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**CARRERA DE LENGUA Y LITERATURA INGLESA**

**“Developing the speaking skill by using Buzz Groups activities in third semester  
students of the English Major at the University of Cuenca”**

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## RESUMEN

Este trabajo aborda la necesidad de cada profesor de inglés que tiene que confrontar al momento de desarrollar la habilidad del habla con sus estudiantes. Aplicamos un método llamado Buzz Groups para mejorar esta habilidad. Algunos estudiantes tienden a sentirse avergonzados de hablar en frente de la clase, pero se sienten cómodos hablando en grupos.

Esta investigación es basado en un estudio aplicado en el colegio llamado Nong Bone en Laos. Al iniciar primero pedimos autorización al director de la Escuela de Lengua Inglesa de la Universidad de Cuenca para aplicar el método con los estudiantes del tercer ciclo.

Después de la autorización, se llevó a cabo una encuesta con el fin de conocer las preferencias de los estudiantes en relación a los temas de la clase de inglés. Los temas seleccionados fueron: música, películas, lugares turísticos, tecnología y comida.

Elaboramos las planificaciones de clases basados en los temas mencionados y aplicamos a los estudiantes del grupo de la mañana y tarde usando el método Buzz Groups, previo al consentimiento de los profesores quienes estuvieron a cargo de la materia de conversación. Las actividades fueron diseñadas para facilitar el trabajo en grupos permitiéndoles a los estudiantes expresarse por si mismos sin limitaciones que podrían tener en la clase.

Adicionalmente, analizamos los beneficios de los temas escogidos por los estudiantes a través de cuadros de porcentaje señalados en la sección de resultados, debido a una encuesta que aplicamos al final de cada actividad. Finalmente señalamos los beneficios de usar este método.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Grupos de trabajo, destreza oral, aprendizaje cooperativo, y motivación.



## ABSTRACT

This work deals with the need that every English teacher faces at the moment of developing the speaking skill with their students. We applied a method called Buzz Groups to improve this important skill. Some students tend to feel ashamed to speak in front of the whole class, but they feel comfortable speaking in groups of partners.

To accomplish this investigation, we based it on a study applied in Nong Bone Public High School in Laos. In order to start our investigation, first we asked the Director of the English Major Career of the University of Cuenca for permission to apply Buzz Groups with third semester students.

After getting the permission a survey was conducted in order to know students' preferences regarding topics in the English class. The selected topics from the survey were: music, movies, tourist places, technology, and food.

We elaborated lesson plans based on the topics mentioned above and we applied them to the students from the morning and afternoon group using Buzz Groups, with the consent of professors who were in charge of the speaking subject. Moreover, the activities were designed to facilitate the work in groups allowing students to express themselves without limitations that they could have in front of the entire class.

Additionally, we analyzed the benefits of the topics chosen for the students through percentage charts in the results section, due to a survey that we applied at the end of every activity. Finally, we pointed out the benefits of using this method.

**KEY WORDS:** Buzz Groups, speaking skill, cooperative learning, and motivation.



## CONTENTS

DEDICATED TO.....	10
ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....	11
INTRODUCTION.....	12
CHAPTER I .....	14
1. Description of the research.....	14
1.1. Justification.....	14
1.1.1. Background .....	14
1.1.2. Delimitation of the problem .....	15
1.2. Research question .....	16
1.3. Objectives .....	17
1.3.1. General objective.....	17
1.3.2. Specific objectives.....	17
CHAPTER II.....	18
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	18
2.1. Speaking skill .....	18
2.2. Definition of Buzz Groups .....	19
2.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Buzz Groups .....	20
2.3.1. Advantages: .....	20
2.3.2. Disadvantages: .....	20
2.3.3. Steps in Using the Buzz Groups.....	20
2.4. Cooperative Learning .....	21
2.5. Motivation .....	23
2.6. Research on Buzz Groups.....	24
CHAPTER III.....	26
3. METHODOLOGY .....	26
3.1. Research approach.....	26
3.2. Participants .....	27
3.3. Data collection instruments .....	28
3.4. Data analysis.....	29
CHAPTER IV .....	31
4. RESULTS.....	31
4.1. Music activity .....	31
4.2. Movies activity .....	34
4.3. Tourist places activity.....	38



4.4. Food activity .....	42
4.5. Technology activity .....	45
CHAPTER V .....	50
5. CONCLUSION .....	50
REFERENCES .....	52
APPENDICES .....	56
Appendix 1 .....	56
Survey .....	56
Sample number 1 .....	60
Sample number 2 .....	63
Appendix 2 .....	66
Surveys.....	66
Sample number 1 .....	66
Sample number 2 .....	66
Appendix 3 .....	67
Interviews .....	67
Interview number 1 .....	67
Interview number 2 .....	68
Interview number 3 .....	69
Interview number 4 .....	69
Appedix 4 .....	71
Lesson plans.....	71
Activity One.....	71
Activity Two .....	74
Activity Three .....	85
Activity Four .....	88
Activity Five .....	92
Appendix 5 .....	94
Photos.....	94



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## **DEDICATED TO**

We dedicate this work to teachers and students who want to improve the speaking skill. The teachers can see in this academic paper the good results of Buzz Groups regardless of students' English level. Also, students can see how they can improve the speaking skill working by themselves.



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I thank my parents for my life and the unconditional support that they gave me during my student stage. To my classmates and friends who helped me and with whom I shared good times inside and outside of class. To my thesis partner with whom I worked very hard to present this research which is helpful to teachers and students. Finally, I want to thank my thesis tutor for her patience and knowledge which guided and suggested the best way to present this thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION

This academic paper consists of the compilation and adaptation of topics and activities for the purpose of helping students improve their speaking skills through a method called Buzz Groups. It is a method in which the students work in groups and develop collaborative activities that gather about four or five people who sit together to discuss different topics of interest.

Chapter one explains why this study focuses on speaking. We considered it one of the most challenging skills in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. Some teachers and students suggest that speaking fluently is the most difficult skill to achieve. The general objective is to create a booklet with five Buzz Groups activities in order for students to improve their speaking skills in class. The topics performed were selected from the students' interests, identified through an earlier survey.

Also, in chapter two we point out the topics that support our study which are related to speaking skills, the meaning of Buzz Groups, the advantages and disadvantages of using Buzz Groups, cooperative learning, and motivation. Additionally, this study determines that the foundation of this investigation is based on research applied in the seventh grade of Nong Bone Public High School in Laos, the first semester of the 2010/2011 academic year.

Chapter three concerns the methodology; we followed a quantitative and qualitative approach. The quantitative research showed us the most popular topics among students. These topics were considered within Buzz Groups methodology. It also showed us the number of students who liked each activity. The qualitative research indicated problems with activities, as well as students' suggestions and comments on the application of this method.



Next, chapter four shows the results of the intervention through percentage graphics, and selected information taken from the students, which the reader can appreciate in a detailed way.

Finally, chapter five reaches a conclusion comparing the Buzz Groups method applied at the University of Cuenca and the seventh grade of Nong Bone Public High School in Laos. Both intervention results were positive regardless of the academic level of the target groups.



## CHAPTER I

### 1. DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

#### 1.1. JUSTIFICATION

##### 1.1.1. BACKGROUND

This topic was chosen in order to help students develop fluency, because this is one of the biggest problems that students face when speaking. Students are able to understand grammar and learn vocabulary; however, they feel frustrated in improving their pronunciation and fluency.

Three main actors of the English Literature School consider that learning the speaking skill involves difficulties. First, the speaking skill is considered a weak area, as indicated by conversations that we have had with teachers of the English Literature School; they have told us this difficulty is due to students not practicing English between themselves. Also, professors mentioned that students do not have a native environment to put the language into practice.

Moreover, they feel afraid to use the language, because of the mistakes that they could make interacting among their partners. Therefore, some students do not speak at all. In addition, “students try to express themselves in English but they are thinking in Spanish” (Argudo, personal communication).

We interviewed two professors, asking them about the most difficult skill to learn in our school. These experienced instructors considered the speaking skill as the most challenging one for our students. (See the full interviews on appendix number 3)

Second, our partners suggest that speaking is the most difficult skill to master because they are not actively engaged with the foreign language. Additionally, methods to foster this important ability are not used frequently in the classroom. One of our partners told us that



“speaking is the most difficult skill, because they are not surrounded by a native English environment” (Cando. Personal communication).

Also, the conversation class does not focus on topics to talk the full hour of class. Instead teachers also have to teach grammar, writing, and reading, so the time to use developing speaking skill is reduced. Two different students have stated this through two interviews. (See the full interviews on appendix number 3).

Finally, we as students of the English Literature School are protagonists of the various problems that have arisen and the deficiencies found during all university life related to the speaking skill. For most of us, it is difficult to speak in the classroom in front of the whole class and even worse outside of the university. That is why we call for methods that help us speak without embarrassment, and, best of all, in a natural way.

In conclusion, and for the reasons mentioned above, we have decided to collect and apply activities through the Buzz Groups method with third semester students of the English Literature Major at the University of Cuenca, in order to develop the speaking skill and to foster cooperative work in the classroom.

The Buzz Groups method will help the students work more effectively in groups. It will motivate them to speak without fear of making mistakes, because they will feel more confident and comfortable speaking in front of some classmates.

### **1.1.2. DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM**

In our daily lives, especially in the university environment, most of us as students speak more than we write, and we consider that this important skill is not developed by teachers using adequate methods. Therefore, if students do not learn how to speak or do not get any opportunity to speak in the language classroom, they may soon become demotivated and lose





interest in learning. On the other hand, if teachers use adequate methods that engage students with speaking in a real situation, the learning of English will be natural and productive.

As part of the graduation profile, students must use the target language fluently, spontaneously, flexibly and effectively for both social and professional purposes. For this reason, we considered it important to improve the speaking skill. Therefore, the speaking skill should be taught and practiced in group activities because it is a productive skill that requires social interaction. Teachers should avoid any kinds of class activities that are boring, and increase efforts to make students develop their speaking skills. Nowadays, teachers need to take a closer look at the type of speaking methods that they are using and see if they really capture students' interest and create a real need for communication.

Moreover, we can point out that an obvious problem that students have as foreign language learners is lack of fluency at the moment of speaking. Most of them learn grammar and vocabulary quickly, but they feel frustrated when they cannot speak fluently. This is because most of the time students work in class individually; they feel embarrassed by speaking in front of the class, and according to our experience, teachers usually do not pay attention to group activities. In addition, students are not encouraged to feel comfortable when talking due to the lack of practice and group motivation. As a result, students are not able to speak naturally.

## **1.2. RESEARCH QUESTION**

Our academic research is going to present activities which promote the practice of the speaking skill to use with third semester students. Buzz Groups activities will be chosen on topics relevant to students' interests; this will motivate them to speak and feel more comfortable speaking with their peers, which we would consider success. As a result, in order



to find out the most effective Buzz Groups activities, which we want to compile into a booklet, this academic paper is going to answer the following research question:

To what extent do Buzz Groups activities support the development of speaking skill in third semester English major students at the University of Cuenca?

### **1.3. OBJECTIVES**

In order to answer our research question we focused on the following objectives:

#### **1.3.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

To create a booklet containing Buzz Groups activities to enhance the speaking skill in third semester English major students at the University of Cuenca.

#### **1.3.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- To conduct a survey to determine the appropriate topics for student group activities, in order to develop students' speaking skill.
- To design and apply five Buzz Groups activities based on students' interests.
- To collect and adapt appropriate materials to be used in the development of the activities, and compile them into a booklet for the use of future teachers.
- To conduct a final survey to discover students' perceptions about each activity performed.



## CHAPTER II

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Speaking skill

Inside of a foreign language classroom, “The process of teaching and learning, the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are simultaneously performed” (Oradee, 2012, p. 533). Generally, the speaking skill is considered one of the most difficult to develop. Kavaliauskiene, (2013) stated that speaking requires a constant interaction with others; however, in classrooms there is not constant interaction between students and teachers.

Nowadays, many English teachers still spend the majority of class time on reading and writing practice, almost ignoring the speaking skill (Bahrani, 2012). As a result, many students do not improve in the development of the speaking skill. Due to this, they maintain the same problems of grammar and pronunciation.

Kavaliauskiene, (2013) argued that students do not have contact with native English speakers because English is studied as a foreign language. Therefore, one of the main problems of English learners is to practice the speaking skill. Moreover, the students do not use English inside the classroom. They still speak in their mother tongue. It is because the students do not feel motivated to speak in the foreign language.

Furthermore, students are frequently too embarrassed or shy to say something incorrectly when they do not understand (Bahrani, 2012). They prefer not to speak. In this case, the role of the teacher must be to encourage students to speak, regardless of the mistakes that they could make. The teacher has to explain that mistakes are part of the process of learning a foreign language.

Bahrani, (2012) expressed that speaking has a decisive role in the language learning process; therefore, the role of the teacher must be to promote student participation. In order to



increase participation, Kavaliauskiene, (2013) stated that “Students must be taught the speaking skills during classroom activities” (p.2).

The teachers must have a set of different methods, and they must find the most useful ones to help their students improve their performances. This paper presents useful activities to improve the speaking skill in the classroom. Teachers can apply these with their students. So, in order to overcome the problem regarding development of fluency when speaking, one of the methods that will help is Buzz Groups activities.

## **2.2. Definition of Buzz Groups**

Ernest W. Brewer, (1997) explained that “Buzz Groups are formed by dividing large groups into small discussion groups of 2 to 15 people who meet simultaneously for a specified time to discuss a specific question, problem or issue” (p. 72). The Buzz Groups method allows students to be actively involved in topics of discussion, encourages students to participate with each other, and develops the communicative skill.

The Buzz Groups method was first used by Dr. Donald Phillips at Michigan State University. “He would divide his large classes into six-member clusters asking them to discuss a certain problem for six minutes” (Gangel, 2003, p. 43). When the class is divided into small groups, students have the opportunity to share their ideas and feel more confident at the moment they speak. Furthermore, Brown & Atkins, (1988) stated that:

Buzz Groups take very little time. They give students an activity and a break so they return to listening and note-taking with renewed concentration. They can be used to link one section of a lecture to another and as a check on understanding. They encourage students to discuss and think. Students also are more likely to answer a question in a large audience if they have checked out their answers with a few fellow-students first. (p. 29)



Therefore, the Buzz Groups method helps students interact in groups, and the four language skills are used. Brewer (1997) claims that this method has the following advantages and disadvantages.

### **2.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of the Buzz Groups**

#### **2.3.1. Advantages:**

- It allows everyone's ideas to be expressed.
- Participants learn to work in real-life situations where other opinions are considered.
- It sets the groundwork to get the discussion started.
- Because members are expressing opinions, it is good for dealing with controversial subjects. (p. 75).

#### **2.3.2. Disadvantages:**

- Effectiveness of the group may be lowered by the immature behavior of a few.
- It may not be effective for younger groups or groups that know each other's opinions seriously.
- It can be time-consuming when dealing with very large groups. (p. 76)

#### **2.3.3. Steps in Using the Buzz Groups**

- The teacher has to divide the class into smaller groups.
- Each group has to choose a leader.
- The students have to sit facing each other in order to increase the discussion.
- The teacher will introduce the topic to be discussed.



- Each group has to discuss and understand the topic.
- All the members of the group have to participate.
- The time allowed can be between 2 to 20 minutes.
- The teacher has to move from group to group, listening, and raising questions to stimulate discussion.
- At the end of the class, the teacher or discussion leader reports the discussion. (p. 73).

The teachers should use real situations that engage the students to talk. Also, the teacher has to create a comfortable environment in which each student must have a turn to talk and listen, too. The term “Buzz” refers to the noise that students make in the class when they are working. In addition, it is important that the teacher provides a specific topic than a general one (Hurt, 2012).

#### **2.4. Cooperative Learning**

The current educational environment requires that students work in a cooperative way and, as a result of this requirement, cooperative learning is now utilized in schools and universities within all subjects around the world (Johnson & Johnson, 2009); professors tend to encourage students to work as a team in order to accomplish a task or acquire certain knowledge.

“There is a big difference between simply putting students together in groups to learn and structuring groups of students to work cooperatively” (Koutselini, 2008, p. 35). What makes it different to work in groups in a cooperative way is that, to be cooperative, a group must have a balance in the structure, which means that a group cannot be formed by a group of students that master a certain knowledge, in our case of study, English native speakers inside the same group. This group will have an obvious advantage against a group formed by foreign English speakers so for this reason teachers must structure the groups in a balanced way.



Cooperative learning offers a wide variety of approaches but the most effective is when students work in mixed-ability groups. They have regular opportunities to teach each other after the teacher has introduced a lesson and success is recognized based on the learning of all members of the group. The ideas and opinions from each group are shared as a result of agreement between the leaders of each group (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

Furthermore, teachers should be the facilitator and guide, not the authority around the classroom in order to overcome difficulties that can be found during task activities. Students should learn to collaborate and reinforce confidence in the group so that cooperation builds between all the members of the groups (Koutselini, 2008).

Definitely, “Cooperative learning groups rely on the professor to organize learning activities and provide sources” (Berry, 2008, p. 150). As an obvious advantage of the cooperative method, we can say that classroom learning is based on the work of the teacher and students in order to achieve common goals in which the teacher will be their guide and critique while observations from students will result in a solid knowledge community.

Moreover, “Group teams develop both taskwork and teamwork through performing their team projects, In order to get positive results students have to develop teamwork making right decisions. Taskwork is related to students’ cognitive activity to accomplish a given task. Therefore, “taskwork and teamwork are conceptually independent, but the nature of their functioning is intertwined and affects team performance” (Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2014, p. 33). “The evaluation of collaborative learning tends to only focus on their task achievement in terms of how effectively and efficiently they accomplish their given tasks” (Kim et al, 2014, p.33). In certain cases students are very critical and they do not care about the grammar mistakes that they made. They just want to convey a message so the teacher can take





advantage of this by adding discussion themes that are interesting for the students; however, teachers have to find an opportunity to check grammar mistakes (Kim et al, 2014).

Additionally, “Within a collaborative structure there is a consistent expectation of verbal exchange through an orderly sequence of skills” (Osterholt & Barrat, 2012, p. 24).

Cooperation in learning in a foreign language is a powerful tool. “For example, students learn and practice the roles of speaker and listener in paired work before they collaborate in a larger group” (Osterholt & Barrat, 2012, p. 24). This means that collaboration can be started with pairs performing the roles mentioned above whereas as the group size increases, the other members can build self-confidence by interacting with the rest of the participants of the group.

Consequently, cooperative learning provides an opportunity for more students to be directly involved which occurs more in small-group situations than in whole-class discussions in which a few students dominate and the rest are very shy or, even worse, they do not say anything (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

“Learning is a social endeavor. When students are prepared and participate consistently in group work there are deep social gains. Group work brings together students who might not interact with one another” (Davila & Mayfield, 2009, p. 245). For this reason, teachers should use cooperative learning to enhance the speaking skill in order to foster common knowledge that will help each member of the group since students can contrast opinions and ideas with each other.

## **2.5. Motivation**

Canrinus, Helms, Beijaard, Buitink, & Hofman, (2012) stated that “motivation is a set of interrelated beliefs and emotions” (p. 120). Some students don’t have the opportunity to communicate in real life situations and, even worse, encounter teacher’s lack of motivation to



teach. These issues have an impact on student's foreign language learning outcomes; therefore, lack of motivation is a frequent problem with students as well as teachers at all levels.

In addition, “Motivation and English achievement demonstrate that the classes with the higher levels of motivation tended to have higher levels of achievement than the classes with lower levels, and viceversa” (Bernaus & Gardner, 2008, p. 392). We as English teachers often find that in the classroom a few students are unmotivated; therefore, they are unwilling to get involved in activities and various tasks. To avoid this kind of boring learning, teachers have to identify students’ interest when planning their activities. The Buzz Groups method in this way increases students’ motivation to speak.

Moreover, Bernaus & Gardner, (2008) stated that “some students might well enjoy aspects of the learning environment, but not be motivated to learn the language and hence, might attain lower levels of achievement” (p. 395). We can say that motivated students and the correct guidance of the teacher have a specific purpose to achieve. If teachers notice negative attitudes from their students, it is a sign that the whole class needs motivation.

## **2.6. Research on Buzz Groups**

We propose the use of Buzz Groups in the third semester of the English Major at the University of Cuenca based on the positive results of a study that was conducted with Seventh Graders of Nong Bone Public High School in Laos, consisting of 17 female and 18 male students. This study was applied in 2011. The researcher applied a pre-test to understand the weaknesses of the students’ speaking skill. As a result of that, many students were afraid of talking; therefore, the researcher applied the Buzz Groups method to overcome this problem. (Sengbounthanh, 2011).



The researcher applied the Buzz Groups method to two courses. In the first group students worked with pictures. At the beginning, they refused to work. Some students had grammar mistakes and they were very shy about speaking. Other students found difficulties in the pronunciation of certain words. These were the negative aspects the researcher found in the first group; then he applied the Buzz Groups method to improve the weakness mentioned above with the second group of students. (Sengbounthan, 2011).

In the second group the researcher worked with the Buzz Groups method using pictures, too. Based on the negative results from the first group, the researcher improved grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and motivation in the second group. First, to improve grammar mistakes the researcher gave a brief explanation and explained grammar just to the students that tend to fail. Second, for the students who were afraid of making mistakes the researcher gave them motivation through pictures that called their attention and to enhance pronunciation, students had to repeat difficult words several times (Sengbounthan, 2011).

After the application of this method, the researchers concluded the following results: First of all, teachers must have adequate lesson plans with appropriate activities that engage students' motivation at the moment of working in groups. Students feel more comfortable working in groups instead of working by themselves (Sengbounthan, 2011).

In conclusion, applying Buzz Groups makes students improve the speaking skill and use the four language skills: reading, speaking, listening, and writing at the same time. Consequently, students increase their vocabulary, improve grammar, enhance pronunciation and fluency and they feel motivated to work.



## CHAPTER III

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. RESEARCH APPROACH

This study is concerned with developing speaking skills through Buzz Groups activities in order to help students improve their speaking skills. It also attempts to answer our research question. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed.

First, we asked the Director of the English Literature School for permission. Then, we talked with the teachers who were in charge of the speaking subject and came to an agreement, in which we specified the hours that we would apply the activities with the students in the morning and afternoon groups.

Since we had the permission of the authorities, we started our research by conducting two surveys. This first survey was part of the quantitative data collection phase. It was applied before the intervention to obtain general information, such as age, academic level, and types of topics the students would like to deal with in the English class. This last piece of information was the most important one that we took into account. It is important to mention that the survey provided extra information such as students' extra courses at other institutions, studies abroad, and identification of native English speakers among students.

The survey was given in Spanish, because we did not know the level of the students and we wanted reliable information. We wanted to be sure that the students understood the questions. The second survey was applied after the intervention, to determine if the students liked the activity, and solicit students' suggestions, comments and perceptions about each activity. This survey was carried out in English and was part of the qualitative phase.

The quantitative research showed us the best topics to be used in Buzz Groups, as well as the amount of students who liked each activity carried out during the Buzz Groups intervention. We got these results through the first survey.



The qualitative research indicated problems with activities, in addition to students' suggestions and comments on the application of this method. We identified problems through our observation while we applied Buzz Groups activities by observing the students' attitudes and responses in each activity performed. We took into account the most relevant and important suggestions that the students gave us in the second survey, which are registered in the results of each activity.

### **3.2. PARTICIPANTS**

In order to determine the most difficult skill to learn for English students, we interviewed two male professors and two female students from the English Literature School, who shared their opinions and experiences in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language.

We took into account the most experienced professors of the school. First, we interviewed Professor Rafael Argudo, who is the Director of the English Literature School. He knows the problems that students have at the moment of interaction with the English language. Also, we had the opportunity to talk with Professor Fabian Rodas. He has been teaching subjects related to speaking over the years in the English Literature School. Both are very involved with this issue as a result of working many years with English students.

Moreover, two female students participated. They shared their experiences learning a foreign language. To make this interview more valuable, we took into account students from the last years of the career, because they have been facing troubles with the speaking skill over the years that they have been studying.

The intervention participants were English teachers and third semester English major students at the University of Cuenca.

All students participated, regardless of their academic grades. We worked with two groups, morning and afternoon shifts; the morning group had 26 students, while the afternoon group



had 21 students. In both groups, a few students did not attend class; therefore, they missed some activities performed. You can see this information in a detailed way in the results section, which shows how many students were present and absent. Both groups had an intermediate academic level, which helped us to work quickly and develop appropriate activities. The age range of both groups was between 18 and 20 years old. There were 17 women and 9 men in the morning group, and 13 women and 8 men in the afternoon group.

### **3.3. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

To determine the problem, interviews were carried out with two professors and two students. They allowed us to use their names in this academic research. This short interview lasted between two and three minutes.

Also, two surveys were employed. First, a survey was conducted in order to select the most popular and useful topics chosen by the students. In addition, the survey solicited general rather than personal information, and took less than 20 minutes for the students to complete. The students answered according to their experiences in the process of acquiring the foreign language. The survey presented some items in the form of multiple-choice questions, and allowed them to choose more than one answer according to their opinions and preferences. Moreover, it also had open-ended questions. Additionally, the students suggested reference points and alternatives to improve speaking skill through Buzz Groups activities. Most importantly, the information obtained through this survey is reliable for the purpose of our research. (See appendix number 1).

Based on the results of the survey, we performed the intervention. We carried out five activities, one per week with each group, with each teacher in charge of the speaking subject. This meant ten classes: five activities in the morning and five in the afternoon. Each 60-



minutes activity was the same for each group. These meetings took place between May 30<sup>th</sup> and June 28<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Moreover, we designed a final survey which was applied at the end of each activity. It had three questions. They aimed to determine whether students like or not the activities performed by Buzz Groups, and also required students to rank these activities by means of a Likert scale. One open-ended question elicited from students' suggestions and comments regarding the activities carried out by means of this method. Students did not take more than five to seven minutes to answer them. (See appendix number 2).

### 3.4. DATA ANALYSIS

The interviews were audio-recorded then transcribed, and we considered the professors' and students' opinions to state the problem. Information taken from professors and students was not edited or altered, because we wanted to maintain reliability and respect for the interviewees' opinions. Transcription conventions from Mackey & Gass, (2005) were used to show in a more natural way the dialogues, which we had with the interviewees. The following symbols were used.

<sup>1</sup>	Symbol	Meaning
	?	Rising intonation
	.	Falling intonation
	(.)	A dot within parentheses indicates a brief pause
	LH	Left hand

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from table 8.1 (Mackey & Gass, 2005)





RH	Right hand
NOD	Refers to one nod
HS	Refers to one head shake
HSs	Refers to more than one head shake

*Tabla 1*

The analysis of the quantitative data from the surveys showed us which topics students preferred the most. Music, movies, technology, tourist places, and food were the most popular ones.

Additionally, the qualitative analysis carried out after the intervention provided useful recommendations and suggestions that future teachers should take into account when applying this method. In the next section the results of this analysis will be developed in a detailed way. It is advisable to refer to the lessons at the end of the document on (appendix number 4)

## CHAPTER IV

### 4. RESULTS

After each activity performed we asked students give us suggestions and comments through a survey applied at the end of each intervention, and also through our observation we stated problems during each activity. These problems will be detailed with corresponding solutions.

#### 4.1. MUSIC ACTIVITY

**Morning Group:**

**Statistical results:**

2

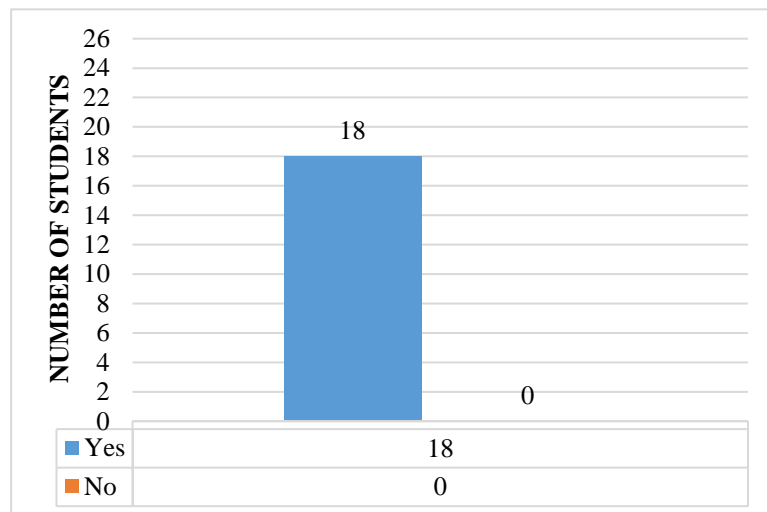


Figure 1: Did students like the music activity?

<sup>2</sup> Eighteen students were present and eight were absent.

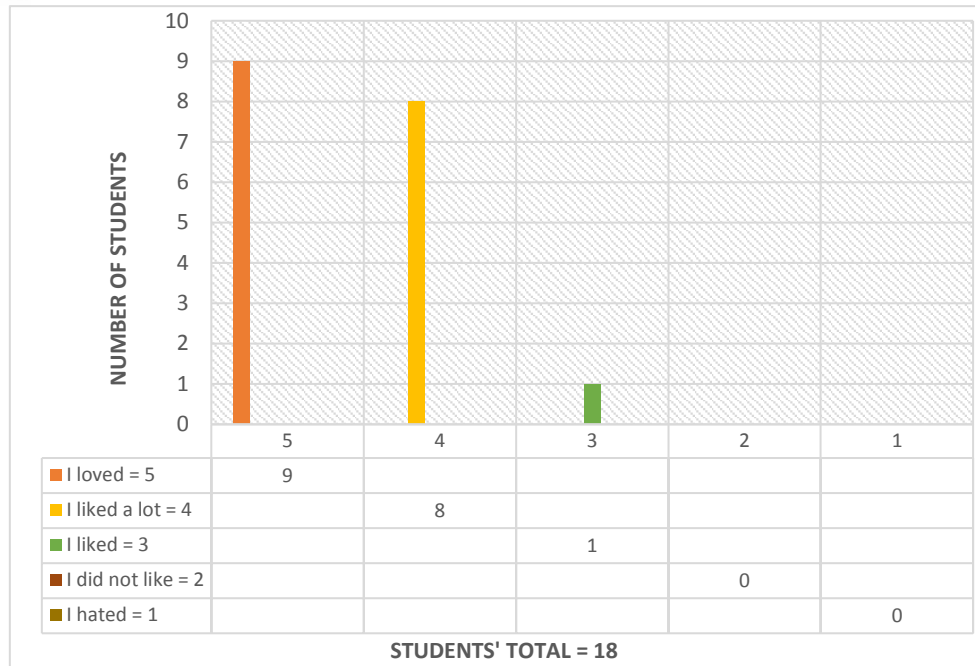


Figure 1: Students' perceptions about the music activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. Explain the goal of the activity at the beginning of the class.
2. It was a good activity to improve speaking skills.
3. These kinds of activities are good because we can share our opinions and experiences.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** We suggest that the table with five kinds of music should be expanded to ten, because students performed the activity quickly and easily. They finished it in a short period of time. The exercise with five kinds of music took less than 5 minutes.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Result</b>
The students used their cell phones.	We asked the students to keep their cellphones off.	They paid attention to the activities and they started to work efficiently.

**Afternoon Group:**

**Statistical results:**

3

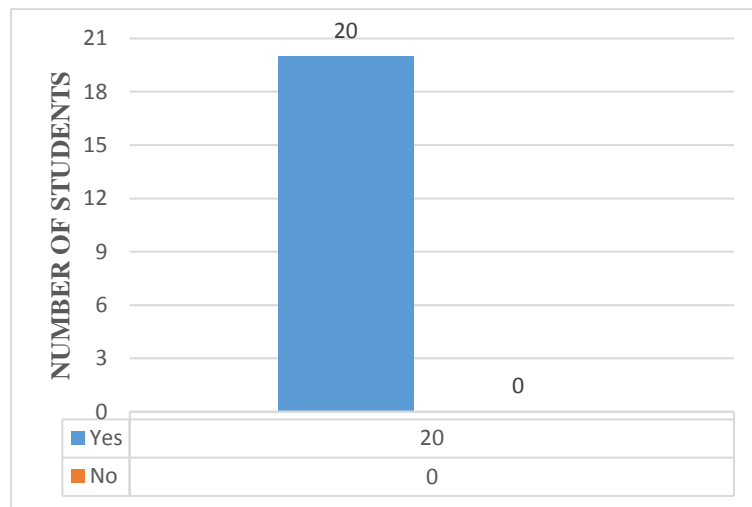


Figure 3: Did students like the music activity?

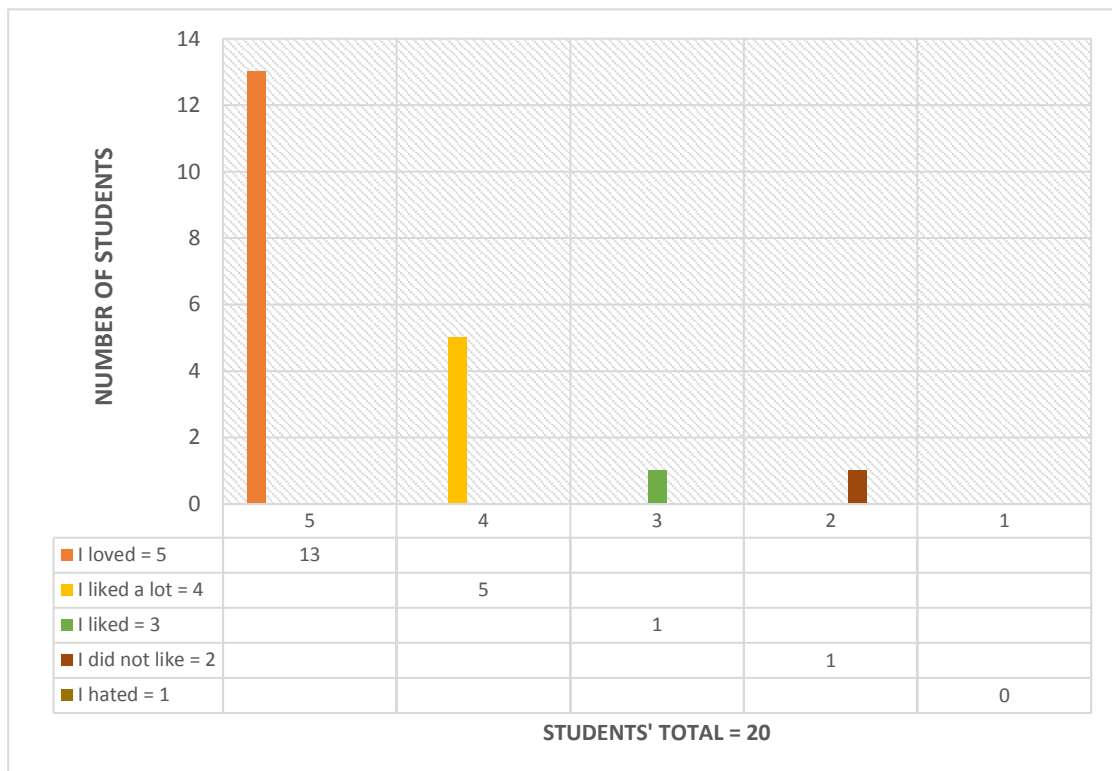


Figure 4: Students' perceptions about the music activity through a Likert scale

<sup>3</sup> Twenty students were present and one was absent.



**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. There were too many questions on the conversation cards.
2. Some conversation cards should be removed.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:**

We suggest adding or deleting conversation cards according to the students' level and the teachers' evaluation of student performance.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Result</b>
The students did not pay attention to the instructions because they were working on another subject.	We explained twice, and we asked them to put away everything that was not related to the activity.	They understood how they had to perform the activity.

**GENERAL CONCLUSION:** Everyone in both the morning and afternoon groups liked the activity. On the evaluation, more than 50% of the students rated it a 5 in both groups, which is the highest score. However, the afternoon group worked with the whole activity, but they showed lack of interest. One probable reason for this behavior could be because some students talked more than others. Also, the speaking skill level in the afternoon class was lower than the morning group.

**4.2. MOVIES ACTIVITY**

**Morning Group:**

**Statistical results:**

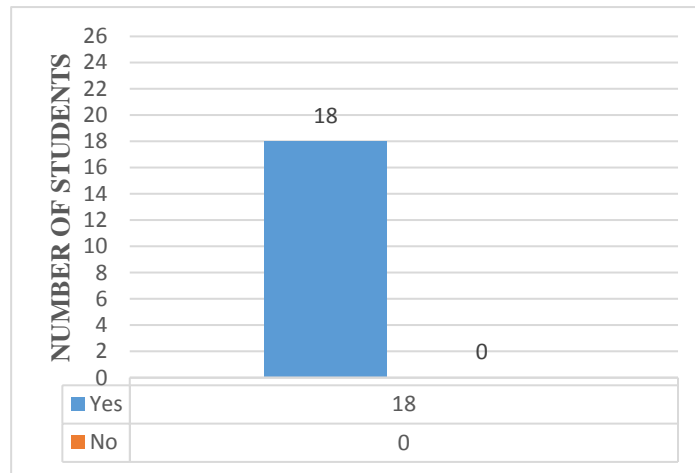


Figure 5: Did students like the movies activity?

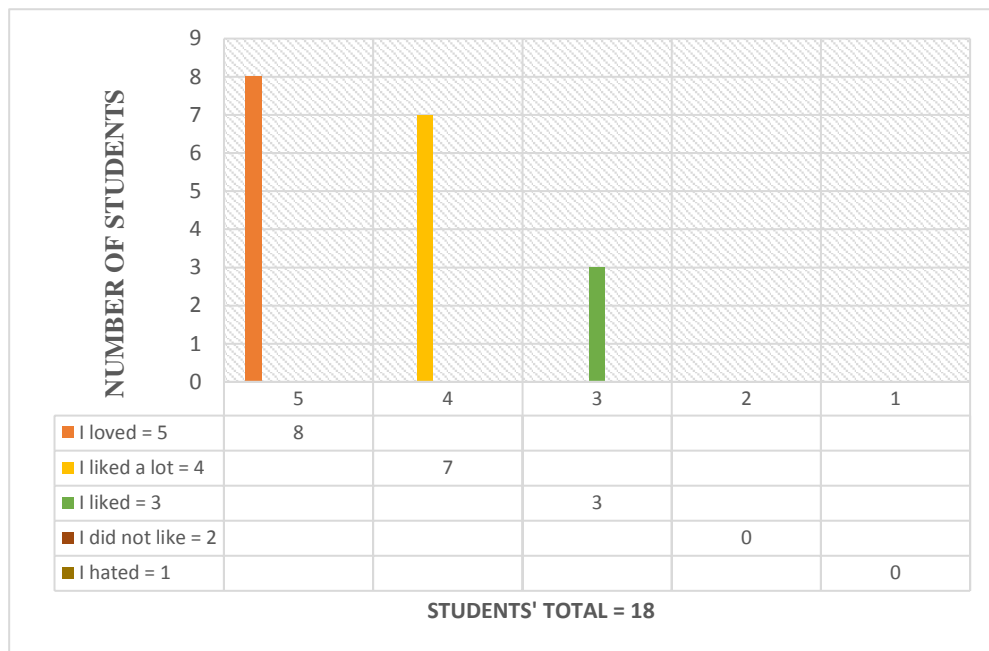


Figure 6: Students' perceptions about the movies activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. Some questions were difficult.
2. It was a creative game, and it was fun.
3. This activity let us talk about many things.
4. It was a good way to interact with other classmates.

<sup>4</sup> Eighteen students were present and eight were absent.



5. It was interesting and everybody in the group talked in English.
6. Through this activity we learned new vocabulary.

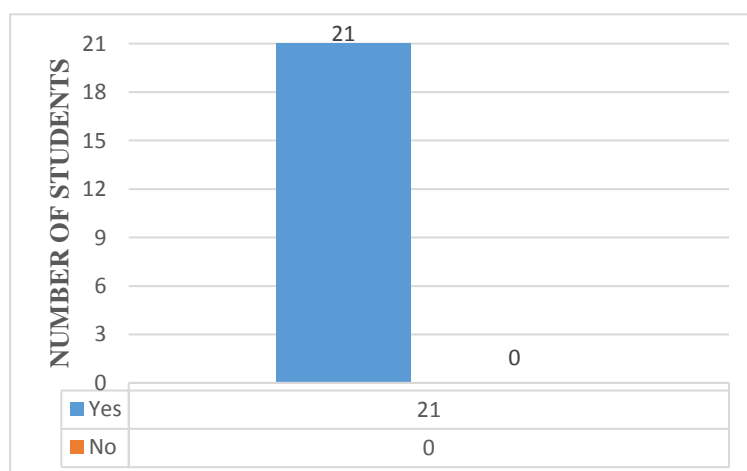
**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** If there are students who are really knowledgeable about the topic and they have enough vocabulary, the teacher needs to mix them with people with lower vocabulary skills, in order to encourage students to help each other.

Problems	Solutions	Results
The students did not know enough vocabulary about movies.	We explained the most difficult words related to movie vocabulary.	They were able to perform the activity very fast.
The students did not want to take the role of the person in charge of taking notes.	We told the group to rotate note-taking responsibilities.	They started to work helping each other.

**Afternoon Group:**

**Statistical results:**

5



<sup>5</sup> Twenty one students were present.

Figure 7: Did students like the movies activity?

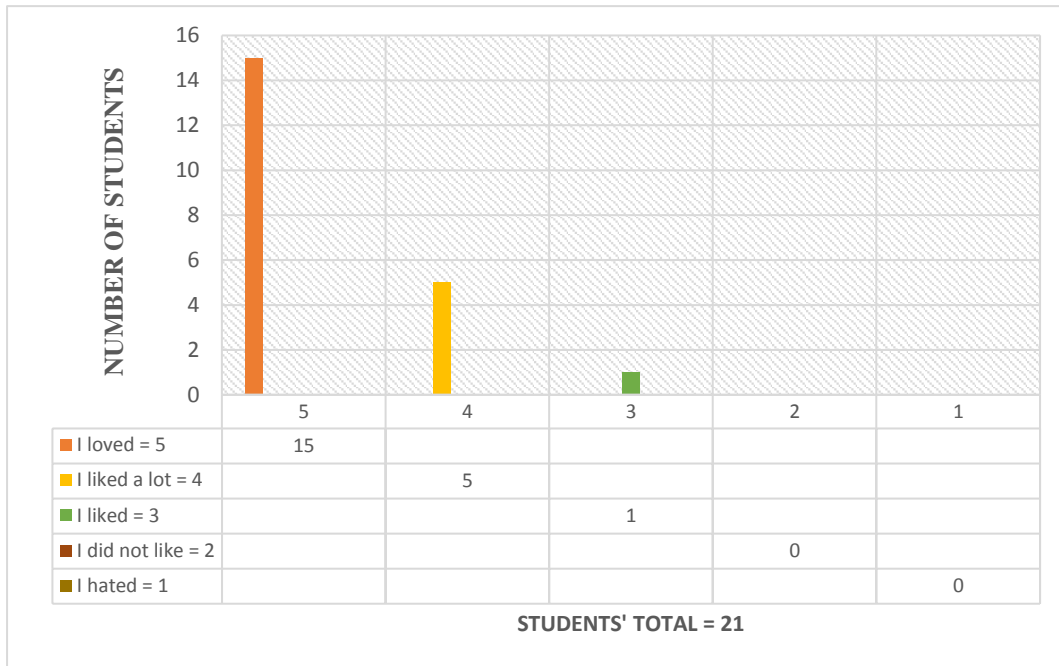


Figure 8: Students' perceptions about the movies activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. The teacher needs to be more involved with the groups.
2. There were too many questions.
3. This activity was creative and interesting.
4. With this activity we could participate and practice our speaking.
5. This activity made us improve our speaking, spelling, and vocabulary.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** The teacher has to monitor the students' participation all the time and ensure each member of the group is working appropriately.

Problem	Solution	Result
The students in big groups (seven or eight members)	Limit groups to four or five students each.	The activity was performed by every member of the





<p>did not participate actively, and they started to do other activities.</p>		<p>group.</p>
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**GENERAL CONCLUSION:** When there are small groups, the student’s performance is more efficient. On the other hand, when there are big groups sometimes one or two students dominate. The role of the teacher with big groups must be to check that everybody participates.

In the morning group, 50% of the students rated the activity a 5 on the evaluation, which is the highest score. In the afternoon group, everybody liked the activity and similarly more than half of the students rated the activity a 5.

### 4.3. TOURIST PLACES ACTIVITY

#### Morning Group:

#### Statistical results:

6

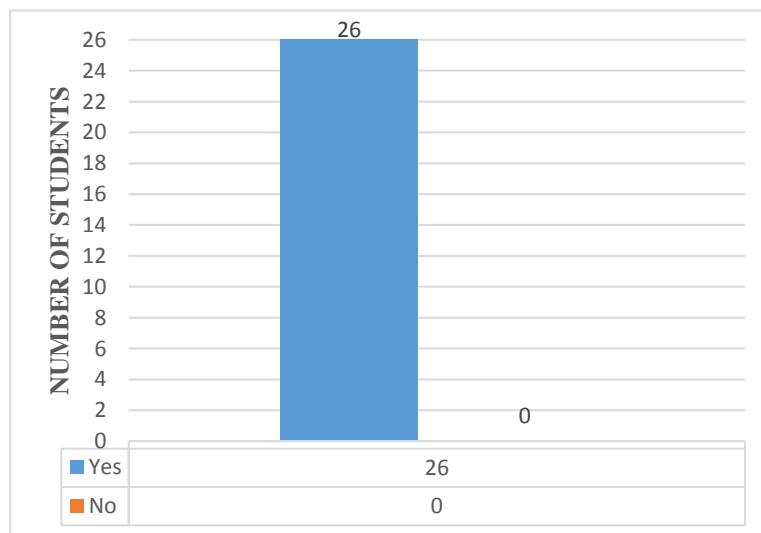


Figure 9: Did students like the tourist places activity?

<sup>6</sup> Twenty six students were present.

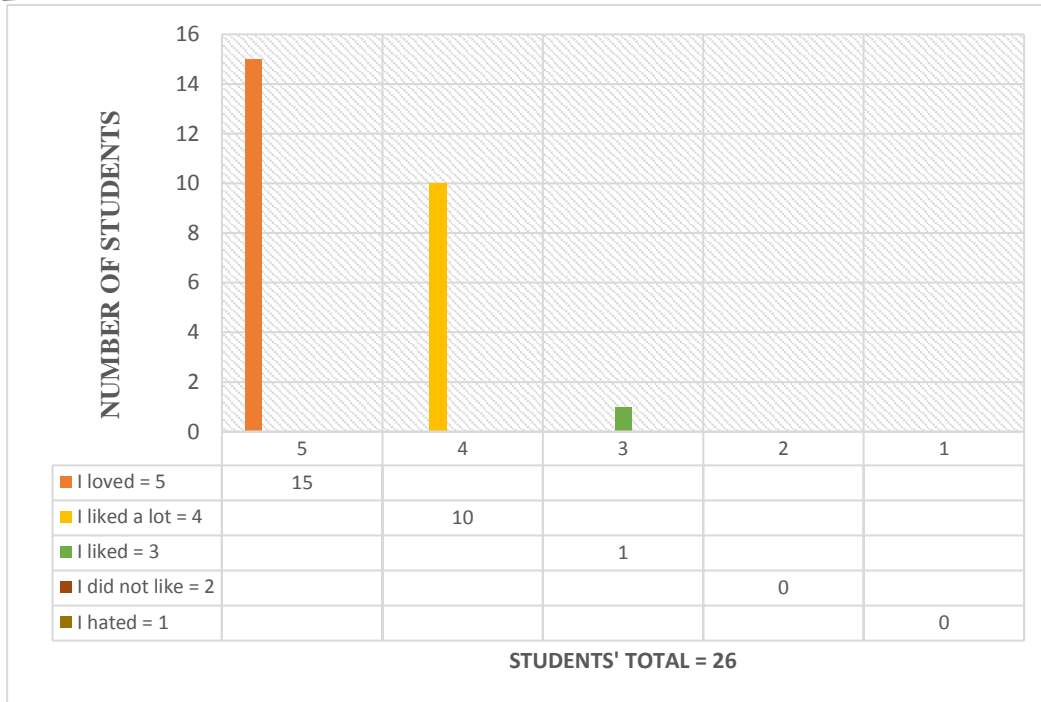


Figure 10: Students' perceptions about the tourist places activity through a Likert scale

### Students' suggestions and comments:

1. We could share opinions or comments, and also we could help each other.
2. We had fun drawing.
3. It developed our vocabulary, and it helped to work in groups.
4. You could describe a picture and have fun.
5. It was a good way to learn how to give descriptions.
6. It helped us to interact with our classmates.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** Do not allow students who had the opportunity to visit another country to monopolize the class; give the rest of the students the chance to talk.

In this activity, we did not allow students to form groups by themselves; instead we formed the groups. We could see that the students took six minutes to integrate in each group, because they did not get along with each other. We suggest allowing the students to form the groups by themselves to avoid wasting time.

Problems	Solutions	Results
The students did not describe the pictures; instead they showed them.	We changed the picture and we asked them not to show the picture.	They worked without cheating.
When there are too many students in the classroom, the noise produced by them distracts the rest of the class.	We asked them to pay attention and be quiet.	Most of the students started to work.

**Afternoon Group:**

**Statistical results:**

<sup>7</sup>

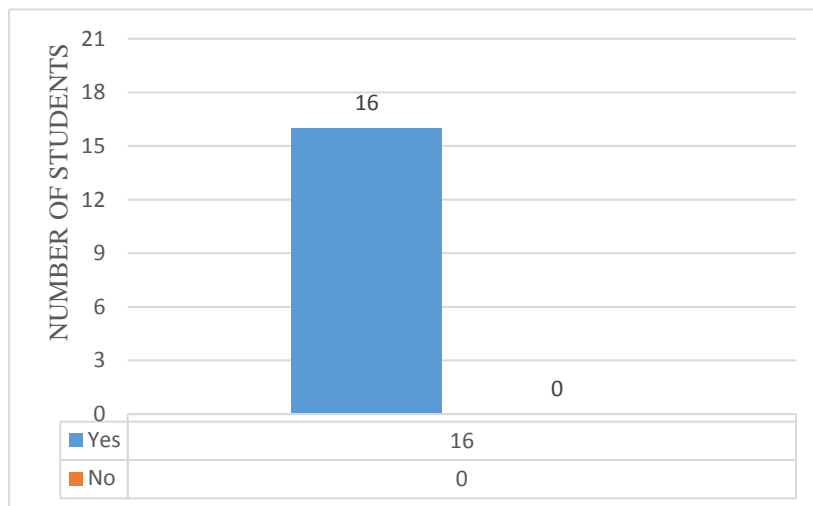


Figure 11: Did students like the tourist places activity?

<sup>7</sup> Sixteen students were present and five were absent.

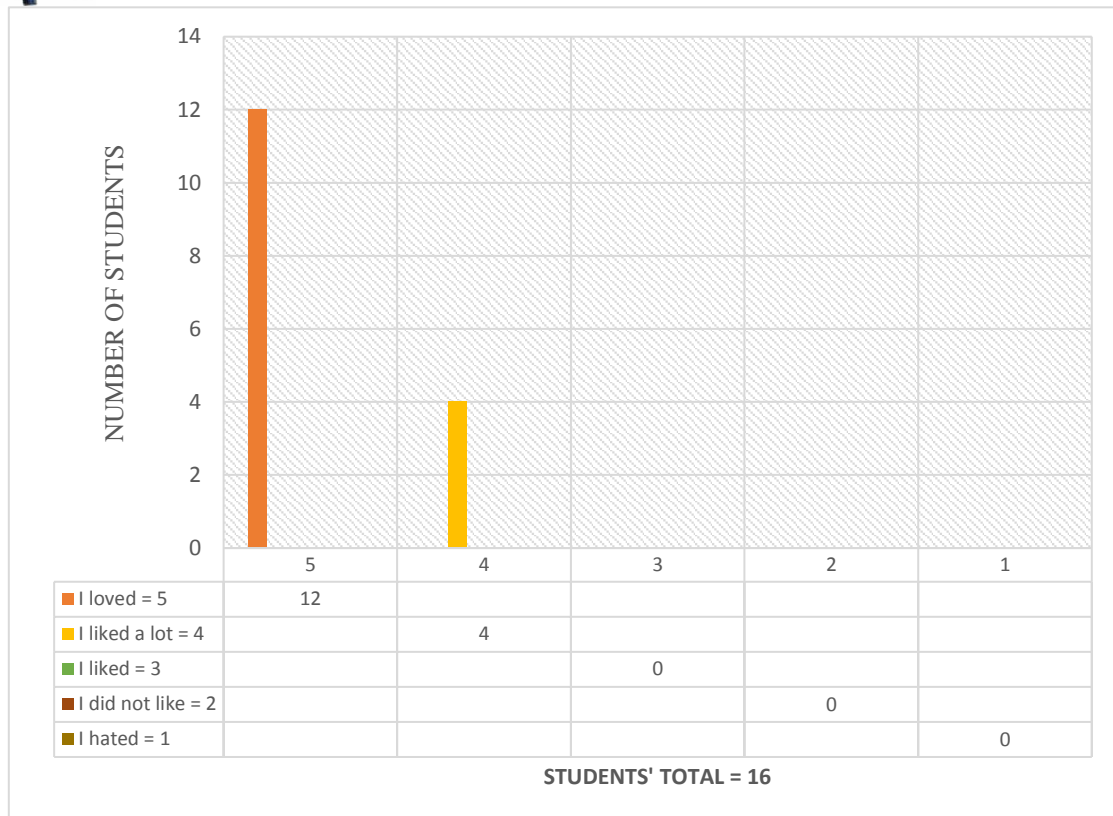


Figure 12: Students' perceptions about the tourist places activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. It made us be more social with other classmates.
2. I liked it because it was fun, entertaining, and made us work as a team.
3. We used our creativity to draw and explain the place.
4. It was very enjoyable, and it helped in the integration of students.
5. I liked this activity because it was different and spontaneous.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** Try to make all the students participate in the activity; do not let one student draw the entire picture. The objective is for all the students to help each other. In addition, teachers should allow additional time to perform the activities. Some students did not get along with each other, so they did not feel comfortable working in this way. For this reason, it is important to give the students the opportunity to form the groups by themselves.

Problem	Solution	Result
Students need more time to draw the described places.	Check if all students are helping the person who is drawing the picture.	All students took part in the activity and they performed it in a cooperative manner.

**GENERAL CONCLUSION:** In both the morning and afternoon groups, all the students felt comfortable performing this activity as result of keeping a constant discussion inside the group trying to guess the place, and the students could develop their drawing skills. However, some students did not fully participate, because they did not get along inside the groups.

#### 4.4. FOOD ACTIVITY

##### Morning Group:

##### Statistical results:

8

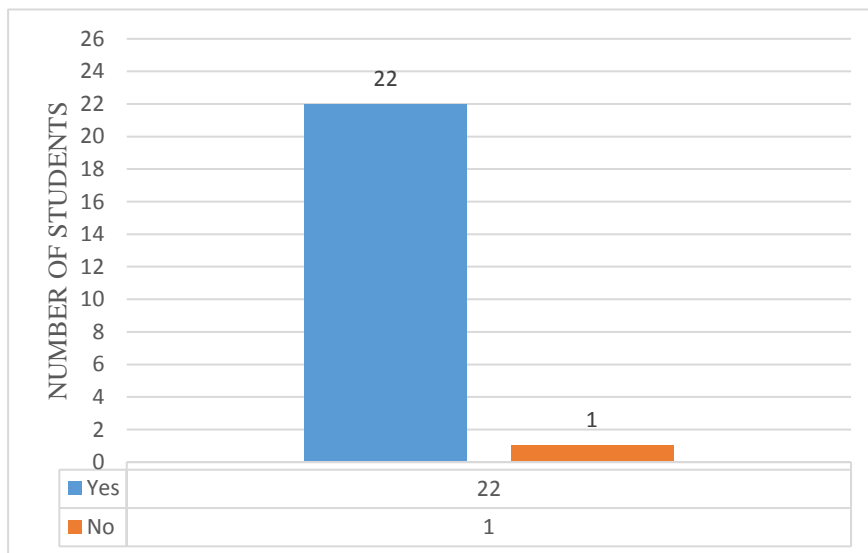


Figure 13: Did students like the food activity?

<sup>8</sup> Twenty-three students were present and three were absent

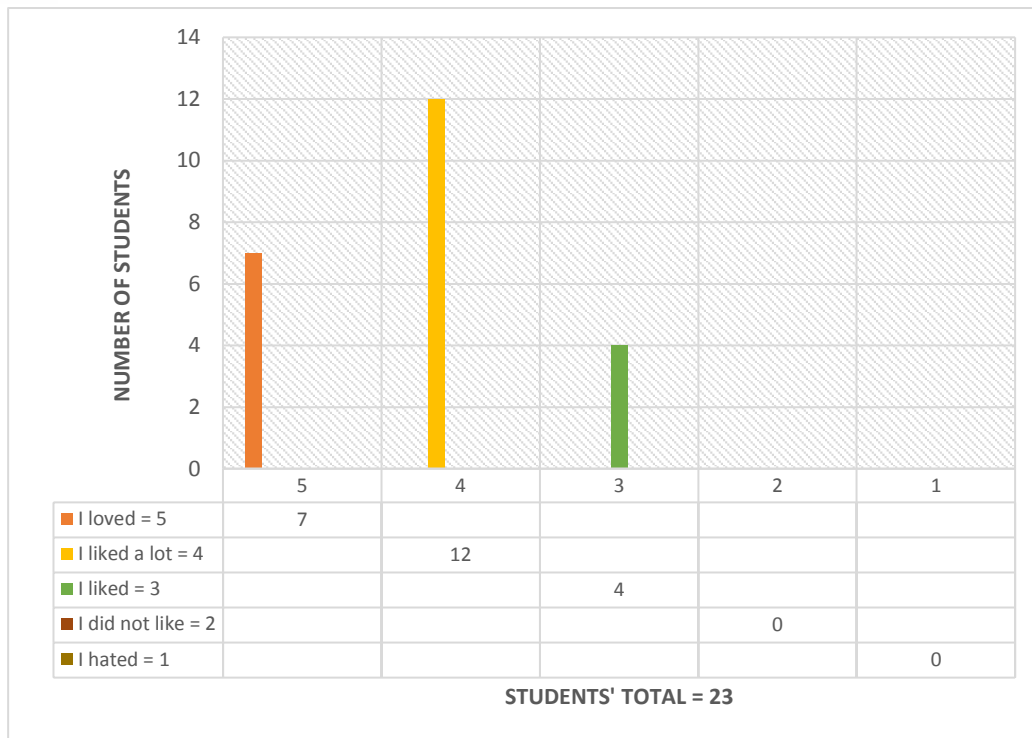


Figure 14: Students' perceptions about the food activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. It was too long.
2. It was boring.
3. The activity needs to include more questions.
4. It helped to interact with other classmates.
5. It promoted speaking in a great way.
6. I liked the activity because I learned new vocabulary.
7. This activity was useful and we talked a lot.
8. Some pictures should be deleted.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** Do not focus on difficult drinks, dishes or desserts that are unknown to some students; try to use popular food from known countries.

The interaction between the students from different groups was not really effective, because they did not get along very well with each other. In addition, we suggest deleting some pictures so that students do not get bored.



Problem	Solution	Result
Some foods were strange for the students.	We gave them the meaning of weird foods.	They could finish the activities and learn new vocabulary about food.

**Afternoon Group:**

**Statistical results:**

9

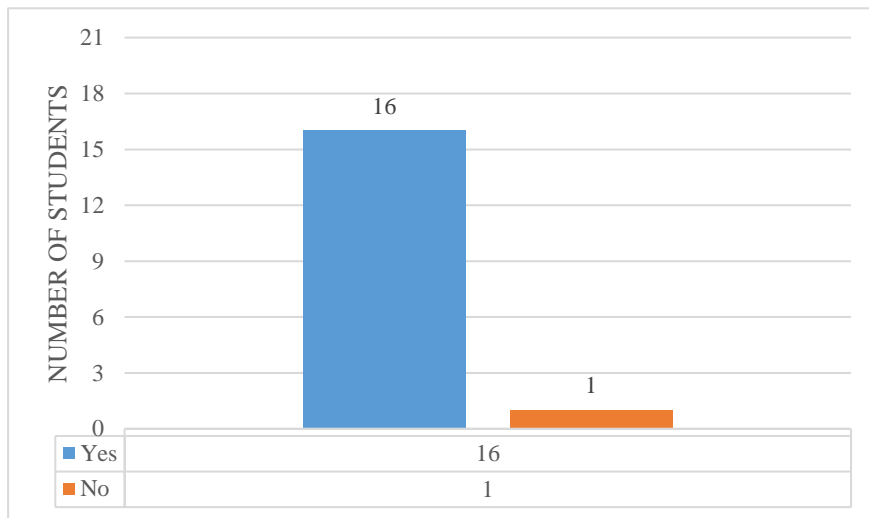


Figure 15: Did students like the food activity?

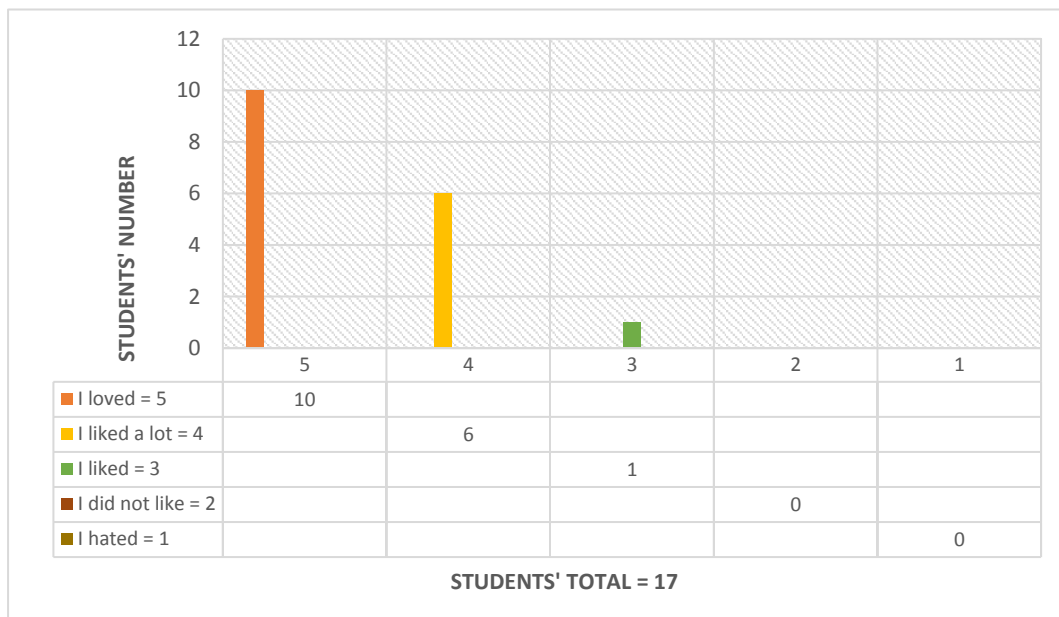


Figure 16: Students' perceptions about the food activity through a Likert scale

<sup>9</sup> Seventeen students were present and four were absent



**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. This activity can be more dynamic and spontaneous.
2. It was interesting and fun.
3. We learned something new for us.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** In this activity we have the same suggestions and comments as the morning group, because there was not much difference between them.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Result</b>
Some foods, drinks and desserts were unknown to the students.	Limit the foods, drinks and desserts to the most popular and known to the students.	The students engaged actively when they knew about the topic.

**GENERAL CONCLUSION:** Both groups performed the activities correctly. What we could appreciate is that some students did not have enough vocabulary to talk about food. Some students got bored because they had a lot of pictures. We suggest deleting some exotic food pictures which are unknown. According to the evaluation of this activity, number 4 is the winner in the morning group. It means some students did not love the activity, and the participation was a little poor. On the other hand, in the afternoon group 50% of the students rated the activity a 5, the highest rating.

**4.5. TECHNOLOGY ACTIVITY**

**Morning Group:**

**Statistical results:**



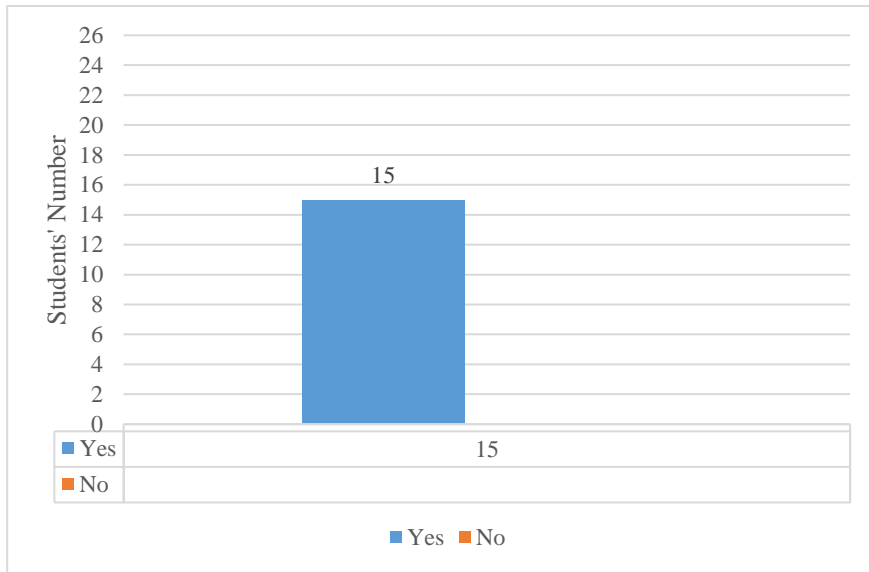


Figure 17: Did students like the technology activity?

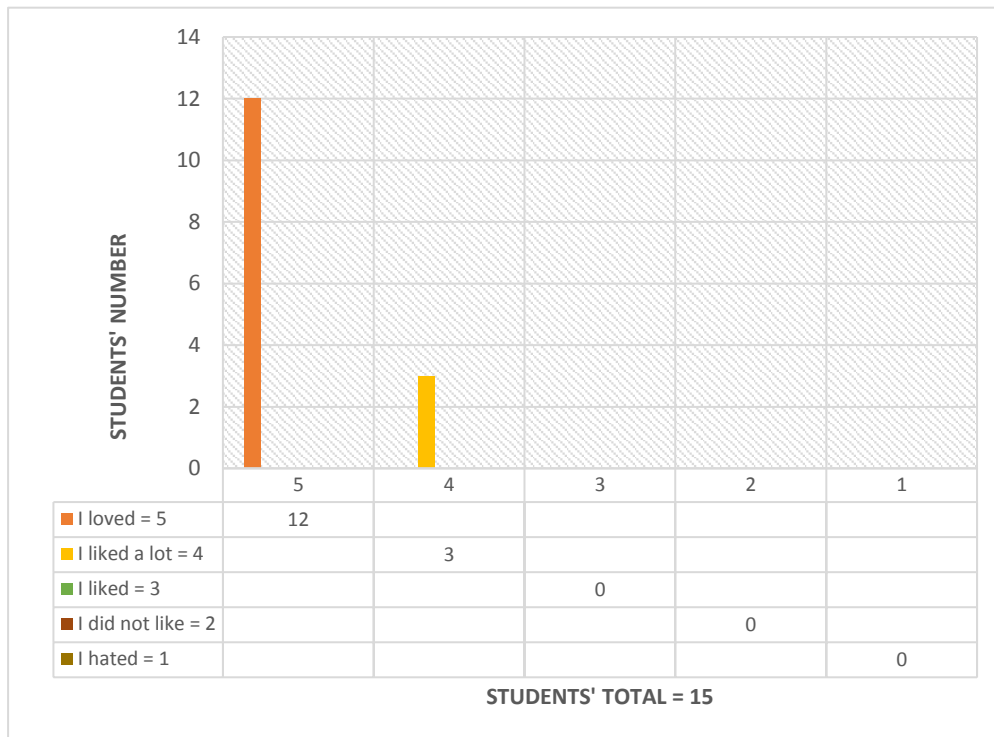


Figure 18: Students' perceptions about the technology activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. I think a debate is a good way to make us talk.
2. It was a good way to share different ideas.

<sup>10</sup> Fifteen students were present and eleven were absent.

3. It was good because we shared different points of view.
4. We learned beliefs and customs of different kinds of people.
5. Try to keep the students calm.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** We suggest maintaining control of the debate, to avoid students changing the topic. Moreover, the teacher should ensure all students participate, including those who are shy or hesitant to speak.

Problem	Solution	Result
The students did not have an active role in the class.	Teacher should ask questions directly to the students who are shy about talking.	All students participated.

**Afternoon group:**

**Statistical results:**

11

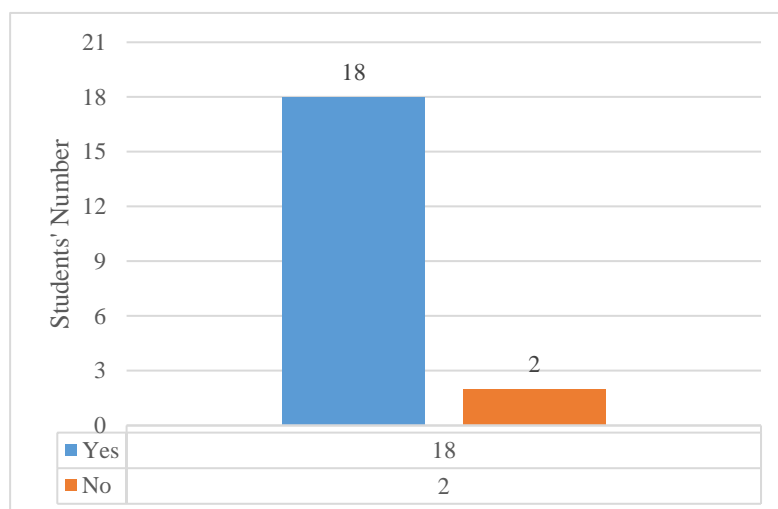


Figure 19: Did students like the technology activity?

<sup>11</sup> Twenty students were present and one was absent.

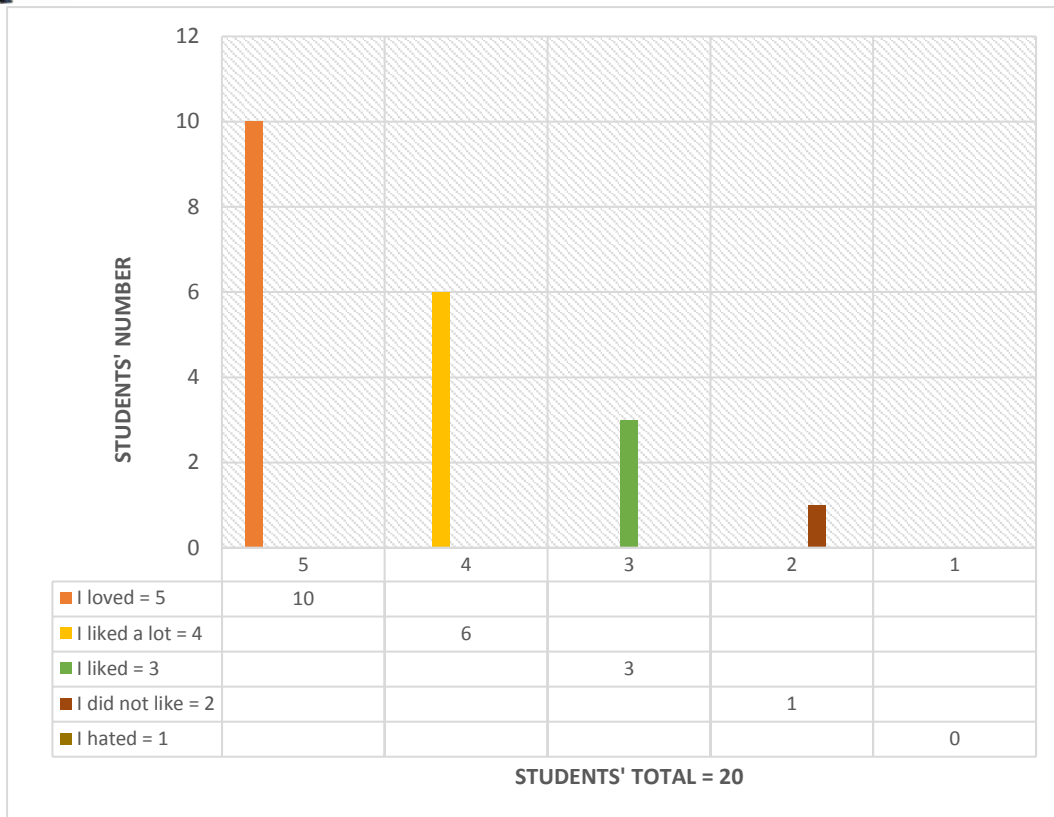


Figure 20: Students' perceptions about the technology activity through a Likert scale

**Students' suggestions and comments:**

1. I liked the activity because it was different and interesting.
2. It was boring to me.
3. Give students more time to think about answers.
4. Try to make everyone participate during the activity.
5. Share more information about the Amish.

**Researchers' suggestions and comments:** Explain more about Amish culture in order for students to better understand the topic. Try to make all students participate.

Problem	Solution	Result
The Amish group was not well known to the students.	We gave an explanation about Amish culture.	Students did the activities based on the information



		shared.
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**GENERAL CONCLUSION:** From the students in the morning group we can say that everybody liked the activity and students gave the highest evaluation. Students also said that the debate let them give their opinions without embarrassment. In the afternoon group, the participation in the debate was very poor because they had a lower speaking level. So, we as researchers suggest that teachers take the students' vocabulary level into account when choosing debate topics.



## CHAPTER V

### 5. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the Buzz Groups method worked efficiently with speaking skill, because this study produced successful results and students were motivated to speak in front of their classmates. The results also show students' satisfaction with working with this kind of methodology.

The Buzz Groups method was applied by Indonesia researcher Mr. Khampheng Sengbounthan, a researcher from the English Education Department at Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta. Mr. Sengbounthan worked in Classroom Action Research in the seventh grade of Nong Bone Public High School in Laos, with the following results. First, students improved their grammar when they spoke. Also, they gained knowledge about new vocabulary as a result of the activities performed, and they lost shyness in the moment of speaking.

In this academic paper, applied with third semester English Majors at the University of Cuenca, the Buzz Groups method showed us that students become more involved when they work with topics that fit with their interests. As a result, students learn new vocabulary, improve grammar and they feel motivated to work in groups, and speak without fear.

Therefore, teachers have to take into account that when the activities are suitable and those have to be engaged with the students interests. Thus, they do not feel forced to work. As a matter of fact students are going to have better results with their educational setting working with the Buzz Groups method.

As a suggestion, it is very important to choose the appropriate activities in order to make the students work without any kind of obligation from teachers. After performing all of the activities, students will be able to speak more fluently. Moreover, students will have better



opportunities to strengthen their confidence to talk about any issue chosen by the teacher, again according to their motivation and interests.

Finally, the study from Surakarta University and this study from the University of Cuenca showed us that this method is useful for working in groups and improving speaking skills. Therefore, Buzz Groups are a useful method that can be used with either elementary school or university levels.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1

### ENCUESTA

Estimados compañeros por favor tómense un momento para completar esta encuesta que tiene como propósito hacernos conocer sus preferencias en los temas a continuación. La información de esta encuesta será parte de nuestro estudio de tesis, el mismo que se enfocará en recolectar temas de sus intereses para mejorar la habilidad de hablar “speaking skill”, mediante conversaciones en grupo. Su opinión es importante, por favor responda sinceramente.

#### INFORMACION GENERAL:

##### 1.-Género:

Masculino:

Femenino:

##### 2.-Edad:

18 - 20                       21 - 23                       24 - 26

27 - 29                       30 - 32                       Otro

**3.- ¿Cuál considera que es su nivel actual de inglés en la destreza del habla “speaking skill”? Marque con una X según su valoración.**

Competente	Avanzado	Intermedio Superior	Intermedio	Pre-Intermedio	Básico
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4.- ¿Ha tomado cursos de inglés en otras Instituciones? Si la respuesta es sí, ¿Por cuánto tiempo?**



Sí  ¿Cuánto tiempo? Meses  años

No

5.- ¿Ha estudiado en el extranjero, o ha realizado intercambios estudiantiles? Si la respuesta es sí, ¿cuántos años o meses vivió fuera del país?

Sí  ¿Cuánto tiempo? Meses  Años

No

6.- ¿Es usted nativo hablante del idioma Inglés?

Sí  No

7.- De las siguientes modalidades de trabajo en clase: Trabajo individual, trabajo grupal o ambas ¿Cuál es su preferida? Subraya su preferencia.

Trabajo individual

Trabajo grupal

Ambas

En caso de que se sienta cómodo en el trabajo grupal, ¿Le gustaría mejorar la habilidad del habla “speaking skill” a través de un método de trabajo cooperativo que consiste en discutir en grupo ciertos temas acorde a sus intereses? Si la respuesta es afirmativa o negativa háganos saber su razón

Sí  No

¿Por qué? .....  
.....  
.....  
.....

INDICACIONES GENERALES:

Valore o reconozca sus preferencias y marque con una X de acuerdo a sus intereses, escogiendo un número del 1 al 5, tomando en cuenta la siguiente valoración: 5 equivale “me



**encanta”, 4 equivale “me gusta mucho”, 3 equivale “me gusta”, 2 equivale “no me gusta”, 1 equivale “no me gusta en lo absoluto”**

- Sus respuestas serán estrictamente confidenciales
- Su opinión cuenta por favor responda sinceramente

	No me gusta en lo absoluto	No me gusta	Me gusta	Me gusta mucho	Me encanta
<b><u>Topics</u></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
TV series					
Science					
Actors					
Leisure Time					
Stories					
Music					
Movies					
Food					
Trips					
Transportation					
Vacation time					
Animals					
The Environment					
News					
Art					
Web pages					



Fashion					
Social Networks					
Singers					
Tourist Places					
Traditions					
Ideal partner					
Technology					

**Si tiene algunas sugerencias, escribalas en la parte de abajo por favor**

.....

.....

.....



**¡Gracias por su colaboración!**



### SAMPLE NUMBER 1

#### DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL BY USING BUZZ GROUPS ACTIVITIES

#### ENCUESTA

Estimados compañeros por favor tómense un momento para completar esta encuesta que tiene como propósito hacernos conocer sus preferencias en los temas a continuación. La información de esta encuesta será parte de nuestro estudio de tesis, el mismo que se enfocará en recolectar temas de sus intereses para mejorar la habilidad de hablar "speaking skill", mediante conversaciones en grupo. Su opinión es importante, por favor responda sinceramente.

#### INFORMACION GENERAL:

##### 1.-Género:

Masculino:   
Femenino:

##### 2.-Edad:

18 - 20       21 - 23       24 - 26   
27 - 29       30 - 32       Otro

3.- ¿Cuál considera que es su nivel actual de inglés en la destreza del habla "speaking skill"?  
Marque con una X según su valoración.

Competente	Avanzado	Intermedio Superior	Intermedio	Pre-Intermedio	Básico
					X

4.- ¿Ha tomado cursos de inglés en otras Instituciones? Si la respuesta es sí, ¿Por cuánto tiempo?

Si       ¿Cuánto tiempo?      Meses       años   
No

5.- ¿Ha estudiado en el extranjero, o ha realizado intercambios estudiantiles? si la respuesta es sí, ¿cuántos años o meses vivió fuera del país?

Sí       ¿Cuánto tiempo?      Meses       Años   
No



DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL BY USING BUZZ GROUPS ACTIVITIES

6.- ¿Es usted nativo hablante del idioma Inglés?

Sí  No

7.- De las siguientes modalidades de trabajo en clase: Trabajo individual, trabajo grupal o ambas ¿Cuál es su preferida? Subraya su preferencia.

Trabajo individual                      Trabajo grupal                      Ambas

En caso de que se sienta cómodo en el trabajo grupal, ¿Le gustaría mejorar la habilidad del habla "speaking skill" a través de un método de trabajo cooperativo que consiste en discutir en grupo ciertos temas acorde a sus intereses? Si la respuesta es afirmativa o negativa háganos saber su razón

Sí  No

¿Por qué? Es una buena forma de desenvolvernos más en speaking y aprender mediante nuestros compañeros que tienen un mejor nivel de Inglés.

INDICACIONES GENERALES:

Valore o reconozca sus preferencias y marque con una X de acuerdo a sus intereses, escogiendo un número del 1 al 5, tomando en cuenta la siguiente valoración: 5 equivale "me encanta", 4 equivale "me gusta mucho", 3 equivale "me gusta", 2 equivale "no me gusta", 1 equivale "no me gusta en lo absoluto"

- Sus respuestas serán estrictamente confidenciales
- Su opinión cuenta por favor responda sinceramente



DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL BY USING BUZZ GROUPS ACTIVITIES

	No me gusta en lo absoluto	No me gusta	Me gusta	Me gusta mucho	Me encanta
Topics	1	2	3	4	5
TV series			×		
Science			×		
Actors		×			
Leisure Time				×	
Stories			×		
Music					×
Movies				×	
Food			×		
Trips			×		
Transportation		×			
Vacation time			×		
Animals			×		
The Environment		×			
News			×		
Art			×		
Web pages				×	
Fashion				×	
Social Networks				×	
Singers			×		
Tourist Places				×	
Traditions				×	
Ideal partner				×	
Technology				×	

Si tiene algunas sugerencias, escríbalas en la parte de abajo por favor

.....

.....

.....

¡Gracias por su colaboración!





### SAMPLE NUMBER 2

#### DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL BY USING BUZZ GROUPS ACTIVITIES

#### ENCUESTA

Estimados compañeros por favor tómense un momento para completar esta encuesta que tiene como propósito hacernos conocer sus preferencias en los temas a continuación. La información de esta encuesta será parte de nuestro estudio de tesis, el mismo que se enfocará en recolectar temas de sus intereses para mejorar la habilidad de hablar "speaking skill", mediante conversaciones en grupo. Su opinión es importante, por favor responda sinceramente.

#### INFORMACION GENERAL:

##### 1.-Género:

Masculino:

Femenino:

##### 2.-Edad:

18 - 20

21 - 23

24 - 26

27 - 29

30 - 32

Otro

3.- ¿Cuál considera que es su nivel actual de inglés en la destreza del habla "speaking skill"?  
Marque con una X según su valoración.

Competente	Avanzado	Intermedio Superior	Intermedio	Pre-Intermedio	Básico
			X		

4.- ¿Ha tomado cursos de inglés en otras Instituciones? Si la respuesta es sí, ¿Por cuánto tiempo?

Si

¿Cuánto tiempo?

Meses

años

No

5.- ¿Ha estudiado en el extranjero, o ha realizado intercambios estudiantiles? si la respuesta es sí, ¿cuántos años o meses vivió fuera del país?

Sí

¿Cuánto tiempo?

Meses

Años

No



DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL BY USING BUZZ GROUPS ACTIVITIES

6.- ¿Es usted nativo hablante del idioma Inglés?

Sí  No

7.- De las siguientes modalidades de trabajo en clase: Trabajo individual, trabajo grupal o ambas ¿Cuál es su preferida? Subraya su preferencia.

Trabajo individual                      Trabajo grupal                      Ambas

En caso de que se sienta cómodo en el trabajo grupal, ¿Le gustaría mejorar la habilidad del habla "speaking skill" a través de un método de trabajo cooperativo que consiste en discutir en grupo ciertos temas acorde a sus intereses? Si la respuesta es afirmativa o negativa háganos saber su razón

Sí  No

¿Por qué? ..Me gustaría mejorar mi speaking skill a través de trabajos en grupo porque pienso que es mucho más fácil aprender un idioma cuando se tiene contacto con otras personas.....

INDICACIONES GENERALES:

Valore o reconozca sus preferencias y marque con una X de acuerdo a sus intereses, escogiendo un número del 1 al 5, tomando en cuenta la siguiente valoración: 5 equivale "me encanta", 4 equivale "me gusta mucho", 3 equivale "me gusta", 2 equivale "no me gusta", 1 equivale "no me gusta en lo absoluto"

- Sus respuestas serán estrictamente confidenciales
- Su opinión cuenta por favor responda sinceramente



DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL BY USING BUZZ GROUPS ACTIVITIES

	No me gusta en lo absoluto	No me gusta	Me gusta	Me gusta mucho	Me encanta
Topics	1	2	3	4	5
TV series			X		
Science					X
Actors			X		
Leisure Time			X		
Stories			X		
Music			X		
Movies			X		
Food			X		
Trips			X		
Transportation			X		
Vacation time			X		
Animals			X		
The Environment			X		
News			X		
Art					X
Web pages			X		
Fashion			X		
Social Networks			X		
Singers					X
Tourist Places					X
Traditions					X
Ideal partner			X		
Technology			X		

Si tiene algunas sugerencias, escríbalas en la parte de abajo por favor

....Hobbies.....

....Home movies.....

.....

¡Gracias por su colaboración!







### Appendix 2

### SURVEYS

#### SAMPLE NUMBER 1

Do you like this activity? Why?

Yes  No

...It's a good way to interact with other classmates.....

If you have suggestions write them down

.....

Pick a number from 1 to 5. One means the lowest and five the highest validation.

Activity	1	2	3	4	5
Movies					✓

#### SAMPLE NUMBER 2

Do you like this activity? Why?

Yes  No

...Because I had fun playing with my classmates. Also, this was a creative game.....

If you have suggestions write them down

.....

Pick a number from 1 to 5. One means the lowest and five the highest validation.

Activity	1	2	3	4	5
Movies				✓	



### Appendix 3

#### INTERVIEWS <sup>12</sup>

##### INTERVIEW NUMBER 1

**I:** Here we have the opportunity to talk with Professor Rafael Argudo. He is the most experienced teacher in the English Literature School. How long have you been teaching in this university?

**P:** Well (.) I have been teaching here for thirty six years now. HSs

**I:** You have a lot of experience.

**P:** I do. I'm very happy because I like to work with young people like you.

**I:** When I started my major career you were my professor.

**P:** Yeah (.) I remembered you of course.

**I:** Thank you.

**I:** For you, what is the most difficult skill to achieve for students?

**P:** Yeah (.) the speaking skill is the hardest skill? which students have (.) and (.) the main reason I think is because students are not surrounded by English speaking environment. LH they don't have the chance to practicing speaking skill during the day (.) they only have the chance to practice when they are in class(.) another problem(.) is that many students ? try to express themselves in English but they are thinking in Spanish RH (.) they try to make a translation (.) a mental translation (.) in Spanish into English and it does not work ? It is very difficult and also some students know the instructions and they have difficulty pronouncing

---

<sup>12</sup> The interviews were audio recorded, in order to transcribe as close as possible to the real conversation, these interviews follow the rules of convention transcriptions. Moreover, this research paper respect opinions and comments from interviewees; therefore, their words have not been altered. (Mackey & Gass, 2005)



the words so pronunciation is also a very serious problem and I think students need a lot of practice (.) If they do that they can improve their speaking skill

**I:** Thank you Professor Argudo (.) we really appreciate your help.

**P:** No problem, I wish you luck.

## INTERVIEW NUMBER 2

**I:** Here we have the opportunity to talk with Professor Fabian Rodas; he is a really experienced teacher, so now we have the opportunity to exchange ideas. So first, how long have you been teaching in this university?

**P:** Ah (.) I've been teaching at this university for twenty five ?,years.

**I:** OK, that is a lot of time. So since I started my career you were my professor (.) I was taking with you conversation it was a great subject. So the next question is (.) from your experience, you can see the problems students have for you. What is the most difficult skill to achieve for students?

**P:** Ah I guess LH (.) all (.) skills are important to develop but probably the (.) skill that is the most difficult LH for students to develop is the writing and the speaking skills? ah the writing (.) writing skill (.) is the skill that takes a lot of time and we have to practice writing a lot, RH but also the speaking skill is complicated because ah (.) some students sometimes are afraid of using the language NOD or they just use the language in the classroom they don't use it at home ? that makes kind of complicated for them to development.

**I:** Thank you Professor Fabian Rodas for your cooperation for this purpose of this research.



### INTERVIEW NUMBER 3

**I:** Here, we have a student Vilma from the English Literature School (.) We are going to talk about two important questions for our academic research (.) The first one is ? How long have you been studying in this major career?

**S:** I have been studying about three years ? (.) and I have been practicing in a course in another institution.

**I:** Oh great, you are improving your English, excellent. The next one (.) What is the most difficult skill to achieve for students?

**S:** NOD OK, from my experience (.) as a student of this major career, speaking skills is the most difficult to achieve (.) because we are not surrounded by a native environment and the time is not enough because the book is not focus only in topics to speak but also grammar. LH Therefore (.) the speaking practice is just inside the classroom (.) but not outside of this.

**I:** Thank you.

### INTERVIEW NUMBER 4

**I:** Here we have a student called Alicia from the English Literature School ? We are going to exchange ideas and opinions in order to answer these important two questions the first one (.) How long have you been studying in this major career?

**S:** I have been studying here almost six years (.) NOD

**I:** Ah right (.) six years so now you are taking subjects related to speaking, right?

**S:** Yes, I took them some two or three subjects in order to improve my speaking skill RH

**I:** OK now the second question (.) What is the most difficult skill to achieve for students?





**S:** I think here in the university the big problem for me was ah (.) speaking skill - because we don't have another opportunity to practice the English you only practice in the class HS (.) with teacher ask something (.) you need to response them that is not more practice(.) In addition. RH could be important the using of methods to develop speaking in class ? avoiding boring classes.



## Appendix 4

### LESSON PLANS

#### General Objectives:

- To enhance speaking fluency
- To increase students' engagement by working in groups

#### Activity One

**Topic:** Music

**Level:** Intermediate

#### Aims:

- To talk about music.
- To take notes about people's opinions and preferences.
- To use vocabulary related to music.

**Time:** 50 minutes

#### Preparation:

Form groups of four or five students. Bring five kinds of music and an audio recorder to play the songs. Make conversation cards.

#### Procedure:

**Step 1:** Introduce the topic

**Time:** 5 minutes

To start the class the students will be asked about kinds of music. Teacher will write the responses on the board

**Step 2:** Playing music

**Time:** 10 minutes



Play the different music tracks. The students' goal is to recognize the music style and be able to identify the singer. The teacher will give a chart to the students, where they write which kind of music they are listening to, as well as the singer's name.

**Teacher's guide**

<b>Kind of music</b>	<b>Singer</b>
Pop	Britney Spears
Romantic	Celine Dion
Electronic	Daft Punk
Rap	Eminem
House	Calvin Harris

**Students' activity**

<b>Kind of music</b>	<b>Singer</b>

**Step 3:** General conversation practice about music.

**Time:** 20 minutes

Form groups of four or five students. The teacher will pass out the conversation cards.

Each group will choose one student to take notes about the information provided by the members of the group. Then, each member of the group will ask and answer questions.



**Conversation Cards**

<p>What's your favorite kind of music? Why?</p>	<p>Can you play a musical instrument? If so, which one?</p>	<p>How often do you listen to music?</p>
<p>Have you ever been to a concert or live show? Talk about it.</p>	<p>Have you ever sung karaoke? Did you like it?</p>	<p>Do you like to sing? Why (not)?</p>
<p>Have you ever listened to Beethoven's fifth symphony?</p>	<p>What kinds of music styles do you know?</p>	<p>Have you ever downloaded music from the Internet? Why?</p>
<p>Do you prefer music in English or in your own language? Why?</p>	<p>Which musician or band would you most like to meet? Why?</p>	<p>Do you like to listen to loud music? When?</p>
<p>Can you dance? What's your favorite dance?</p>	<p>Do you listen to music on the radio? What's your favorite radio station?</p>	<p>When you listen to music, do you try to understand the words (lyrics)?</p>
<p>Would you like to be a famous singer? Why?</p>	<p>What's your favorite band? Why do you like it?</p>	<p>Who's your favorite singer? Why do you like him or her?</p>

Adapted from islcollective

[https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets\\_doc\\_docx/lets\\_talk\\_about\\_music/questions-lets-music/2576](https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets_doc_docx/lets_talk_about_music/questions-lets-music/2576) (Philipr, 2010)

**Step 4:** Report on the activity

**Time:** 10 - 15 minutes



The person in charge of taking notes will report the most relevant information about the members of his/her group. Members from different groups will ask questions about the information that they will hear. Finally, the reporter will describe a favorite singer or band from the group as the other students will try guessing about him/her/them. The goal is to guess, who the person is that the reporter is talking about. The group which has more questions will be the winner.

## Activity Two

**Topic:** Movies

**Level:** Intermediate

**Aims:**

- To talk about movies
- To use vocabulary related to movies

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Preparation:**

Form groups of four or five students. Bring a deck of cards for each group. Create a sheet of 52 movie-related questions, assigned to specific cards – for example: two of diamonds =

What is your favorite movie?

**Procedure:**

**Step 1:** Introduce the topic of movies

**Time:** 5 - 10 minutes

Ask the students two different questions:

**Teacher's guide:**

- 1.- Do you like to go to the cinema?
- 2.- What kind of movies do you prefer?



**Step 2:** Instructions for conversation activity with the deck of cards.

**Time:** 5 minutes

Create groups of four or five students. Each group will be given one deck of cards, and a sheet of paper with a bank of questions in order to perform a game in which each card is going to have a question related to movies. Each student is going to choose one card. For example, student “A” chooses four of diamonds; this card has a question about movies, and this one is in the bank of questions. The bank of questions will be given to one member of the group. This person is in charge of asking the questions and writing the answer of the person who chose the card. Each member of the group is going to perform the same activity.

**Step 3:** Perform the activity

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Step 4:** Report on the activity

**Time:** 10 minutes

One member of each group will report the most relevant responses.

**Teacher’s guide:**

**List of Questions:**



**Diamond cards:**

2 of diamonds. What is your favorite movie?

.....

3 of diamonds. What is the best movie you have ever seen?

.....

4 of diamonds. Do you find downloading movies from the Internet a theft?

.....

5 of diamonds. How important is the director of the movie?



.....  
6 of diamonds. Do you prefer to read the book or watch the movie?  
.....

7 of diamonds. How often do you go to the cinema?  
.....

8 of diamonds. Do you watch movies on your computer?  
.....

9 of diamonds. How important is the cast in the movie?  
.....

10 of diamonds. What kind of movies do you like best?  
.....

J of diamonds. What movie genres do you know?  
.....

Q of diamonds. Have you ever watched movies from your computer?  
.....

K of diamonds. What are the most important factors in evaluating movies?  
.....

A of diamonds. How important are the special effects in the movie?  
.....

**Spade cards:** 

2 of spades. How important is the soundtrack of the movie?  
.....

3 of spades. Do you like romantic movies? Why?



.....  
4 of spades. Who is your favorite movie actress?

.....  
5 of spades. Would you like to be a film star? Why?

.....  
6 of spades. Do you like funny movies? Why?

.....  
7 of spades. Has any movie ever made you cry? Why?

.....  
8 of spades. Who is your favorite movie director?

.....  
9 of spades. What kind of character would you like to play?

.....  
10 of spades. Do you like scary movies?

.....  
J of spades. Do you like animated movies? Why?

.....  
Q of spades. Who is your favorite movie actor?

.....  
K of spades. What is your favorite movie soundtrack?

.....  
A of spades. What was the last movie you saw? Did you like it?





**Heart cards:** ♥

2 of hearts. Have you ever been to a film festival?

.....

3 of hearts. What kinds of movies have a negative impact on children?

.....

4 of hearts. Where do you usually see movies?

.....

5 of hearts. Have you ever seen a celebrity or famous person? Tell us about it

.....

6 of hearts. What kinds of movies have an educational value?

.....

7 of hearts. Have movie trends changed over time? In what ways? .....

8 of hearts. Do you have cable television?

.....

9 of hearts. Do you have a favorite cinema? Where?

.....

10 of hearts. Is it acceptable to show violence in movies in your family?

.....

J of hearts. Do you think there is too much violence in movies?

.....

Q of hearts. How often do you watch movies at home?

.....



K of hearts. What movies have you seen that took place in Ecuador?

.....

A of hearts. Can you think of some tourist sights related to the movie industry?

.....

**Club cards:** 

2 of clubs. Have you ever acted in a play or movie? Can you describe your experience?

.....

3 of clubs. Have you ever bought a pirated movie?

.....

4 of clubs. When you watch an English movie, do you prefer it dubbed or subtitled. Why?

.....

5 of clubs. Do you ever watch reality TV shows? Do you like them? Why?

.....

6 of clubs. What is the best movie you have ever seen?

.....

7 of clubs. Have you ever watched the Academy Awards (Oscars)?

.....

8 of clubs. Tell as many movie words as you can (vocabulary)

.....

9 of clubs. What kind of snacks or drinks do you like when you go to the movies?

.....

10 of clubs. Do you like to watch movies at home?

.....



J of clubs. What is the worst movie you have ever seen? Why was it so bad?

.....

Q of clubs. Do you watch movies in English? Why?

.....

K of clubs. Do you prefer fiction or nonfiction movies? Explain.

.....

A of clubs. Would you like to be a famous film star?

.....

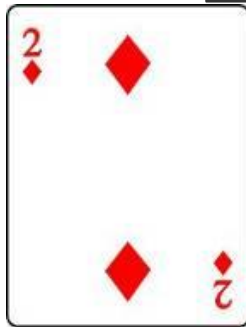
Questions adapted from:

<http://speaking24.com/conv/movies.html> (Speaking24, 2016)

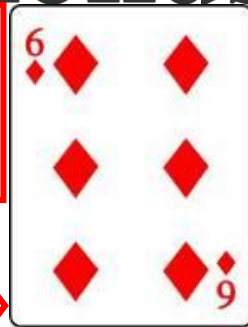
<http://www.englishcurrent.com/movies-lesson-plan-advanced-esl/>

(ESL Lesson Plans)

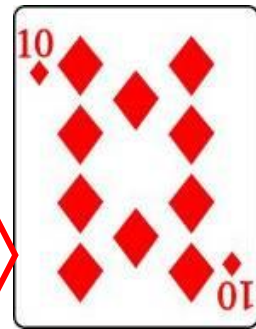
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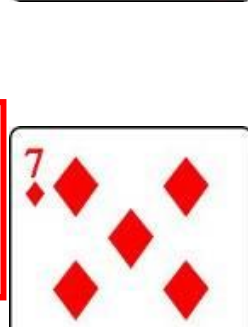
What is your favorite movie?



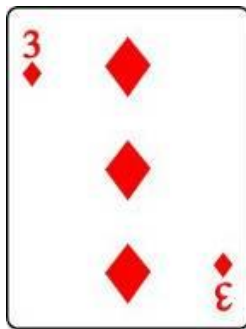
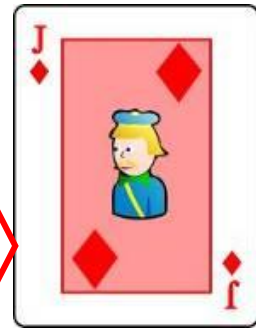
What kinds of movies do you like best?



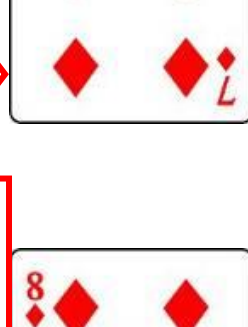
Do you prefer to read the book or to watch the movie?



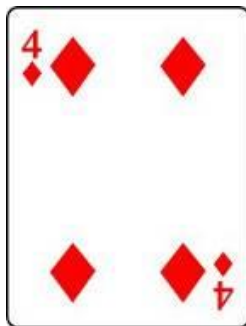
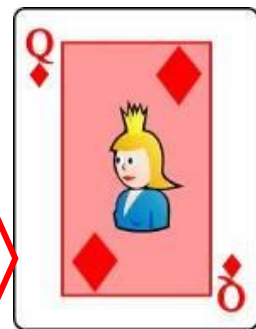
What movies genres do you know?



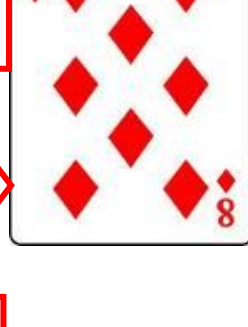
What's the best movie you have ever seen?



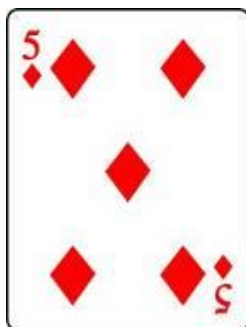
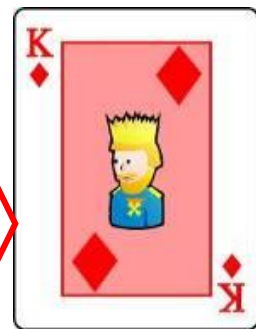
Have you ever watched movies from your computer?



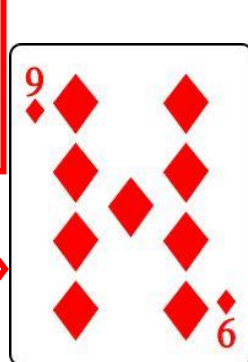
Do you find downloading movies from the internet a theft?



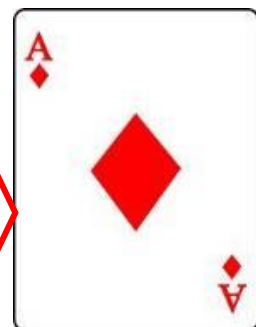
What are the most important factors in evaluating movies?



How important is the director of the movie?



How important are the special effects in the movie?

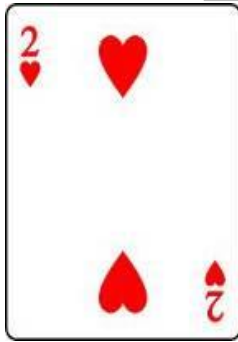


How important is the cast in a movie?

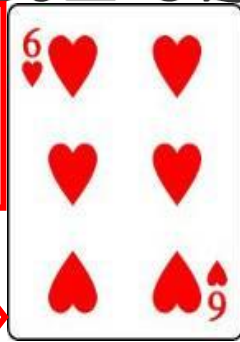
# ♠ Spades ♠

	<p>How important is the soundtrack of the movie?</p>		<p>Do you like scary movies? Why?</p>	
	<p>Do you like funny movies? Why?</p>		<p>Do you like animated movies? Why?</p>	
	<p>Do you like romantic movies? Why?</p>		<p>Who is your favorite movie actor?</p>	
	<p>Has any movie ever made you cry? Why?</p>		<p>Who is your favorite movie actress?</p>	
	<p>Who is your favorite movie director?</p>		<p>What is your favorite movie soundtrack?</p>	
	<p>Would you like to be a film star? Why?</p>		<p>What was the last movie you saw? Did you like it?</p>	
	<p>What kind of character would you like to play?</p>			

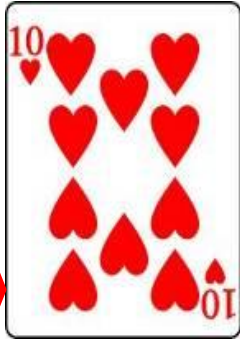
# ♥ Hearts ♥



Have you ever been to a film festival?

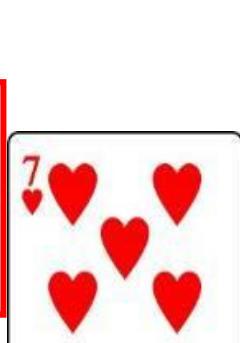


Is it acceptable to show violence in movies in your family?

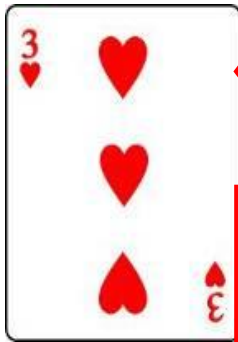
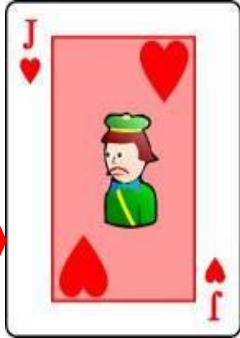


What kinds of movies have an educational value?

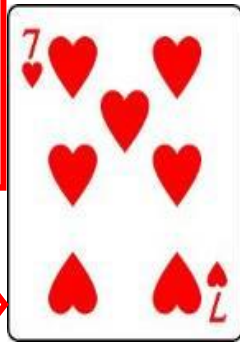
What kinds of movies have a negative impact on children?



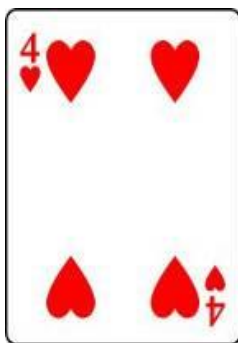
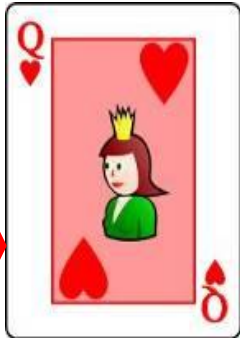
Do you think there is too much violence in movies?



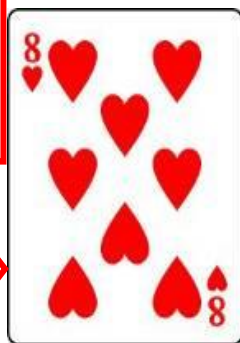
Have movies trends changed over time? In what ways?



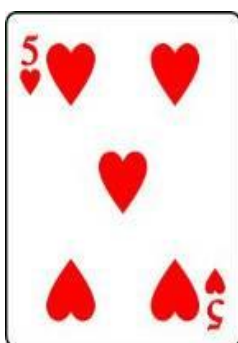
How often do you watch movies at home?



Where do you usually see movies?

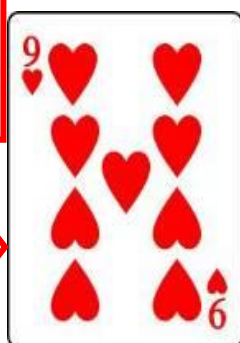


What movies have you seen that took place in Ecuador?

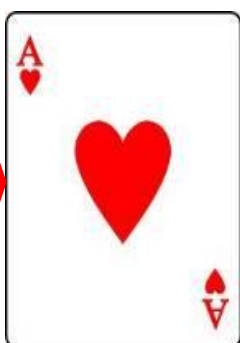


Do you have cable television?

Have you ever seen a celebrity or famous person? Tell us about it.



Can you think of some tourist sights related to the movie industry?



Do you have a favorite cinema? Where?



# ♣ Clubs ♣

	<p>Have you ever acted in a play or movie? Can you describe your experience?</p>		<p>Do you like to watch movies at home?</p>	
	<p>What's the best movie you have ever seen?</p>		<p>What is the worst movie you have ever seen? Why was it so bad?</p>	
	<p>Have you ever bought a pirated movie?</p>		<p>Do you watch movies in English? Why?</p>	
	<p>Have you ever watched the Academy Awards (Oscars)?</p>		<p>Do you prefer fiction or nonfiction movies? Explain</p>	
	<p>When you watch an English movie, do you prefer it dubbed or subtitled? Why?</p>		<p>Would you like to be a famous film star?</p>	
	<p>Tell us many movie words as you can (vocabulary) (e.g. film, ...)</p>			
	<p>Do you ever watch reality TV shows? Do you like them? Why?</p>			
	<p>What kind of snacks or drinks do you like when you go to the movies?</p>			



Design Adapted from:

[https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets\\_doc\\_docx/playing\\_cards\\_conversation\\_game\\_\\_4\\_pages\\_with\\_questions\\_directions\\_5\\_pages\\_editable/questions-debate-conversation/3823](https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets_doc_docx/playing_cards_conversation_game__4_pages_with_questions_directions_5_pages_editable/questions-debate-conversation/3823) (Zailda, 2011)

### Activity Three

**Topic:** Tourist places

**Level:** Intermediate

**Aims:**

- To describe tourist places
- To ask and answer questions about tourist places.

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Preparation:**

Form groups of four or five students. Bring different kinds of pictures and blank sheets of paper. Students have to guess the description of the picture and they have to draw it.

**Procedure:**

**Step 1:** Introduce the topic through questions

**Time:** 5 minutes

Teacher will ask the students the following questions and students will write their responses on a piece of paper.

Have you ever been abroad?

What places have you visited?

What places would you like to visit?

**Step 2:** Show a video about tourist places around the world

**Time:** 5 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=31HIL8-o53s>



The students will compare the written information with the information they see in the video. They will check which places are the same as the ones they had written.

**Step 3:** Describe and draw a picture

**Time:** 20 minutes

Two or three members of the group should have a blank piece of paper and pencil.

The other members should be given a picture to describe. The students with the picture will start describing it to their classmates. During this time, any member of the group can ask different questions or give clarifying information based on how the description is going.



Adted from <http://wttuc.com.br/cusco-enforex/>

(Wttuc, 2015)

**Location:** South America

**Country:** Cuzco, Perú

**Description:** It was built in the most difficult area.

**What it looks like:** Ruins



Taken from:

[www.housebeautiful.com/lifestily/a4498/eiffel-tower-facts/](http://www.housebeautiful.com/lifestily/a4498/eiffel-tower-facts/) (Smith, 2015)

**Location:** Europe.

**Country:** Paris, France.

**Description:** For 40 years it was the tallest structure in the world.

**What it looks like:** Lego Block.



Taken from:

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/210261876323857792/> (Pinterest)

**Location:** West Europe.

**Country:** Moscow Russia.

**Description:** It was used as the residence of dukes and tsars.

**What it looks like:** Castle from Disney tales.



Adapted from: <http://www.pricetravel.com.mx/rio-de-janeiro> (Matte Urrejola, 2016)

**Location:** South America

**Country:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**Description:** It was built during five years

**What it looks like:** Statue



Taken from: [http://wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_York\\_City#/media/File:Statue\\_of\\_Liberty,\\_NY.jpg](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_City#/media/File:Statue_of_Liberty,_NY.jpg)

(Wikipedia the free encyclopedia (Photographer), 2016)

**Location:** North America

**Country:** New York, USA

**Description:** It was given as a gift.

**What it looks like:** Woman



Adapted from: [http://www.tripadvisor.co/Tourism-g255060-Sydney\\_New\\_South\\_Wales-Vacations.html](http://www.tripadvisor.co/Tourism-g255060-Sydney_New_South_Wales-Vacations.html) (Corners, 2013)

**Location:** Oceania

**Country:** Sydney, Australia.

**Description:** It took sixteen years to build.

**What it looks like:** Triangles.



**Step 4:** Report the activity

**Time:** 5-10 minutes

A member of each group will report his/her drawing to the whole class. He or she will give the most relevant information.

**Step 5:** Final activity

**Time:** 5 minutes

Ask the students the following questions:

What did you learn about the places you saw?

Would you like to visit one of those places?

Do you know extra information about those places?

### Activity Four

**Topic:** Food

**Level:** Intermediate

**Aims:**

- To talk about food.
- To use vocabulary related to food.

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Preparation:** Bring two sheets of paper about food. Each student has to pick a number and each number will have a picture and a question related to it. The questions are almost the same for each number; the only thing that changes are the responses according to the picture. Each member of the group has to choose a number and answer the question. Finally, one member of the each group has to tell the class how many of them know about the fruit, vegetable, dish or drink.

**Questions:**



**If the numbers are related to fruit or vegetables**

What is the name of this fruit or vegetable?

Do you know the origin of it?

Have you ever tried it?

**If the numbers are related to dishes or drinks**

What is the name of this dish or drink?

Do you know the origin of this dish or drink?

Do you know the recipe for this dish?

Do you like this dish or drink?

**Procedure:**

**Step 1:** Form groups of four or five students. Each group will have a sheet of paper about food.

**Time:** 5 minutes

**Step 2:** Hold group discussions on food

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Step 3:** Finally, report

**Time:** 5-10 minutes

Final question: What's the favorite dish, fruit, vegetable of the class?

**Sheets of paper about food**

<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 	<b>3</b> 	<b>4</b> 	<b>5</b> 
<b>6</b> 	<b>7</b> 	<b>8</b> 	<b>9</b> 	<b>10</b> 
<b>11</b> 	<b>12</b> 	<b>13</b> 	<b>14</b> 	<b>15</b> 
<b>16</b> 	<b>17</b> 	<b>18</b> 	<b>19</b> 	<b>20</b> 



<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31</p>	<p>32</p>	<p>33</p>	<p>34</p>	<p>35</p>
<p>36</p>	<p>37</p>	<p>38</p>	<p>39</p>	<p>40</p>

Taken from: google images



## Activity Five

**Topic:** Technology

**Level:** Intermediate

**Aims:**

- To discuss the pros and cons of technology
- To produce a debate.
- To get acquainted with the Amish culture

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Preparation:**

Divide the class into two big groups in order to produce a debate. Bring an article about Amish culture. Hold a discussion about technology and Amish culture.

**Procedure:**

**Step 1:** Introduce the topic discussing the following questions

**Time:** 7-10 minutes

What do you think of when you hear the word technology?

Brainstorm. Discuss in groups.

What devices do you use and for what purposes?

What would you do without these devices?

**Step 2:** Show a video about Amish people

**Time:** 7 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x00Tl7FxEf8>

**Step 3:** Read about Amish culture

**Time:** 5 minutes

Teacher's guide

### Unusual American Lifestyles: The Amish



America is a large country with many different cultures. People in America have the freedom to live the kind of life they want to. Some groups have chosen to live a different kind of life than the average American, and the Amish are one of them. They do not have telephones, refrigerators, electricity, plumbing, and many of the things we use daily.

The Amish do not take pictures of their faces. They do not like pictures of themselves to be taken. They believe that it is not allowed, according to the Bible.

David is a born Amish. For him, farming is a hobby. Woodworking pays the bills. The Amish have been farmers all of their lives, but it is becoming more expensive and they cannot live by farming alone. They have begun to use their woodworking skills to make a living.

A normal Amish family is eight to ten. There can be up to fourteen in a family. Women are the homemakers. After girls finish the eighth grade, it is important for them to learn how to bake, quilt, sew, and garden. They grow 85% of the food they eat.

Reading taken from:

[https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets\\_doc\\_docx/unusual\\_american\\_lifestyles\\_the\\_amish/people/86358](https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets_doc_docx/unusual_american_lifestyles_the_amish/people/86358) (Skcott, 2016)

**Step 4:** Form two groups and hold a discussion about the following questions:

**Time:** 20 - 25 minutes

1. What do you think about people who shun technological devices, like the Amish?
2. Can you imagine adapting your lifestyle to the Amish culture?
3. Are technological advances always for the better?
4. Can you think of any disadvantages of technology?

In this activity the role of the teacher has to be as moderator.

**Step 5:** To close

Share general ideas about Amish Culture and technology.

**Time:** 5 minutes



## Appendix 5

### PHOTOS



