build up their own knowledge (James Lee and Bill Van Pattern 61).

2.2 Meaningful communication in EFL classroom

The objective of teaching a foreign language is that students can use the target language to express themselves effectively and accurately getting meaningful communication, instead of communication competence (Harmer 24).

Jeremy Harmer argues that some teachers think communication competence is the main concern in the EFL classrooms and all students should get it. Nonetheless, it is almost impossible to expect it from students since communication competence has to do with using language correctly in classroom (24).

That is, students must use all grammatical rules correctly when they convey themselves; here, accuracy of language is more important than communication. Nonetheless, communicative competence is hard to develop in a classroom during an hour class because the classroom cannot substitute for an English community. Another problem when trying to accomplish this goal due to if teachers want to students use the language correctly, all their class becomes is a grammatical one. When classes are just studying grammatical points, they get boring and students get discouraged of learning it. So the

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

author said that this goal of communication competence is not just difficult, but also unnecessary in classrooms, especially in children.

Lee's study claims that "communicative language ability - the ability to express one's self and to understand others – develops as learners engaged in communication, and not as a result of habit formation with grammatical items" (51). That means classes should be meaningful and communicative practices, including grammatical practice, to help students gain a higher level of communicative proficiency.

The communication process is simple when communication happens in the first language context; however, when communication occurs in a second language, in this case, English, the act of communication breaks down due to the restricted vocabulary (Lee 52). Children are not able to communicate their ideas because they do not understand what teachers are saying. It is due to many teachers who do not use strategies adequately to teach, such as mimes, pictures, flash cards, and body movements during their class to communicate significantly.

Besides, Lee states that communication is not only a process; also it has two purposes: psycho–social, and the informal–cognitive (53). The former is called psycho–social because people use the language to connect in social situations. That means, children use the language to express their ideas, wishes, doubts, and so on. On the other hand, the second purpose of the communication process has to do with an informal–cognitive process since children use the language to get more information on any topic that seems interesting to them. Although, there are two purposes which are different in the communication process, they might combine. That is, kids can express their doubts to clarify the information that they are acquiring.

In conclusion, communication is not just a process; it has two important purposes which will be applied in class to create opportunities for children to improve their communication skills. Moreover, the classroom must become a place to talk about real things and to learn about each other in a significant manner.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

2.3 Importance of Communicative Activities

"The main purpose of communicative activities is to communicate meanings effectively" (Littlewood 16).

Consequently, communicative activities are a key part in developing communication performance in students of a foreign language. As a result, communicative activities, that teachers design, have to accomplish the two requirements of communication. In the first place, these activities must promote students to get language knowledge, which means all the grammatical points of language. On the other hand, these activities must prepare learners to use the acquired language knowledge in real life. Thus, teachers have the responsibility to include meaningful communicative activities in lesson plans, even though they are going to decrease time for reading or writing.

Nevertheless, Jack. C. Richard says that the importance of the communicative activities is that learners use the target language within a real communicative context to exchange real information. In the exchanging of information, learners can use language which may not be completely accurate (16). In other words, learners acquire the target language if they practice it in a real framework where they can express freely without too much control.

Actually, learners in this way develop their fluency in using the language rather than accuracy in the performance of language because fluency is when a user of a language uses it in a natural way to communicate with others. Also, in order to develop this fluency, the speaker must be engaged in a significant and comprehensible communication despite his or her restricted communication performance (Richard 15). The fluency of language use is the negotiation of meanings between the speakers and listeners.

Thus, good communicative activities let learners interact with language through the negotiation of meanings, the use of communicative strategies, and the correction of misunderstandings to be able to convey and understand oral messages.

23

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

As a final point, Peter, in his blog "Communicative Language Teaching Purposes of Communicative Activities" provides there are four purposes of the communicative activities.

➢ The Communicative activities supply "whole task practice" meaning students can perform the action while they learn the vocabulary because these activities are based on real daily activities.

➢ These activities enhance motivation in learners because the objective of the communication activities is for learners to interact among themselves.

➢ These activities enable natural learning of language. The natural process of learning language is when it is used to communicative process.

➢ These activities can build up real frameworks in class. These frameworks are positive because they contribute to the process of learning more significantly. Also, this context can generate opportunities for learners and teachers to create positive relationships between them in class; in this way, the classroom atmosphere becomes relaxed.

In sum, when learners use the communicative activities in classroom, they interact among themselves in a self–motivating learning process. It is due to the communicative activities which provide situations where for students it is a necessity to use the target language to be able to carry out the activity proposed by the teacher.

Beside, these activities contribute to change the method of approach in students–centered instead of teacher–centered. In other words, students are the responsible of construction of their own knowledge, and teachers became facilitators who guide and help the process of learning. Therefore, if teachers want to foster listening and speaking skills successfully, they should look for attractive and fun activities since the only way children learn is through playing and having fun.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

2.4 Listening Skill

According to Jack C. Richard, listening is an interpretative, complex process where listeners receive speakers' messages; construct and deduce the meaning; negotiating the meaning with the speakers, and respond with the messages gotten from the speakers. All this process is possible since when listeners hear the message, rapidly, they associate what they heard with what they already know establishing strategies to ease, check, and evaluate their listening performance (1).

According to Farlex in her on–line dictionary, there are three basic strategies to facilitate listening process.

Hearing is the first strategy; it is a passive process which has to do with the utterances of language. Understanding is the second strategy which is performed when listeners interpret and deduce the meaning of the message received. Finally, the last strategy is judging. It involves an examination of the spoken words in order to deduce a clear and understandable message.

Richard, moreover, states listening has two focuses; these are a comprehensible approach, and an acquiring approach (Richard 1).

Listening as comprehension is the first focus. The objective of the listening process is to ease interpretation of the spoken messages; however, this interpretation is achieved through two processes.

The first process involved in comprehension of language is Bottom–up processing, where listeners use the received input to decode the message. In this process, it is necessary that the procedures mentioned above are carried out. Another process concerned in listening comprehension is Top–down processing, which uses learners' previous knowledge about a topic, a situation, or cultural information to interpret the meaning of the message.

However, these two processes cannot be seen as separate processes because, in real life, these processes often occur together; it depends on pupils' knowledge to know which predominates over the other (Richard 10).

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

The second focus of listening is to facilitate the acquisition of language. According to Richards' study, the listening process provides a rich language input to learners, which serves to learn the target language unconsciously. This input language helps learners improve their communicative competence because this input has a variety of grammatical rules inside, and learners use them in order to convey with others using grammatical rules unconsciously (16).

People do not learn everything from the oral input, but they do notice important features of language which are using later during the process of communication. In the same way, in acquiring a second language; when children listen something interesting their attention concentrates on it and some information will held permanently in their memories; then they incorporate this information into their previous knowledge to get the new language (16).

For that reason, it is important that teachers provide significant listening activities, which should be based on children's interests and needs, to result in activities interesting to children. So it can be said that children's experiences are a manner by which they are able to discern several things beyond their own experiences. For instance, children know many facts from cartoons, superheroes, famous people, and folk legends. For this reason, teachers should try to exploit these sources in order to become guides and helpers of children so they can convey in the target language effectively.

In conclusion, these studies deduce that these procedures are always present during the listening stages in a lesson plan. Firstly, the pre–listening activities prepare pupils for listening, they involve pupils' prior knowledge and learning new vocabulary. In second place is actually during the listening. In this part of the listening, the activities concern the students extracting key information from the listening. Finally the post-listening activities in which imply learners' opinions have worth.

2.4.1 Listening Micro skills

The micro skills form part of a skill. All these micro skills are little steps to combine to improve of a skill. Thus, teachers should provide activities for developing each micro skill.

To sum, the micro skills of listening are

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

1. Recognize the different sounds of English words.
2. Remember gist information of the listening
3. Identify the different features of the language.
4. Predict messages
5. Get the general idea of listening

Taken from Kaluo Ali Blog

2.5 Speaking skill

The speaking skill is also called oral interaction, in which learners listen to get information, and then explain it expressing their own ideas. Here, it can be seen that there is not just the task to be carried out, but also the purpose to listen to, and understand, the whole information.

As a consequence, it can be seen as one of the most difficult tasks to be developed in the classroom because of lack of vocabulary, and memorized answers without any reference (Richard 2). However, this methodology changed, now the main objective of speaking is to develop fluency rather than accuracy.

Unfortunately, to English students, the speaking tasks involve a series of difficulties because students have a restricted vocabulary; as a consequence, they do not like using the target language to express themselves. Since speaking is a productive skill, there is more demand to be practiced in the classroom (Harmer 16). Thus, these skills should be taught within a social context where learners are involved in a true communication process.

In order to break down this problem of students being afraid to make mistakes in using the second language, teachers should provide activities to students get familiar with the usage of language in the oral way. The activities that can help to break the ice in classroom are information gaps, exchanging information, and all activities that involve having fun (Richard 38).

To sum up, a way to foster speaking skill in class is through creation of a comfortable space where children can express their ideas, thoughts, wishes, and so on. In this way, children are not afraid to make mistakes, and they speak more words using the target language.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

2.5.1 Speaking Micro skills

Micro skills help to development of a skill. Some micro skills that help to develop the speaking skill are listed as follows:

1. Use the correct intonation and pronunciation of English words
2. Produce authentic language of diverse sizes
3. Produce short sentences
4. Produce a fluent conversation
5. Be able to express clearly and understandably

Taken from Kaluo Ali Blog

2.6 Storytelling in the foreign language

According to Scoot and Ytreberg, storytelling is the act of telling a story orally from the heart, adapting to a comprehensible language level for children (29).

In contrast, Hamilton and Weiss argue that storytelling was a technique used by older people from a tribe to teach the youngest about their traditions, beliefs, and culture. Consequently, storytelling is one of oldest the forms to teach in a significant way. Also, this technique helps to maintain the culture and identity of countries (1).

When teachers use this technique in class, they are supplying a big amount of input to children. Thus, this input can work as a source of previously new language material which is learned unconsciously and gradually by pupils in the classroom.

To begin with, it explains the importance of storytelling to get a second language.

In the first place, Jack C. Richards, in his book, Interchange: Approach and Methodology, reports that it is important that students know how to use English for everyday situations and purposes. That is, students have to express their own ideas through grammatical points. For this reason, it can be deduced that storytelling can be applied as a technique which can be used to encourage to children to express themselves using the target language. The technique of

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

storytelling is not just based on teaching grammatical points, but it can also incorporate native culture which students already know, and strategies to convey clear messages (Page IV).

Moreover, another function of storytelling is to develop learners' cognitive skills. It is a process that works when children try to decode and understand the story told. For this reason, teachers might be conscious that this activity needs to be worked out through meaningful activities (which foster children's imagination). For example, questions involving thinking and problems which need logical solutions are important, such as changing the end of a story; the most important factor here is not just to find a solution, but to find the ways used to solve questions involving thinking. In addition, this technique creates a social context environment in class because teachers are conveying a message in real time. Also, storytelling helps to reduce stress in classroom, creating a confident atmosphere between teachers and children where each participants' opinions are respected. In this way, children will feel as accepted by their teacher as by their classmates (Puchta 8).

Besides, storytelling is a technique which can be implanted in a classroom to engage the process of teaching – learning because teachers have to use vocabulary according to children's ages in order to facilitate the process of understanding and keep children's attention. At the end of storytelling, teachers must encourage feedback and get information from the students with respect to the message of the story. In this way, teachers will not teach grammar only, but engage the children in learning grammar in context.

Finally, teachers should realize that children are afraid to convey themselves using the target language because they are afraid of making mistakes. For this reason, teachers must use storytelling as a means to interact more creatively with students to gain the students´ confidence. In this way, students will feel a relaxed atmosphere in class; therefore, pupils will express themselves without being scared to commit any mistakes.

Likewise, when children start to communicate, it is necessary that teachers give a slight feedback concerning different structures which are found in the

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

storytelling, thus helping students to avoid mistake and thus, improving children´s verbal proficiency.

2.6.1 Stages of Storytelling

Puchta establishes that storytelling is considered as a vehicle for language. That is, teachers use stories to develop listening and speaking skills as tools to develop real communication with children; however, this vehicle follows a process. Puchta declares that the process of telling a story needs a beginning (setting the scene), middle (the conflict), and the end (a resolution to the problem) to become successful (10). That is, teachers have to set a clear scene with the characters. Then teachers create the conflict which should engage children in order that they participate to make predictions or give solutions to problems that characters face in the story and finally, children can deduce an end of the story.

On the other hand, Wright in his book, Storytelling with Children, states some activities which can be carried out before the story. They are choosing new key words, simplifying the language, introducing a new work through pictures, objects, mimes, context, translating, and establishing new words through memory games, picture word matching, bingo, and so on (23-27)

After that, he claims that there are different ways to start a story. One of them is based on children´s experience. That is, if the teachers´ story is based on legends, teachers can start asking some questions about the topic center of the legend. Another way to start is with an introduction of the story; namely, teachers can give children a kind of summary without revealing the conflict, decisions, and the end. The final way is teachers can use their own manner to start a story (15).

According to Wright, the tone of voice, the language, body movements and facial expression must be present during the whole story. Thus, teachers have to be creative adopting different tones of voice according to characters appearing in the story. Stressing important words in the sentences and making pauses in key moments to give to the students chance to predict or fill an idea from the story. Moreover, language is important within a story, so teachers must

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

do pre-teaching of some word or phrases which will appear in the story because they help children to get the meaning of the story. The sounds of these expressions can be useful in order for children to be able to identify inside the story. Teachers should try to tell the story slowly and if it is possible use rhythm and rhyme too. Children love it, learn it, and remember it much longer. Body and face movements help a lot to convey the meaning of a story rather than words. Therefore, teacher can perform some actions and scenes, instead of using their monotonous voice during the whole story, to get children´s attention (16 – 18).

Finally, as Puchta said above, the end can be the children´s creation or as Wright said, children can retell the story in their mother language or inspire them to use some words or phrases in English if they are not able to produce complete sentences (32).

2.7 The Benefits of storytelling in class

The storytelling technique is a useful tool in the EFL classroom since it has positive influences in the teaching – learning process.

According to Putcha, storytelling improves critical thinking skills and emotional connections in learners. When the critical thinking skills are developed, children try to deduce the meaning of the story through personalization of the story. In contrary, the emotional connections are created in class when teachers give students the chance of sharing their experiences, emotions, opinions, inferences, wishes, likes, and dislikes; thereby, children will feel respected and motivated to have an active participation in class. (16).

In addition, storytelling fosters listening and speaking skills in class in that students will be openly questioned, and encouraged to hold conversations, and to reflect upon what they have heard. Teachers must take advantage of this benefit to ask students, as many questions as teacher can, to foster the communication process in the classroom. Also, these kinds of questions will help students to comprehend the story and to get a general understanding of it, and gain the confidence to express themselves without fear, and create a peaceful atmosphere in class (Scoot and Ytreberg 28).

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Hamilton and Weiss claim that other benefit of storytelling is to recall and organize data in students' brains. When students have too much stored information in their memories without a context, they tend to get confused and forget it easily. Storytelling presents all data in a sequence with a reference which makes students able to catch the story quickly and memorably. Also, they say storytelling is an effective filter, and allows learning to take place as an enjoyable process in the classroom because it creates a less stressful environment in class, which makes students more interested in learning the second language (2).

Another benefit presented by Hamilton and Weiss is the stimulation of learners' imagination. The stimulation of imagination in learners is a big step in the learning – teaching process because students will engage in learning without any distraction. Also, imagination helps to solve problems, and to get language in a meaningful way. Imagination can be stimulated through different ways during the storytelling process, which helps to teach language. These can be colorful pictures, body movements, facial expressions, puppets, flash cards, synonymous, and antonymous (10).

Finally, storytelling is a way to teach moral values to children because teachers not only teach English, but also values in their classes, like responsibility, solidarity, confidence, honesty, respect, gratitude, generosity, and all other positive attitudes. Teachers should know that children are like sponges; they absorb everything that they find in their atmosphere (Carter 110).

To sum up, all these advantages of storytelling allow that the learning – teaching process is carried out more effectively in acquiring either the first or a second language.

2.8 Storytelling and Legends of Cuenca

Collins English Dictionary states that legends are "popular stories handed down from earlier times whose truth has not been ascertain." In other words, legends are the lore of a country, which are known by the majority of its people because they are passed down from the older people to younger ones. In

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

addition, it says that legends have to do with real and fictional data about people, culture, beliefs, and moral messages.

On one hand, according to the survey carried out in Fe y Alegría elementary school, legends of Cuenca are well known by children since they are part of their Spanish curriculum in the seventh grade. Children think that legends are interesting and enjoyable because they have a mystery and an unsuspected ending which makes that their concentration span extend during the development of legend (See Appendix 2 57).

Consequently, storytelling with the legends of Cuenca can be selected as a good topic to use in the EFL classroom to foster listening and speaking skills because children enjoy listening to them, and they feel identified with them due to these stories containing people and settings already known by them. Therefore, teachers can use the benefits of storytelling to stimulate children´s imagination, understanding, and thinking. As a result, the highest objective in class will be developing the communicative competences rather than grammatical ones (See appendix 2 57).

Another advantage of using storytelling with folk tales in class is that the activities carried out in class are most significant and memorable to learners, since educators will create with it a secure atmosphere, thus encouraging children to risk communicating among themselves in the target language. Here, the teachers' intentions are that children use their previous knowledge context to acquire the target language, since the English teacher will use the same Spanish legends translated to English. In this way, teacher tries to encourage children to feel self–confidence, and motivate them to try to use the target language.

Moreover, Heidi Bordine and Kim Hughes say that the North Dakota Center establishes that storytelling is "an art form through which people have preserved their heritage passed on traditions" (22). That is, the use of storytelling along with legends is beneficial to learners because English teachers do not just engage students in acquiring of a second language, but they contribute to teaching the students' culture and identity. It is important

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

because the globalization process is weakening and losing cultural identities. Thus the use of the legends in class to teach makes children feel more interested in learning about their roots.

Finally, the objective of this investigation is the creation of a link between teaching a foreign language and the learners' culture. This aim can be reached through the use of storytelling along with local legends. In this way, teachers can combine both languages, Spanish and English, in a creative and significant manner to children.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Basic Methodology

After having determined the topic that will be analyzed and studied in this investigation, the method applied in this present research to get information concerning the topic is action research.

First, the action research method is used due to this investigation being carried out inside the classroom, and its purpose was to come up with a technique through which children can nurture their communicative skills in a foreign language in a fun and a meaningful way using a background, legends.

Moreover, the action research has two approaches: quantitative and qualitative. This study employed qualitative approach to get information which will provide more reliable information about the participants and the problem through application of a survey, an observation, and questionnaires in the classroom. Likewise, this academic work has researched for feasible solutions to English teaching – learning by using literature review and an interview with an expert in the field to benefit both the researchers, and the participants, involved in this investigation.

The literature review served to support the bases of storytelling as a technique to promote listening and speaking skills in the classroom. The questionnaires and survey were applied to determine children's interests, feelings, and performance with respect to the communication skills and the formulation of the problem; the interview with an expert clarified and supported the basis of this study.

Finally, this investigation is also considered transferable because it could be applied in other institutions and situations. Furthermore, transparency of the data collected is shown by figures and statistics that will be presented later on, for which the quantitative approach was carried out.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

3.1.1 Human resources

People who intervened in this research were the participants and also an expert in the field. The participants were thirty–three students of the seventh grade of "Fe y Alegría" Elementary School in Gapal. Their ages ranged from ten to twelve years old.

The participants formed a whole grade and their native language was Spanish; however, they study English as a foreign language one hour per week because it is an optional subject in the curriculum of Elementary School designed by the Ministry of Education. This participation grade was divided as follows: twelve girls and twenty–one boys. Another person who collaborated in this research was Mgst. María Isabel Espinoza, an English teacher at University of Cuenca. She has worked with people of all ages.

3.2 Data Gathering Techniques

In order to make this application acceptable, it included a field of qualitative research by using accurate data, interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and class observation.

First of all, data was classified through a determinate research question which facilitated the gathering of information for this study. Second, formal interview was applied to expand the principal basis of the investigation. The next step was the application of the questionnaire to the children, in order to create a secure atmosphere so to help children express their experiences and interests in their own words. This questionnaire was based on guided tour and task questions. Guided tour questions were used to analyze children's listening and speaking, with a background in describing different situations in their own words. In contrast, task questions were carried out in order to get brief information about children's community lives. One of the weaknesses observed in the classroom during the class observation process was the lack of vocabulary and practice of the communicative skills. These two weaknesses make it hard for children to understand and express their ideas in English. Lastly, a survey was applied which gave real information about participants' likes and dislikes regarding to the target language.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

3.3 Data-collection planning

There were several materials used to obtain information during the development of this research.

The interview was the first one. It consisted of open-ended questions on key concepts of storytelling, the importance of fostering students' listening and speaking skills in the classrooms, and the advantages and disadvantages of applying storytelling using native legends in class. Another material used was the survey. It was made up of open–ended and close-ended questions based on children's interest relating to folktales. Moreover, a pre-test and a post–test were designed to prove the effect of storytelling, using legends of Cuenca, as a means to foster communication skills as a background to gain better comprehension in a target language. Class observation helped to understand students' reality during the teaching - learning process of a foreign language which used mechanic and drill practice.

3.4 Data-processing planning

The information obtained was come by as follows. Class observation was the first step. Class observation took place during a whole class of English to get a real picture of how the teaching – learning process was being carried out.

Afterwards, the survey was applied to the thirty–three kids to identify their performance with respect to communication skills. The survey was developed during forty–five minutes. In the following class, a questionnaire was used to learn children's interests. This questionnaire was completed by children during fifteen minutes of the class.

The interview with Mgst. María Isabel Espinoza was the next procedure. In the interview, Mgst. Espinoza talked about the usage of storytelling in class to foster communication skills, specifically listening and speaking, in children. Finally, the pre–test and post–test was answered by children in order to make a comparison.

The pre–test was developed to study how beneficial it is to have former knowledge as a reference, and the post–test was designed with the

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

background, folktales, to know if this helped the students remember significant information and use it to communicate effectively. After collecting the data, the next step was to draw conclusions from it in order to advance this project.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Survey

This research was carried out at Fe y Alegría Elementary School in Cuenca. The questionnaire was answered by thirty-three children in the seventh grade. Eighty-two percent of the students were males and twelve percent of them were females.

This questionnaire was applied to measure the children's knowledge of folk tales, their likes and dislikes of the English language as a subject, and the way they would like to learn listening and speaking skills in the classroom. The questions for the survey were divided into three parts.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FOLK TALES

Figure No. 1 DO YOU KNOW WHAT A LEGEND IS?
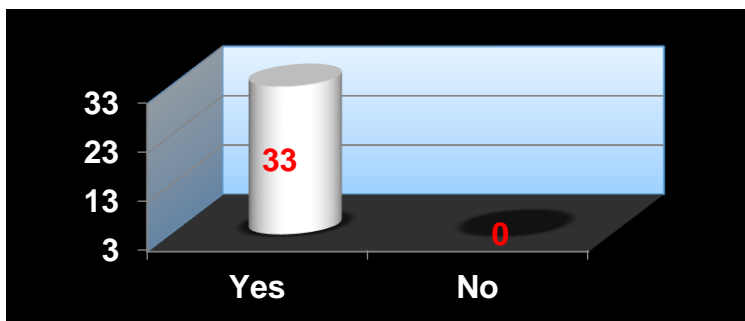
SOURCE: Author

The first question was asked to find out if the participants were already familiar with the topic.

As the graph shows all the participants had previous knowledge about what a legend is. Children have already seen this topic in Spanish classes, so they have an idea what a legend is.

Moreover, all families know at least one legend; legends have been passed down by oral tradition in Ecuador to entertain people of all ages.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Figure No. 2 WHAT IS A LEGEND?
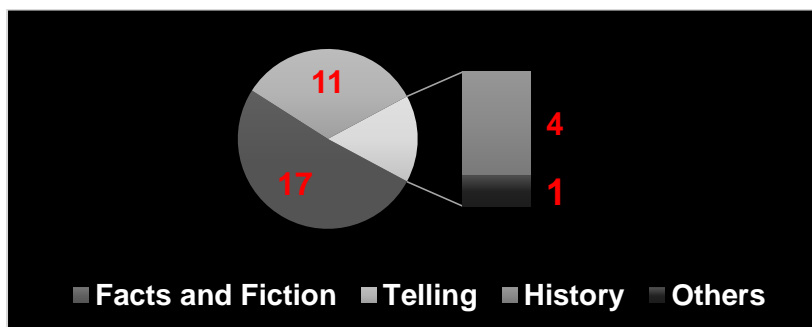
SOURCE: Author

Regarding the second question in which children had to give a definition of folk tales, answers varied.

All students had a previous knowledge about what a folk tale is since the topic has already been presented in Spanish class; however, they did not have a clear perception of folktales.

Seventeen children believed that folk tales are based on fact and on fiction from early times. It is because the content of legends looked pretty similar to events that exist in real life. That is, during the process of telling the legend, the teller would mention real places, real characters, as well as fictitious events and personages; to make the tale more interesting.

On the other hand, eleven children established that legends are short, such as bed time stories; these children considered that folk tales are just imaginary stories which entertain people.

Finally, four students expressed that legends are relating to historical events. They believed legends are based on history because they associated them with History class since this topic was covered during history class.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Figure No. 3 DO YOU LIKE LEGENDS?


0 33

■ **Yes** ■ **No**
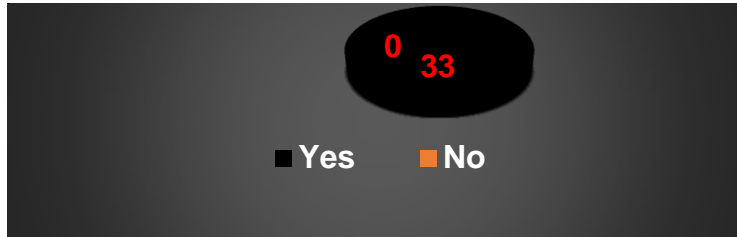
SOURCE: Author

The next questions had to do with children's likes. This information was gathered from four questions.

In this question children were asked if they like legends. The results drawn from the survey were positive because all the students liked legends since children associate legends with a fun time or a mystery time. The majority of legends are related to Evil, or to Good and have a moral message. The main characters are usually Devil and God. Students are interested because they are curious and want to know how the characters overcome the problem.

Also, another reason why children like listening to legends is due to their contents. The content of folk tales is short, concise, and uncomplicated. Students pay attention to a story all the time without losing any detail in order to be able to repeat it to their friends.

FIGURE No. 4 WHY DO YOU LIKE THEM?

33
23
13
3

19   11   3

Entretai...   Informati...   Others
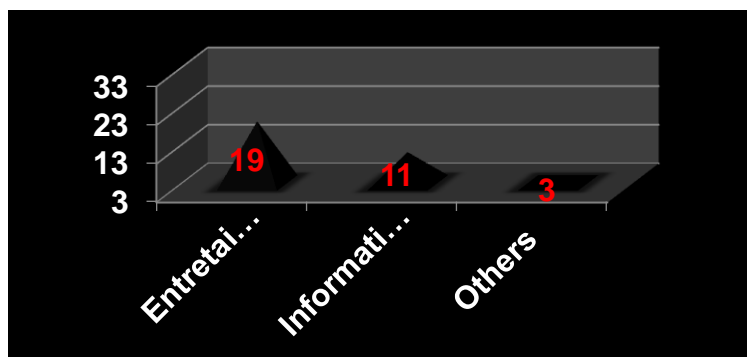
SOURCE: Author

Question number four is about the students' likes. It gave the reasons why students like the legends. The answers to this question were divided among three possibilities. More than a half of children said that they enjoy the legends because they have fun when they listen to them. This is because

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

legends touch on real facts disguised with mythical qualities, and they are told in a peaceful atmosphere.

Another fact is that legends are easy to remember because they do not include too much, or too boring, information. At the same time, less than a half of children expressed that they like legends because they get information from them; children like to hear folk tales to know more about the culture, values, people, and events of the past.

Finally, less than five children had other reasons, such as that legends are good to waste time in class, legends tell scary happenings, etc.

Figure No. 5 DO YOU KNOW ANY LEGEND OF CUENCA?
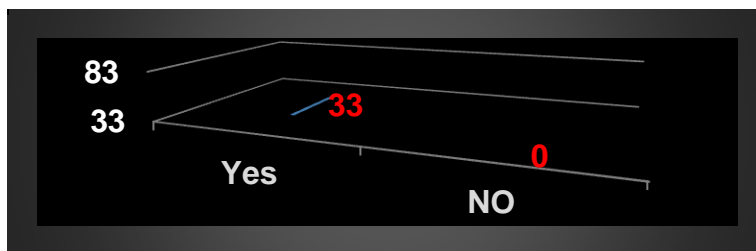
SOURCE: Author

The survey showed positive results concerning this question since all the participants know at least one legend of Cuenca, which shows students' interests. It is because during the Spanish classes, the teacher had already touched upon this topic and as homework, she had asked students to look for a legend of Cuenca. After that, children had to tell their stories to the whole class. As a result, all children remembered at least one of these legends. Moreover, the Spanish teacher use these tales to entertain and motivate her students when they were bored or tired.

Another, good source of knowing these tales are students' grandparents. Grandparents constantly tell stories about Cuenca; and as children like to listen to them, they remember them afterwards.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Figure No. 6 HOW MANY LEGENDS DO YOU KNOW?
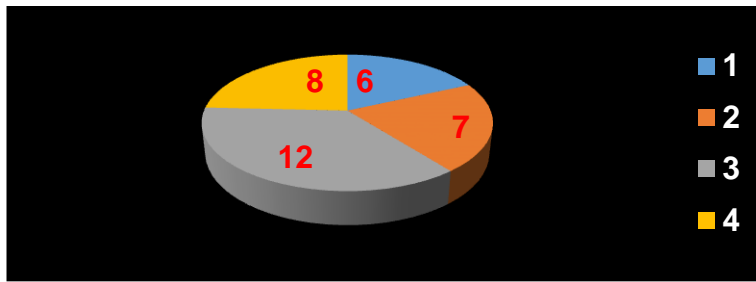
SOURCE: Author

This is the final question in relation to students' interest; in question six, researchers wanted to know how many legends children knew. The majority of the students knew or remembered at least three legends. The other children answered four, two, or one. That means children were familiar with legends and knew at least one folktale of Cuenca.

Figure No. 7 WHAT ARE THE LEGENDS THAT YUO KNOW?
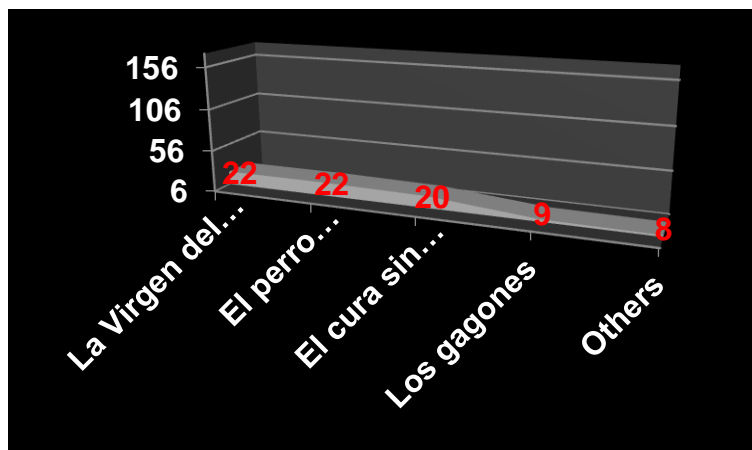
SOURCE: Author

There are four legends that are well known by children. However, the legend of "The Virgin of Tomebamba" outweighs the others. The majority of children know this legend. Meanwhile, "The Chained Dog" is the second in importance. It is followed by "The Priest without a Head" and finally "Gagones". These legends were known because when the children investigated about legends on the Internet, these legends were among the first that appeared. Also, the first legend had been told by the teacher because the school is near the Tomebamba River.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

THE APPLICATION OF STORYTELLING IN CLASS

Figure No. 8 HAS YOUR ENGLISH TEACHER EVER TOLD YOU A STORY IN CLASS?
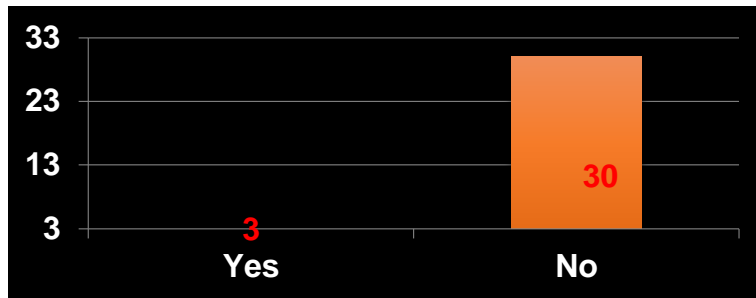
SOURCE: Author

This question shows another part of the survey. In this part, children answered how often the teacher has used storytelling as a technique to foster communication skills. As the graph illustrates, this technique is not frequently used during the teaching – learning process. The graphs demonstrate that only 3% of the students have listened to story in a class, and that 30% of the students have not.

Figure No.9 WOULD YOU LIKE TO LISTEN TO STORIES IN ENGLISH?
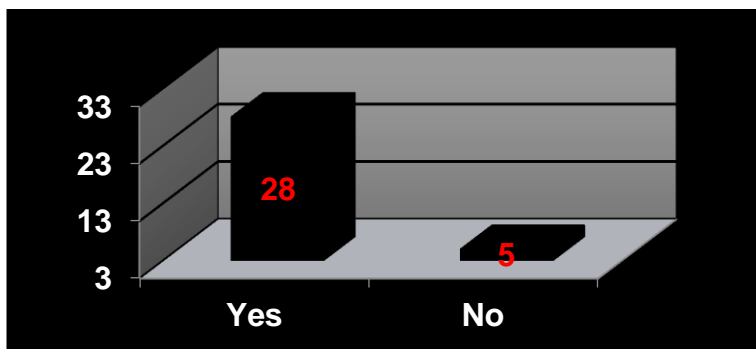
SOURCE: Author

Despite the fact that children find English difficult, most of them have expressed that they would like to listen to stories in English. It is because they are curious to know new sounds, learn new vocabulary, and have fun during English lessons. However, a minority expressed that they do not want to listen stories in English because they will not understand the new words, sounds, and structures.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Figure No.10 DO YOU LIKE LISTENING STORIES IN ENGLISH?

REASONS OF THE POSITIVE ANSWERS
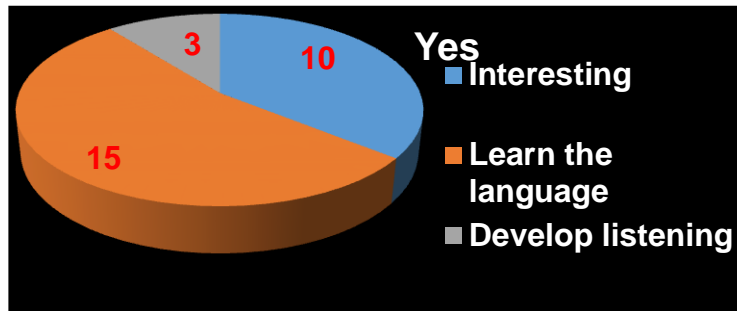
SOURCE: Author

RESONS OF THE NEGATIVE ANSWERS
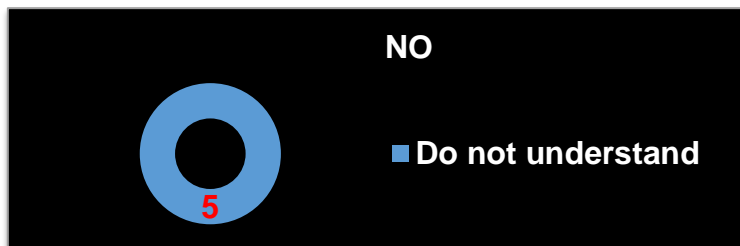
SOURCE: Author

The first graph shows the reasons that students want to hear stories in English. Ten percent of the students consider that these folk tales can be interesting and fun. Also, it is a way to change the routine of the days in class. Half of the students are interested in learning new features of the language, such as new vocabulary, new structures, and new sounds.

On the other hand, 8% percent of the students expressed that they would like to improve their listening since this skill is not well developed during the classes. They have this special interest because of the globalization of information. The majority of the information that they find on Internet is in English. In contrast, the others do not want to listen to stories because they think that it is a real challenge to them to understand the whole story.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Figure No 11 WHAT KIND OF STORIES WOULD YOU LIKE LISTENING TO?
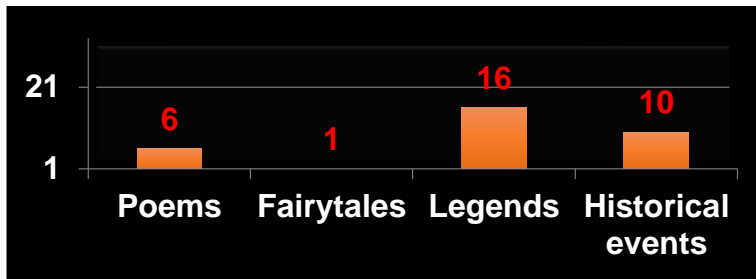
SOURCE: Author

This question reflects students' preferences. Most of them express their preference for legends. It is because they already have some previous knowledge of them. Also, they have an enjoyable time when this activity is carried out in class. Ten percent of the students like to listen to historical events because they want to know more about their culture and identity. Six percent of the students that would like to listen to poems. And just one percent would like to listen to Fairy Tales.

Figure No. 12 WHAT DO YOU PREFER?
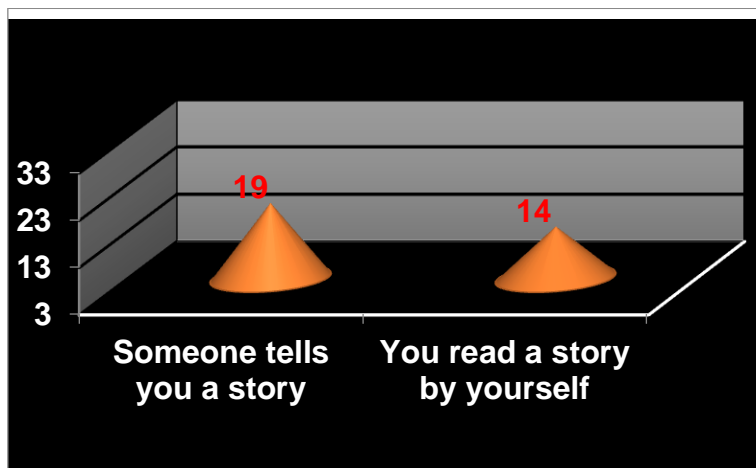
SOURCE: Author

In this figure, the answers do not vary a lot, but this question shows that children like to listen to a story rather than read it by themselves. As the graph illustrates, the majority of students prefer to listen to a story. It is due to the fact that the teller has a positive effect on children. Moreover, when children read a story in English by themselves, they have a hard time trying to understand it.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN CLASS

Figure No.13 HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE SPEAKING / LISTENING ACTIVITIES IN CLASS?

SOURCE: Author
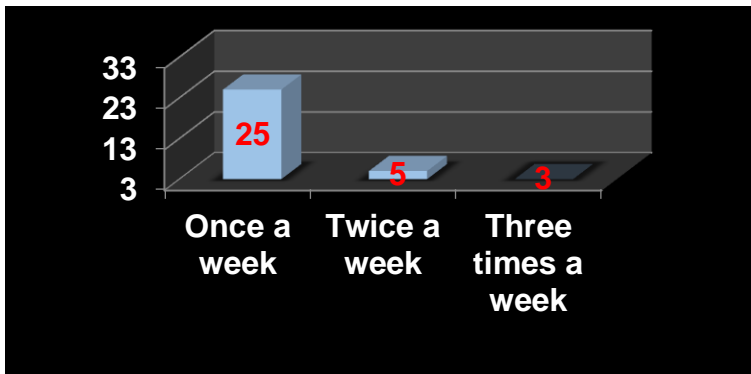
The data demonstrates that students do not have much experience in communication skills. This fact is due to lack of time since they have just one hour per week. Thus, the English teacher focuses on the grammar parts and the vocabulary to prepare children for High School.

Figure No 14 IS IT EASY TO SPEAK ENGLISH?

SOURCE: Author
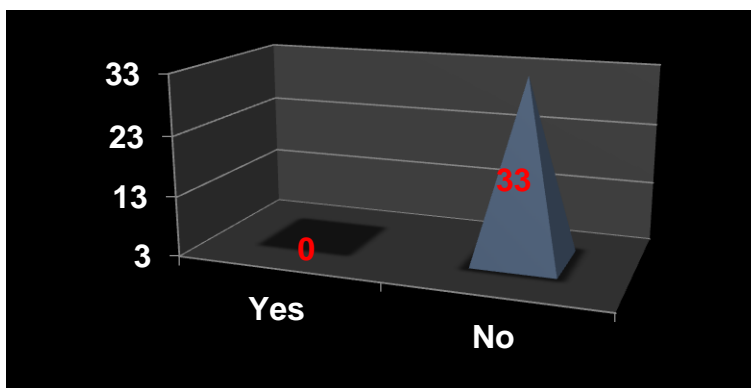
FIGURE No. 15 WHY IS IT DIFFICULT?

SOURCE: Author

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

These two questions with resulting graphs show that the speaking skills are hard for students. This is because of three reasons. The main one is the pronunciation. Children express that they feel confused because the sound of a word is pretty different from the written word. Also, in English, there are sounds that do not exist in Spanish. Another reason is that they do not know many words in English since they hate to memorize them.

FIGURE No. 16 WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF WORDS?
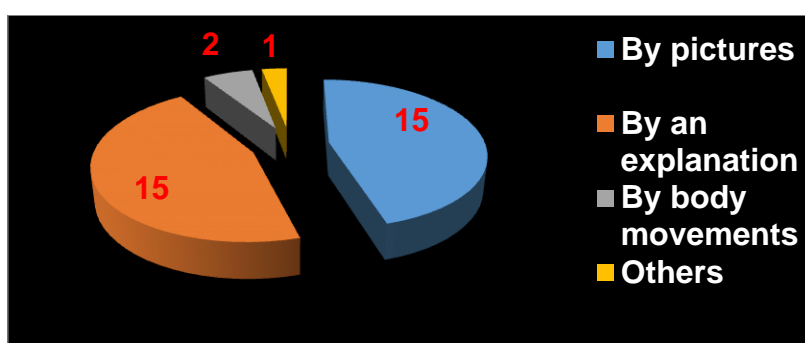
SOURCE: Author

Pictures are the best way to convey the meaning of words. Since children tend to associate the meaning with the image, it can be followed by an oral explanation; that means children understand the meaning of the word by examples, synonyms, and antonyms after seeing it in a picture. Finally, there are two techniques that are usually applied here; they are the body movement and the mimes.

4.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Pre- and Post- Tests

COMPARISON PIES

FABLES AND LEGENDS

In this parts of the graphs, the study shows a comparison made between an unknown fable and a well–known legend in a combination of the techniques of storytelling **(**See Appendixes 3 and 4).

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Figure No. 17 ORDERING PICTURES
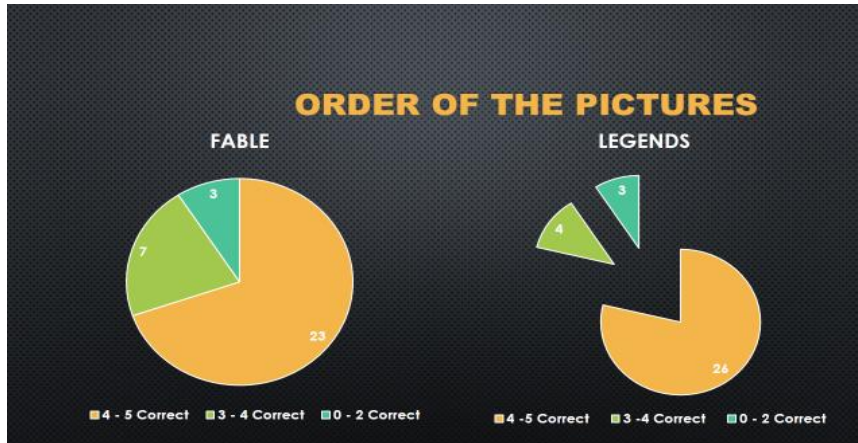
SOURCE: Author

Question seventeen had as its objective to analyze the understanding of sequence of the stories through pictures for an unknown story versus an already known story. The answers in the pies do not vary a lot; however, children have better accuracy in sequence of a story when they have previous knowledge of it.

As the graphs show, for an unknown fable, 23 out of 33 children had from 4 to 5 correct answers, 7 out of 33 got from 3 to 4 correct answers, and only three students had from 0 to 2 correct answers. On the other hand, for the known legend 26 out of 33 children had from 5 to 4 right answers, 4 out of 33 had from 3 to 4 right answers, and 3 out of 33 had from 0 to 2 right answers.

Figure No. 18 GENERAL UNDERSTANDING
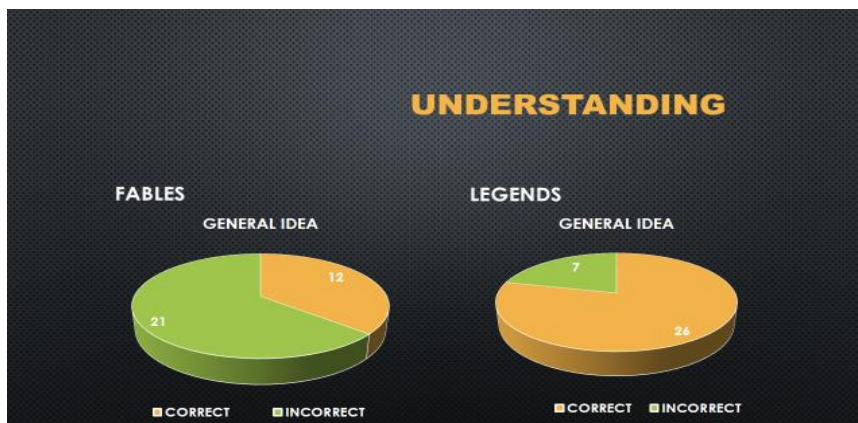
SOURCE: Author

The aim of these comparison pies was to see if children caught the general idea of stories. In case of the fable 21 out of 33 students got it. Nevertheless, the legends graph illustrates that when there is a previous

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

reference of the story, more children achieved the general idea of the story in the target language.

Figure No. 19 DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERS AND SETTINGS
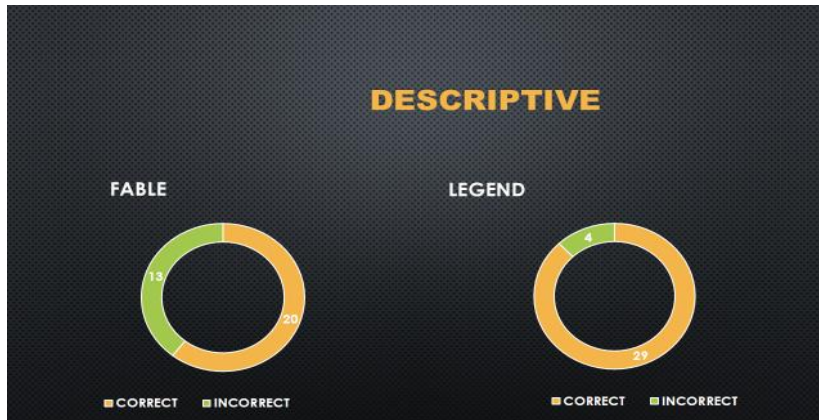
SOURCE: Author

Regarding this graph, the study that 20 out of the total sample were able to give a little description of the characters and the settings of the fable; whereas 27 out of 33 students could picture the scenes and personages of the legend.

Figure No. 20 DETAILS OF STORIES
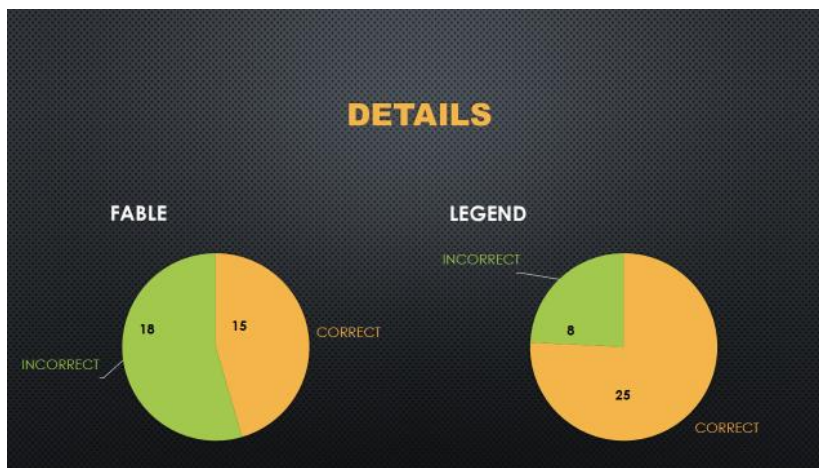
SOURCE: Author

This figure reveals the importance of getting the main details of the story, such as characters' features and description of the settings. In the fable, 15 out of 33 participants were able to remember the details of the story meanwhile for the legends 25 out of 33 students could elicit details of the legend.

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Figure No. 21 DEDUCING THE IMPLICIT INFORMATION

SOURCE: Author

The figure twenty–one comprises the concern of extracting implicit information of the stories. In this part children had to deduce the moral message of the fable and the legend through listening comprehension. The graph shows that 23 out of participants can extract a moral message of the fable. On contrary, in legends, there were 30 out of 33 students can elicit the moral message.

Figure No. 22 PARTICIPATION DURING THE DEVELOPING OF THE STORIES
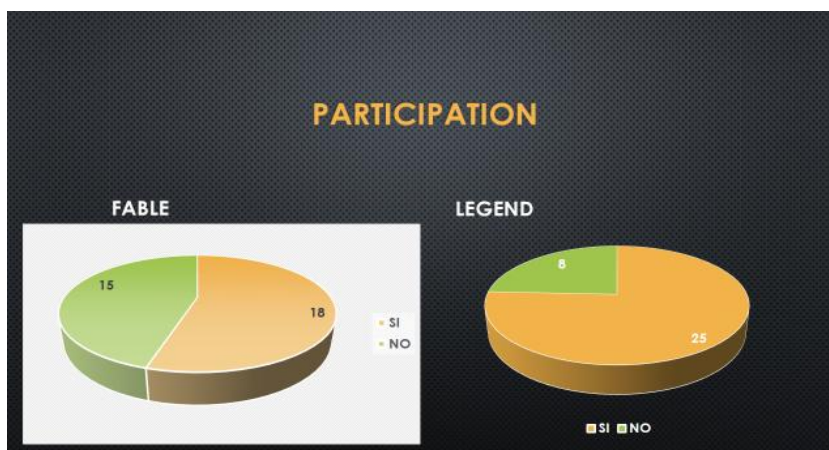
SOURCE: Author

The figures measures children's oral participation. In order to get this fact, a register was used to determine this data. In the fable, 18 % out of 33% of the students participated actively in class using a mix of their mother tongue and the target language. On the other hand, during telling of the legend, 25% out of 33% of the students collaborated, expressing their ideas likewise using a mix of both languages.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

4.3 Interview

The interview was made with Magister María Isabel Espinoza. She is an English teacher at the University of Cuenca. She has a vast experience in this field since she worked with children for some years.

All the information gotten in the interview will be used to reinforce the basis for this academic work.

According to María Isabel, storytelling technique is not often used in the classrooms because of the lack of time and materials. She claimed that it is difficult to carry out in class, especially in public schools, due to fact that children in these schools have English class one or two hours per week, and they have one teacher for all grades. These facts make teaching English difficult.

Moreover, she explained that there are some benefits to use storytelling in class. One benefit is that children can use the target language in real contexts making it easy to acquire. Another advantage explained is that children get into their comfort zone, as a result, they feel self–confidence and intrinsic motivation to be active listeners and speakers. Another contribution that she gave to this research, is the use of storytelling in combination with legends in class. She said that it is a good idea since students do not just learn a foreign language but also their culture. But, she claimed that this combination was more appropriate for high intermediate level.

4.4 Class Observation

Class observation was made in Fe y Alegría elementary school, in the seventh grade "A". The purpose of this study was to know the real situation of an English class in order to be able to propose a technique to foster the communication skills in children.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Picture No.1 ATMOSPHERE OF THE CLASSROOM

SOURCE: Author

In the beginning, the teacher started her classes with a greeting and asked questions about children's last activities to try to create a comfortable atmosphere in class. Nonetheless, there was not too much collaboration from the children because this activity is repeated in each class; so it has become a boring activity for them.

Picture No. 2 TEACHER WAS EXPLAINING THE TASK

SOURCE: Author

After trying to create a good atmosphere in the classroom, the teacher asked students to take out their book, and then started to explain the

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

grammatical points of the unit. She then gave them an extra paper to reinforce the grammatical point and did some exercises which were isolated.

Picture No. 3 STUDENTS DURING THE DEVELOPING OF THE TASK
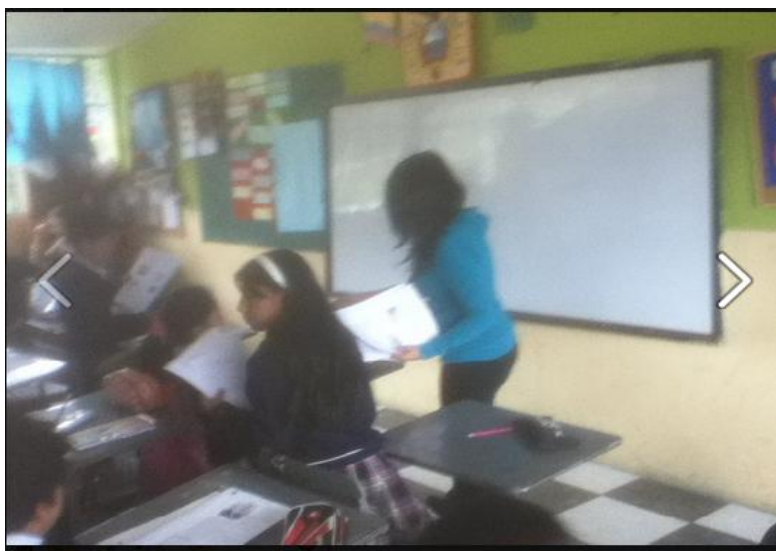
SOURCE: Author

During the developing of the task, some students seemed confused and disappointed because they did not understand the grammatical point, as a result, they could not do the task. In addition, they asked the instructions from each other because they did not feel confident about asking the teacher. However, at the end of the class, teacher gave a feedback on the discussed topic.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In conclusion, this research has shown that some Ecuadorian children think that English is hard because acquiring and remembering foreign words with their meanings is difficult. Therefore, English teachers must use techniques like storytelling to facilitate the process of learning English as a second language, since through the use of storytelling children can improve their listening and speaking skills. This is because when storytelling is carried out in class, listening is considered as an interpretative process. In this process, listening, has two points of view.

The first point of view is the comprehension process, and the second one is the acquiring process. Listening is taken as a comprehension process when teachers start with pre-listening activities to give children a better comprehension of the story. In addition, when teachers ask the students to answer "true" or "false" to some statements to identify the characters, or to arrange pictures according to the story, listening becomes an acquired process (Richard 19).

Moreover one goal of this research is to create confidence in students to improve their oral skills using storytelling in the classroom. Children are afraid to speak due to fear making mistakes in public. For this reason, teachers should use storytelling as a means to interact more with the students, and increase students' confidence about speaking aloud in English in front of their classmates and teachers without any fear. For instance, when teachers tell a story in class, children gain confidence while talking about the topic because they feel connected to the story.

The second aim of this investigation is the idea of joining the teaching – learning process with students' native culture. Thus, the results of this work have determined that children can learn a foreign language more easily when they have a known starting point, such as legends of Cuenca, with which children can relate the new knowledge to their previous knowledge.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

In conclusion, this research tries to prove that the use of storytelling and the legends of Cuenca as tools to teach a foreign language present an opportunity to foster both listening and speaking skills at the same time without wasting time; however, this process needs to be carried out by following key steps patiently.

5.2 Recommendations

In order to successfully use storytelling, along with legends, in class this work has suggested some clues.

In the first place, during the process of storytelling, teachers should use all visual aids meaningful to students, such as facial expressions, mimes, body movements, puppets, real things, and especially colorful pictures since they stimulate children's imagination and comprehension.

Also, teachers ought to use the correct tone of voice, intonation, pronunciation, and vocalization to students can identify the different personages of the legends.

Another piece of advice is that teachers interact with the students, making predictions about the legends to create more expectation in children. Likewise, when children to start to speak, it is the best moment for teachers to give feedback concerning the different structures which can be used within the storytelling. Mistakes can be identified and corrected to increase the children's proficiency.

Finally, if teachers take into account this advice, they will create a peaceful atmosphere class which will help the teaching – learning process.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

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Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

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Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX No.1

INTERVIEW TO AN EXPERT: TRANSCRIPTION

1. **Why is storytelling not frequently used in Elementary Schools?**

   Well, I think the lack of time makes it difficult to do it. Public schools for instance have one or two hours a week and sometimes every two weeks.

   Most of the time there is just one teacher for the whole school which makes it difficult to teach effectively.

2. **Why would storytelling be important as carried out during a teaching process in Elementary Schools?**

   Because students get to learn the target language by actual use of it in real contexts.

3. **What are some benefits of applying this activity in class with children?**

   Children love stories, so it's engaging for the students and makes students move beyond their comfort zone; that is, learning new words as well as enjoying the story. Also, children will get self–confidence and intrinsic motivation to start speaking in class. Thus, not just the fostering of effective communication but also developing listening comprehension.

4. **How will teachers foster literature of Cuenca through the application of storytelling with children?**

   This is a great idea where the students may be able not just to learn a foreign language, but to get to know more about their culture and local writers.

5. **Do children know legends of Cuenca? And in which stage of the lesson plan can legends be applied?**

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

Well, in Spanish Language classes teachers tell children about different legends and myths; however, in order to teach legends through English I think it applies for students over a high intermediate level of the target language.

6. **Why should legends of Cuenca be passed down to children? Why is it important?**

It is important because it is a way to perpetuate our history as well as community beliefs.

7. **What is the role of communication skills during the learning process?**

The role each one has is very important so the students learn significantly through active communication activities where the children are the ones who speak more.

8. **What are communication skills activities designed for children?**

In my opinion the most significant activities are related to interaction, movement, that is to say any kind of games.

9. **What are the advantages of using authentic material during listening activities in the teaching – learning process in Elementary Schools?**

At any stage I think it is important so they become familiar with the real use of the target language.

10. **Will storytelling help teachers to develop communicative skills in children?**

Stories will be useful as long as they are catchy and relevant for the children.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

APPENDIX No.2

SURVEY

The following survey intends to collect information relating to Communication and Storytelling: legends from Cuenca to foster listening and speaking skills with children of the seventh grade. The results will be used as a basis for a thesis investigation.

QUESTIONS

F   M

Age………………………   Gender [ ]   [ ]
Class……………………

LEGENDS

Do you know what a legend is? If yes what is it?

YES [ ]   NO [ ]

What is it?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Do you like legends?

YES [ ]   NO [ ]

Why?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Do you know any legends of Cuenca? Which ones?

YES [ ]   NO [ ]
   1. ……………………………   2. …………………………..
   3…………………………….   4…………………………….

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

STORYTELLING

Has your English teacher ever told you a story in class?

YES ☐   NO ☐

Would you like listening to stories in English?

YES ☐   NO ☐

Why?

………………………………………………………………………………………

What kinds of stories would you like to listen to?

Poem ☐   Fairytales ☐   Legends ☐   Historical Events ☐   Others ☐

Why?

………………………………………………………………………………………

What do you like?

Someone tells you a story ☐   You read a story by yourself ☐

COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

How often do you do communicative activities in class?

Once a week ☐   Twice a week ☐   Three times a week ☐   Other ☐

Is it easy to speak in English?

YES ☐   NO ☐

Why is it easy or difficult?

………………………………………………………………………………………

What is the best way to understand the meaning of words?

By pictures ☐   By an explanation ☐   By body movements ☐   Other ☐

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

APPENDIX No. 3

PRE–TEST

FABLE: THE DOG AND THE SHADOW

(Pictures taken from Google images).

SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Making Predictions

Researchers showed three different scenes relating to the fable. After that, researchers asked the students what the story would be about and the different ideas that came to their minds. All these ideas were written on the white board. At the end of the story, researchers checked to see if the story matched with the answers.

PRE – LISTENING

Show the pictures relating to topic as a vocabulary. Then the teacher showed the students some pictures and asked them if they know the story. Afterwards, the teacher asked students for words that they think are relating to the story.

Next each child received a sheet with pictures that were not in order. Then, the teacher asked the students try to guess and put the pictures in order.

VOCABULARY

MEAT

SHADOW

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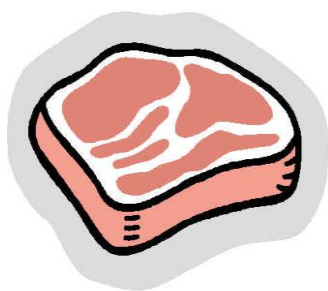
 BRIDGE

 CATCH

PUT IN ORDER THE PICTURES

WHILE – LISTENING

Teacher told the fable through showing the pictures of the vocabulary and interacting with students. The interaction was carried out by question – answer technique.

FABLE

The Dog and the Shadow.

It happened that a Dog had gotten a piece of meat and was carrying it home in his mouth to eat it in peace. Now, on his way home he had to cross a bridge. As he crossed, he looked down and saw his own shadow reflected in

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

the water. Thinking it was another dog with another piece of meat, he made up his mind to have that also. So he tried to catch the shadow in the water, but as he opened his mouth the piece of meat fell out, dropped into the water and was never   seen   again.

Beware lest you lose the substance by grasping at the shadow.

AFTER LISTENING

After teacher finished telling the fable, she and students checked the answers on the work sheet. After that, teacher gave students another work sheet with multiple choice questions. This activity was based on details, understanding, moral message, and description of the characters and settings of the fable.

MULTIPLE CHOICE ACTIVITY

CHOOSE THE CORRECT ANSWER

1). What was the fable about?

a). A little dog   b). A dog and a meat   c).   A hamster   d).   A dog and the shadow

2). Where did the dog go?

a). To the forest   b). To its owner   c). At home   d). To the river

3). What did the dog have in its mouth?

a). A fish   b). A carrot   c). Meat   d).   Chicken

4). What did the dog cross?

a). House   b). A bridge   c). Hell   d). Heaven

5. What did the dog see in the water?

   a) His shadow b) His coat   c) His neck   d)His father

6. What did the dog think later? It was…..

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

a) Another pet   b)Another dog   c) Another sweater   d) Another friend

7. What thing did the dog´s mouth fell out when he opened his mouth?

a) Meat   b) An apple   c) Milk   d) Teeth

8. Why did the dog open his mouth? Because he

a) Tried to get another meat   b) Tried to buy a car   c) Tried to drink water
d) Tried to ask some help

9. Did the dog eat something?

Yes   No

a) Meat   b) Carrots   c) Piece of cake   d) A boy

10. What was the end?

a) Happy   b) Sad   c) Surprised d)Unexpected

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

APPENDIX No. 4

POST – TEST

LEGEND: THE CHAINED DOG

(Pictures taken from Google images).

SPEAKING ACTIVITY

Making Predictions

Researchers showed three different scenes relating to the fable. After that, researchers asked the students what the story would be about and the different ideas that came to their minds. All these ideas were written on the white board. At the end of the story, researchers checked if the story matched with the answers.

PRE – LISTENING

Show the pictures relating to topic as a vocabulary. Then the teacher showed the students some pictures and asked them if they know the legend. Afterwards, asked the students for words that they think are relating to the legend.

Next, each child received a sheet with pictures that are not in order. Then, the teacher asked the students to try to guess and put the pictures in order.
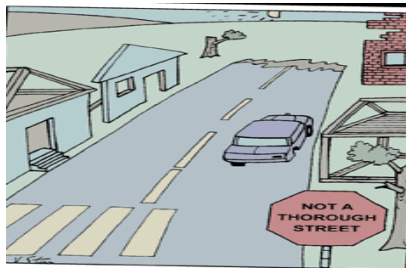
VOCABULARY

PRIEST   **HELL**

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

SATAN

DOG

CHAIN

STREET

PUT IN ORDER THE PICTURES

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WHILE – LISTENING

Teacher told the legend in English through showing the pictures of the vocabulary and interacting with students. The interaction was carried out by question – answer technique.

LEGEND

THE   CHAINED   DOG

It is believed that this animal was a reincarnation of Satan. It was a very large and quick dog that God let escape from hell. This dog dragged a heavy chain against the streets of Cuenca, sounding very scary during the night. It is said that the dog went out in order to punish bad boys.

AFTER LISTENING

After the teacher finished telling the legend, she and students checked the answers on the work sheet. After that, teacher gave students another work sheet with multiple choice activities. This activity was based on details, understanding, moral message, and description of the characters and settings of the legend.

MULTIPLE CHOICE ACTIVITY

CHOOSE THE CORRECT ANSWER

1). What was the legend about?

a). A little dog   b). A rabbit   c).   A hamster   d). A big dog

2). What did people believe? It was a reincarnation of

a). God   b). Evil   c). Dog   d). Satan

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

3). What did the dog look like?

a). Tall   b). Small   c). Big   d). Big and slow

4). Where had that animal escaped?

a). House   b). Orphan   c). Hell   d). Heaven

5). Why did that animal escape?

a). To follow its owner   b). To look for food   c).   To follow bad children d). To follow and punish priests and religious people

6). What did that animal drag?

a).   A chair b). A chain   c). Grass d). A stone

8). Where did that animal walk?

a). On the streets of Cuenca   b). On the streets of El Vado   c). On the streets of San Roque   d). On the streets of El Vergel.

9). How was the sound of the chain?

a) It was scary   b). It was happy c). It was noisy   d). it was quiet

10). What did people use to think when the dog howled?

a). Something will happen   b). Someone will die   c). Someone will be hurt d). Someone will steal

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

BOOKLET

One of the most attractive features of any country is its culture. As culture, it refers to its history, people, customs, and beliefs. Among Cuencano beliefs, there are many legends which enrich its traditions (Pictures taken from Google images).

1. THE CHAINED DOG

Level: 10 to 12 years old Beginners

Objective: Listening for specific information

In the past times, parents told children that there was a dog that lived in Las Herrerias which was a creation of Satan. It was a very big and quick dog that God let escape from hell to punish bad boys and girls. This dog had a heavy chain that sounded scary on the streets. The dog went out every night to take any bad boy or girl to hell.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES

The teacher presents key words from the legend.

PRIEST

HELL

73

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

SATAN

DOG

CHAIN

STREET

The teacher sticks a picture on the board and makes questions about the key points of the legend to the students.

1. Do you like a horror legend?
2. Can you guess the name of this legend?
3. What do you know about it?
4. Where did it happen?

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

DURING THE STORYTELLING

FILLING IN THE BLANKS

The teacher asked the students to listen to the legend carefully. After telling the legend the first time, teacher handed out to the students a work sheet for the students to fill in with the missing words.

WORK SHEET

1. There was a ………………… that lived in…………………………………………
2. The dog was a creation of………………………………………………………...
3. Dog punished to bad ……………………… and …………….....................
4. The dog had a heavy ………………………………………………………………..
5. The chain sounded scary on the …………………………………………………...
6. The dog went out every ……………………………………………………………
7. The dog took any bad boy or girl to ………………………………………………..

POST STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

MATERIALS

➢ Markers
➢ Question Cards

Teacher- elaborate with question cards with relevant information of the story.

1. What was the legend about?
2. What was the protagonist of the legend?
3. Who was the owner of the dog?
4. What did the dog have over its neck?
5. Who did the dog punish to?
6. Why did the dog take to children?
7. Do you think there is a message?
8. What is the message of the story?

The teacher divided the whole class into two groups, and gave them the markers. After that, the group number one will ask and the group two will answer the question, and vice versa until question eight. Then when the teacher

75

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

says TINGO – TINGO, students pass the marker among them. When teacher says TANGO, students stop passing the marker. The students of the first group that has the marker, has to answer the question, and vice versa. The whole group can help to answer the question, it is optional.

## 2. VIRGIN OF TOMEBAMBA

Level: 10 to 12 years old Beginners
Objective: Listening for specific Information

A long time ago, in Cuenca it started to rain a lot. As a result of this raining, Tomebamba River filled up and water started to go out to the streets. This flood destroyed many houses, buildings, "El Puente Roto", and "El Vergel" Church. Suddenly, a miracle occurred, the rain stopped and a little girl looked at picture of Maria Virgin in the river. Then people took the picture from the water and built a new church where this picture is in it.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES

Teachers presents key words of the legend.
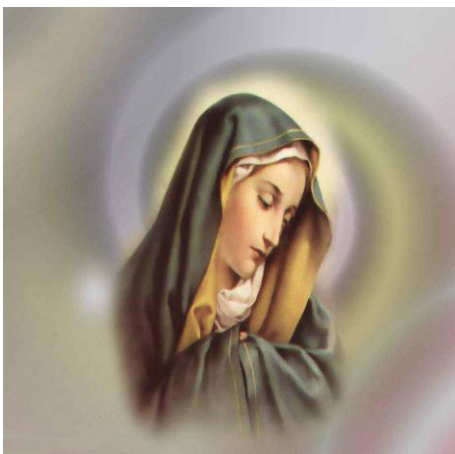
VIRGIN   CHURCH

 RAINING **PICTURE**

Teacher shows two pictures of the legend; then asks to the students if they know the legend. After that, teacher asks each row for three key moments of the legend and writes them on the board. At the end of listening to the legend, the teacher checks the answer and determinates the winning row.

DURING THE STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

The teacher asks the students to pay attention to the legend. After the teacher tells the legend, the teacher gives to the students a piece of paper with sentences relating to the legend. Students have to answer TRUE or FALSE according to the legend.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

WORK SHEET

Answer TRUE or FALSE to the following statements

1. A long time ago, in Cuenca it started to snow   (   )
2. Yanuncay River filled up and water started to go out to the streets   (   )
3. This flood destroyed "El Puente Roto", and "El Vergel" Church   (   )
4. When the rain stopped, people looked at picture of Maria Virgin   (   )
5. The picture was on the street   (   )
6. People broke the picture   (   )

POST STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

Teacher puts key moment pictures from the legend on the board. Then teacher asks the children to retell the legend using the pictures on the board.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

3. THE ENCHANTED STONE

Level: 10 to 12 years ago Beginners

Objective: Listening for gist information

Once upon a time, there was a big stone in El Bosque de Monay which was bewitched. This stone had the power to accomplish any wish for good children, since it had a memory and all information was stored inside. It also had the power to punish the children who were disobedient with their parents.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES

Teacher presents the vocabulary of the legend
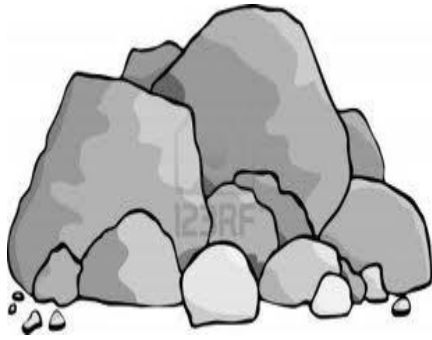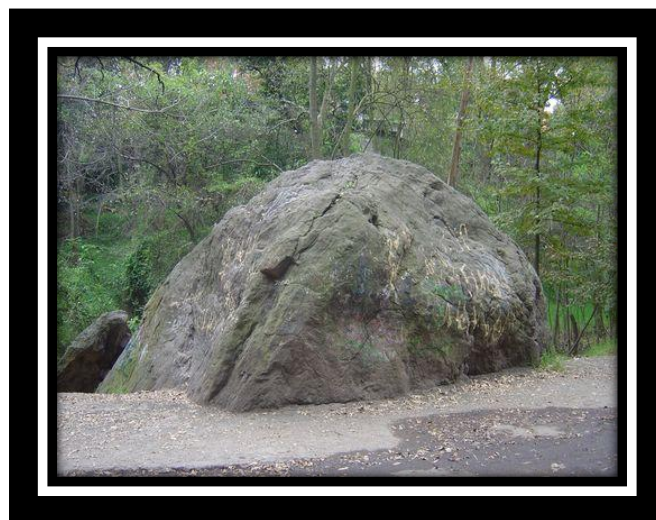
 STONE **BEWITCHED**

 MEMORY **PUNISH**

Teacher writes the name of the legend on the board and asks the children for words relating to the legend. Teacher should give some clues in order to elicit the students' participation.

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
Power               │     THE      │          Satan
                    │   ENHANCED   │
Wishes              │    STONE     │          Dark Place
                    └──────────────┘
Money    Gold   Punishments   Rewards
```

DURING STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

The teacher gives the students a sheet with sentences in disorder. While the teacher is telling the legend, children have to put these sentences in order according to what the children have heard.

WORK SHEET

Put in order the following sentences according to the legend heard.

- ➢ The stone was bewitched.
- ➢ One upon a time, there was a big stone in El Bosque de Monay.
- ➢ The stone had a memory.
- ➢ This stone had the power to accomplish any wish to the good children.
- ➢ The stone also had the power to punish the children who were disobedient with their parents.
- ➢ All information was stored inside of the memory.

POST STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

The students make an interview to the Enhanced Stone. The students works in pairs; one student pretends to be the Enhanced Stone and another one pretends to be the interviewer. Teacher holds short dialogues with them about the interview. At the end of the interview, students change the roles.

Interview

- ➢ **Interviewer:** Hi My name is……..Can you answer me some questions?
- ➢ **Stone:** Yes, it will be a pleasure.
- ➢ **Interviewer:** What is your name?

Gabriela Pañi & Alejandra Parra

➢ **Stone:** Give true answer

➢ **Interviewer:** Where do you live?

➢ **Stone:** Give true answer

➢ **Interviewer:** How old are you?

➢ **Stone:** Give true answer

➢ **Interviewer:** What is your hobby?

➢ **Stone:** Give true answer

➢ **Interviewer:** Why do children have to a good behavior?

➢ **Stone:** Give true answer

4. THE HEADLESS PRIEST

Level: 10 to 12 years old Beginners
Objective: Listening for details

In the neighborhood of San Roque, there was a priest who had a secret girlfriend far away from his house. Thus, he ride a horse to visit her all the nights, but as he was a priest, he had to hide his face before people. Thus, he hid his face using a black hood over his head; when people looked at him at night, they though that he did not have head since it was a lost soul. This soul went out all nights to take care of that children sleep early, on contrary, he took to their souls.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES

Teacher presents the vocabulary of the legend.

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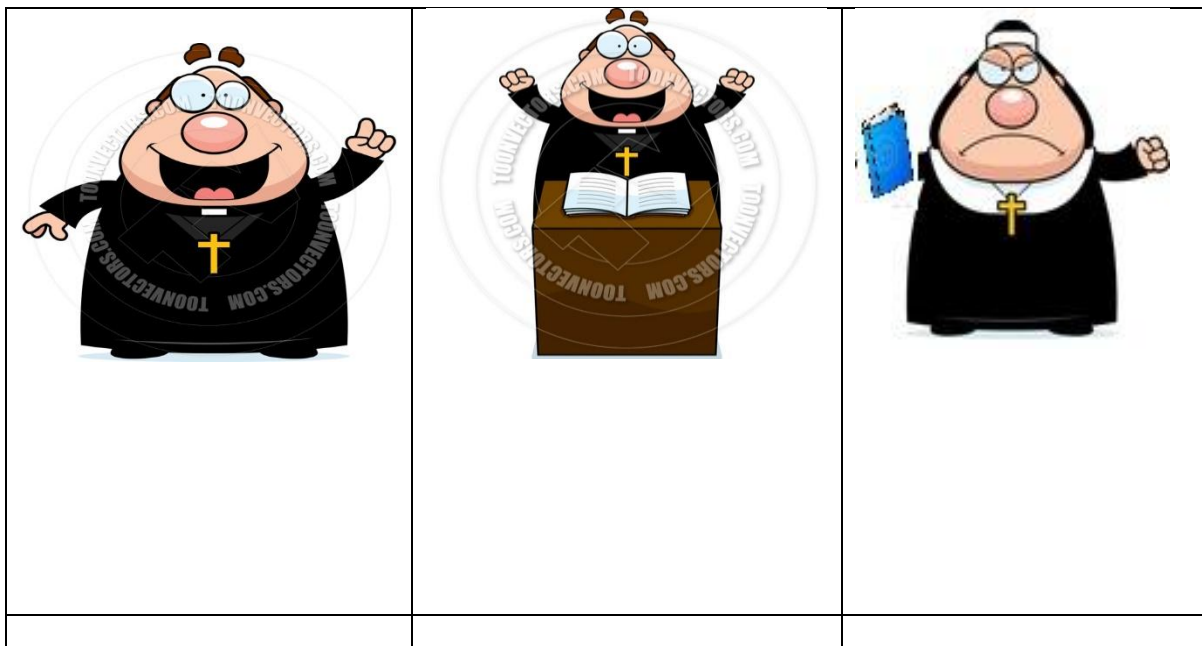
 HEADLESS PRIEST

 BLACK HOOD

 SOULS

Teacher gives three different pictures of priest to the students; then he/ she gives a description, the students have to select the picture that is according to the description given.

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DURING THE STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

After the teacher tells the legend, the teacher holds up a sheet with a pictures of the sequence of the legend in disorder. The students must put the sequence of the story in order.

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POST STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

The teacher sticks up some pictures guiding a new end of the legend, the students have to build the new end.

5. THE LAMP OF THE WIDOW

Level: 10 to 12 years old Beginners
Objective: Listening for prediction

In the neighborhood of El Vado, there was a young woman who had a prohibited love. So, to meet with him, she had to cover her face and carry a lamp to illuminate her walk. As she was thin, people thought that she was a

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dead person that lived in the lamp on the corner waiting for her love. If she found someone in her road, she took his / her soul.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITIES

The teacher writes a key sentence of the legend on board, then asks the students for more details of the legend in order to predict what the legend is about. At the end of telling the legend, the teacher and students will check the correct answers.

THERE WAS A WOMAN THAT WAITING FOR HER LOVE.

The teacher gives a card of bingo to each student containing the vocabulary of the legend. When the teacher says a word students should look for that word in the card and if he or she has it, to cross it out. The students that complete the bingo will win the game.

TABLES OF BINGO

B	Neighborhood
I	Woman
N	Face
G	Lamp
O	Love

B	Thin
I	Walk
N	People
G	Dead
O	Road

B	Soul
I	Woman
N	Road
G	Lamp
O	Thin

DURING THE STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

CORRECT THE LEGEND

The teacher writes clue words of the legend on the board. Then the teacher tells the legend. Afterwards teacher hands the legend to each student, but this legend will have some mistakes. Thus, the students have to correct the legend using the words of the board.

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KEY WORDS

Lamp, Woman, Neighborhood, Love, Face, Walk, Thin, Dead, Someone, Soul

THE DOOR OF THE GIRL

In the city of El Vado, there was a young woman who had a prohibited cat. So, to meet him, she had to cover her eyes and carry a lamp to illuminate her house. As she was fat, people thought that she was a beautiful person that lived in the lamp on the corner waiting for her love. If she found a dog in her road, she took his / her ears.

POST STORYTELLING ACTIVITY

HANGMAN

The teacher divides the class into two groups and asks questions at random. If the participant of one of the group answers wrong, teacher draws a part of the hangman. The group that complete its hangman first will lose the game.

QUESTIONS

1. Where did it happened?
2. What was the neighborhood where the woman appear?
3. Was the woman old?
4. Why did she cover her face?
5. What did she carry to illuminate her road?
6. Was she thin?
7. Why did she carry a lamp?
8. Was she dead?
9. Why did people think she was dead?
10. What is the message of the story?

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