

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' INITIAL EFL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' INITIAL EFL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH
THE COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING APPROACH

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Signature

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DEDICATORY

To my mom, whose unconditional love, support, and encouragement have inspired me to give
my best throughout the entire process of my career.

To my sisters, Geraldine and Jennifer, whose invariable belief in me charged me with the desire
to work hard for the things that I aspire to achieve.

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Abstract

This study corresponds to qualitative action research developed with fifth grade students of the public institution Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño in 2019. The main purpose was to study the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching approach in the development of students' initial EFL communicative competence. The research emerged from an initial observation and diagnostic stage, where it was possible to identify that the students had a low performance in English, in which they were not able to understand basic questions or express simple ideas on common topics. To address these difficulties, a pedagogical intervention was planned based on the communicative activities proposed by the CLT approach. As a result, students went through different intervention phases that contained a set of objectives and performance targets related to specific forms of knowledge of the language, which hence allowed them to make use of linguistic resources for different purposes in a variety of communicative situations.

Keywords: Communicative competence, Communicative Language Teaching, communicative activities.

Chapter I: Contextualization and research problem

This chapter conceptualizes the research problem by considering aspects like the local and institutional context of the school where this research was developed, the chapter also presents the characterization of the population based on the results of the analysis of the class observations, a survey, and a diagnostic test whose aim was the diagnosis of the language level of the school population. Later, it includes the problem, state of art, rationale, and finally, the research question together with the objectives which the current study sought to achieve.

Local and institutional context

This study was conducted at the Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, which is a public educational institution located in Avenida Caracas No. 23-24 Sur, in the San José neighborhood; 18th Rafael Uribe Uribe district. The school was founded in 1916 and its initial orientation aimed to prepare women for domestic or household tasks. Over time, the Liceo Femenino has had different transformations that have placed it as one of the best schools in the city, due to its innovative dynamics and excellent institutional management.

The school borders with Caracas Avenue and also some commercial businesses, since the neighborhood is located in an area characterized mainly by commercial and industrial activities. The predominant commercial activities are clothing and footwear business; as well as the trade of other items including auto parts and accessories for vehicles. Moreover, in the surroundings of the school, it can be found other establishments like restaurants, bars, private clubs, and institutions of formal and informal education for young people and adults.

According to the Institutional Educational Project (PEI in Spanish), the pedagogical model that guides the educational work of the school is the social constructivist model. This

model is supported by a humanist approach, which promotes the formation and integral development of the human being so that he may transform himself and the contexts in which he participates. In this sense, the PEI of the institution is geared towards a perspective profoundly humanistic, dynamic, and innovative; that allows the formation of women from a critical, reflective, and autonomous sense (Colegio Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, 2018).

In this connection, the mission of the school promotes the integral formation of its students, through values such as respect, honesty, identity, solidarity, and autonomy; this is to generate life projects that contribute to transforming their environments. In the vision of the school, it is emphasized the effort for the quality of the teaching and thus the excellence of the graduates in areas like the technologies and the foreign languages (English and French).

Concerning the learning of English, the school has a special English laboratory which is a separate classroom from the others that make up the primary block. The classroom is broad, it has 9 tables with capacity for six students each, and the teachers also have a personal desk. Regarding the resources, this room has two forms of technological equipment to support the activities: an interactive digital board along with a computer with Internet access used by teachers and students.

Within the curriculum design of the area of English in Primary Education, different objectives were identified. Some of them are based on developing knowledge, communication skills, social and intercultural values; others are based on developing implicit thinking in foreign languages (English and French). All this, in order to achieve a good understanding, interpretation, and textual production that allow students to interact in bilingual contexts and societies. In this way, the specific objectives of the curriculum are divided into communicative and structural, taking into account expressions and vocabulary in a context that allows improving

the comprehension and production at the oral and written level in the English language. Learning processes in English are based on the European Reference Framework for languages and are developed under the cooperative learning approach.

It should be emphasized that the curriculum design for the English course contains a standard vision of learning goals and skills for all primary years, consequently, there are no specific objectives for the group within the intervention was developed. In terms of contents, the thematic axes for fourth-grade consider *commands, numbers from 1 to 99, physical descriptions, places of the school, there is and there are, and daily routines*. In the case of fifth-grade topics include *commands, numbers from 1 to 999, places of the school, talking about myself, daily routines, and time*.

Characterization of the population

The Liceo Femenino has about 5.348 students and offers three academic days: Morning, afternoon, and night. Likewise, the academic levels are divided into pre-school, elementary, and secondary school, where students graduate and choose their high school degree with an emphasis on English, French, or Health Sciences.

Taking into account that this study was developed during two semesters the group of students changed from 2019 to 2020. Thus, in 2019, the research started with 39 students, aged between 8 and 12 years old, attending the elementary level, specifically the fourth-grade of the afternoon shift.

In order to characterize the population, a survey was applied. The analysis of the results showed different aspects. Regarding the family characteristics of students, they expressed living with their mom, dad, brothers; some live also with grandparents, uncles or cousins; their parents'

professions varied but the most common were: sellers (formal and informal), housewives, drivers, cleaners, policemen, teachers, bank officers, or construction workers. Also, the majority of students were assisted by their relatives with homework at home; only 5 stated they had no help.

Within the socioeconomic characteristics, 80% of students had access to private services like cable television and internet. Also, most of them lived in neighborhoods near the institution, such as Restrepo and Usme; others lived in neighborhoods far from the school as Bosa and Soacha. In terms of transportation, half of the students used the school bus to get to school; others did not use any means of transport and could walk to school, and only a small group used other means such as bus or car.

In relation to socio-cultural characteristics, it is important to mention the hobbies or activities that students enjoyed doing in their free time. The most common were playing (x-box, volleyball, basketball, soccer, table games, with dolls, with their pets and others), watching television, skating, watching movies, drawing, jumping, running, going to the park, or dancing.

In addition to all the previous activities, a small group of students mentioned other types of hobbies as reading, doing homework, going to the library, playing instruments like the piano or writing stories.

About their cognitive characteristics, all the students agreed that they liked to go to the school; students' specific answers were: "Para aprender; porque me enseñan a tocar instrumentos; porque me siento feliz; porque hago actividades divertidas; porque me divierto mucho con mis amigas; porque comparto con mis compañeras; para ser alguien en la vida" (See appendix A). In addition, a small group expressed having failed a course because of different

reasons as difficulties to read, bad relationship with the teacher, irresponsibility with homework, bullying or lack of money to pay for school.

In relation to the favorite student subjects, 52% of students voted for Technology, the reasons were: they could work with computers; they liked technology; they could interact more and they could play. 21% of students said their favorite subject was Spanish, because of the teacher; because they learned or because they loved writing. Small groups chose other subjects like Maths, English, Dances, Sciences, Philosophy, or Philharmonics.

On the other hand, 74% of students preferred working in groups than individually, for reasons such as; they could talk and share with their classmates, also, when they did not understand something their classmates explained to them, they could learn together or because it was more fun. 25% of students said they preferred to work individually since they could concentrate more, finished the activities faster, or not be copied by their classmates.

Concerning explicitly about English area 83% of students agreed that they liked English because they could learn new languages, they could be able to communicate in other countries, it was fun to learn English, and also because English could help them in their future professional careers. On the contrary, 16% of students answered they did not like English; this because they did not understand English so it turned confusing.

When identifying the student's strengths and weaknesses in the English class; half of the students expressed listening was the easier skill to them. On the other hand, regarding the most difficult skill, about half of the students chose speaking and reading as the most difficult ones.

Finally, with regard to the affective characteristics, 94% of students were comfortable in the educational institution in which they study, as well as with their classmates with whom they

share each day. All of them expressed feeling happy at their school since they shared good times with their classmates, they could learn new things and they had a good relationship with the majority of teachers. Also, most of the students said they got along well with their classmates considering that they shared with one another, they played, they were respectful and friendly.

During the observation period, the general behavior of the students during English classes was good, although sometimes the attention was a little scattered, especially in the activities with videos, since the students located in the back did not concentrate as much as the ones who were close to the smartboard. Similarly, participation, which in most cases consisted of the repetition of songs in English, was bigger in the students in the classroom front, as students in the back were easily deconcentrated with other activities.

While observing the student's performance, after the videos on songs related to some vocabulary topics, the students proceeded to develop worksheets to practice the vocabulary they had seen in the videos. The students developed the worksheets and classes ended when they delivered their papers.

The diagnosis of student's language level

With the aim of identifying the knowledge in English of the students of 504 of the public school Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño, a diagnostic test was carried out (See appendix B), using as a frame of reference the English standards of the Ministry of National Education and also the institution's English area plan. The test was applied at the beginning of May 2019 and the results of the same are presented below.

The sections that made up the test were: Reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking. The first section consisted of two points, the first of multiple-choice and in the

second point it was necessary to organize the images of a story according to the sequence of events.

The writing part consisted of a series of questions that the students had to answer all about personal information, for example, *What's your name* or *How old are you*. In the grammar section there were three points; the first one was about prepositions, students had different images and they had to select the correct preposition according to the pictures; the second point consisted on writing sentences according two different images using some words provided; and in the last point students must organize words in order to form fourth simple sentences.

In the vocabulary section, students had to develop two points, in the first one they had to choose the correct written form of different numbers, and in the second point, they had to match school supplies with their meaning in English. The speaking and listening section was done at the same time; students had to listen to simple questions about their preferences and their environment and answer them in English.

In regards to results, in the reading part, most of students had errors when finding the correct adjective for *ant* due to they chose the option *huge* instead of *small*. Also they had difficulties to understand and differentiate simple descriptions as *young* or *old*. In the second point, some students expressed they did not understand anything of the story even when it was a simple one; it was necessary to clarify some words in Spanish so that they could develop the activity. Therefore, as set out in the Standards for English learning and the syllabus of the school, the main difficulties identified were the lack of understanding of short and simple texts as well as the sequence of events in a story.

In the writing section, students had difficulties when recognizing the questions, and it was also necessary to clarify their meaning so that they were able to answer them. In all the questions students limited themselves to respond with the requested information and they did not use structures in English like *My name is* or *I am*. Only two students tried to write in English; they answered *moder y fader* to describe the members of their families, the rest of them wrote the information in Spanish. In this section, the main difficulties detected according to the Standards and the school's syllabus were that students could not recognize basic questions of their environment, likewise, they could not write simple sentences about their personal information or express themselves in a written way and with short messages in English.

In the speaking section, students had to answer some simple questions like *what is your name? what is your favorite sport? what is your favorite subject?* They did not understand all of the questions and if they could understand, they answered always in Spanish since their oral production was very low. In this sense, the difficulties detected were the low level of listening and oral expression in English, since, in the Standards for English learning, fourth-graders must be able to answer personal questions or questions about likes and preferences, similarly, they must be able to talk about themselves, about their classmates and about their daily activities with simple sentences logically chained. In the syllabus of the school, it was also established that in this level students should communicate in a foreign language, *greeting, introducing themselves, and giving personal information.*

Meanwhile, in the grammar section, most of the students were successful in choosing place prepositions; however, they had difficulties in making and organizing sentences. Firstly, they did not know the meaning of words, even when they were only colors or animals; also, they did not know the meaning of pronouns and verbs. Later, when they were explained about the

meanings they did not have clarity on how to form sentences: what to write first or what to write next, then it was a very complex activity for them. In this final section, the main difficulties were the lack of knowledge of the students about the construction of sentences in English to communicate some idea; in this regard, one of the specific objectives of the school's syllabus is to further the knowledge of structures, expressions, and vocabulary in a context that allows improving the comprehension and production at an oral and written level in the English language. Likewise, the Standards for English learning also propose that fourth-graders should apply frequently used grammatical structures and patterns.

Concerning to what has been mentioned above, among the major difficulties identified was the low production of students in English, due to the decontextualized learning of the language both in situations of use and in structures or complete sentences. Taking this into account, in the following semester a new diagnostic activity was carried out to analyze accurately the deficiencies of the students in linguistic and communicative knowledge of the language. This test contained four points; in the first, students had to relate two columns A and B with questions and answers about a short conversation in English; the second point was to organize simple sentences in English like *We are good friends* or *My friend is very intelligent*; in the third point, the students had to describe their best friend including information such as their name, their age and an activity that they enjoyed doing together and finally, the fourth point was about interviewing a classmate and talk about questions like *What is your favorite subject at school?*, *Who are your best friends at school?*, *Some of your school supplies are ...?*, *What do you like to eat at lunchtime?*

By analyzing the results, in the first point, most of the answers were correct although there were also some errors. The most accurate questions were those related to common

greetings or farewells such as *Hello, Good afternoon, or Goodbye*. In the second point, there were a little more difficulties in organizing the statements which were about simple descriptions or questions of personal information, students did not recognize most of the words and did not know how to place them to form the statement.

In the third point, few students were able to express their ideas in English, some did not develop the point, others only wrote the name of their best friend and others wrote the description in Spanish. Only five students attempted and successfully expressed their ideas in English although with some spelling errors. In the last point, which involved the oral interaction of the students, difficulties also arose. It should be made clear that for reasons of time, the activity could not be carried out with all the students, but with the groups in which the exercise was developed, there were many doubts about the meaning of the questions in the interview and also about how to answer them. The researcher tried to guide the process by repeating the questions and trying to clarify the meaning of some words, regardless, the students said their answers in Spanish as it was very difficult for them to express their ideas in English.

Statement of the problem

Taking into account the field notes it was possible to notice that students were learning English from non-contextualized vocabulary and isolated words. As a consequence of this, students presented difficulties when remembering vocabulary and, they were not able to express simple ideas on common topics since they were not familiar with the structures or authentic uses of the language in particular contexts. It demonstrates that learning only vocabulary or isolated words does not favor a complete appropriation of the language as it does not allow becoming familiar with structures or phrases that enable communication or expression in English.

In the course of class observations, students were focused on the repetition of words or vocabulary therefore the activities were mainly based on pronunciation and vocabulary repetition. Also, in the second part of classes students were given some worksheets to develop activities regarding the vocabulary they had been taught but they hardly remembered it without the teacher's help. This caused the class learning to be evaluated through the mechanical development of the worksheets, but students did not demonstrate that they had internalized some vocabulary.

Production exercises were not present in English classes because students focused on repetition and memorization. In this way, students were not able to use English with a communicative purpose and they did not produce even a short sentence to express themselves. The language students learned was quite simple, only basic words as the colors or objects of the classroom, but as they learned those words in an isolated way, they were not familiarized with simple phrases or sentences to use them in real contexts.

The above could be evidenced in the stage of the diagnosis test, in which students' performance on the different skills demonstrated they had a low level of English. They could not recognize and understand simple questions about personal information as *How old are you?* or *What is your favorite subject?* and when they were asked to form simple sentences as *I play soccer* they were not able to do so. Also, when they needed to write something or to express simple ideas, they communicated only in Spanish.

According to the Basic Standards on Competence of foreign language: English by the Ministry (2006), there were goals and tasks that students should be able to do according to their academic level. Comparing the standards with the performance of the students it is evident that they did not have some of the necessary knowledge for an adequate development in the

language, seeing that in fourth-grade students must at least, be able to use sentences with predictable structures to talk about everyday topics (MEN, 2006).

Thus, the specific need that was intended to be addressed and that constituted the object of study of the current research was the development of the initial communicative competence of fourth-grade students considering the communicative competence as: “The set of individual knowledge, skills and characteristics that allows a person to perform actions in a given context” (Basic Standards of Competence in Foreign Languages: English, 2006, p.11). It means that communicative competence brings together a set of language skills that students must be able to use according to the context.

Consequently, communicative competence became the unit of analysis of the current research as it contains the necessary knowledge for students to learn the language not only with a linguistic but also communicative purpose. Besides, as stated above, one of the students' main difficulties was their low production in English because of their decontextualized learning in both structures and situations of use, therefore, the development of communicative competence in the students will allow the handling of grammatical concepts and their use in different communicative situations.

It is also important to mention the fact that the proposal covered an initial development of communicative competence taking into account the ages of the participants, therefore, linguistic or grammatical knowledge and functional knowledge of the language in situations of interaction and communication were taken as the central axis.

State of art

The following state of art will provide an overview of the background of the study in order to evince the previous investigations that have been made in this regard and to observe what remains to be developed. A total of five studies were chosen, three of them conducted at the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, another at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, and the last at Alberto Hurtado University in Chile. All the investigations present significant contributions in the field of teaching English and about methodologies such as communicative grammar or communicative activities in English class to strengthen students' expression skills as well as their communicative competence.

The first study was carried out in 2016 by the student Karla Paola Cruz Anzola from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. She conducted an investigation about the impact of communicative activities to promote communication with 32 students of sixth grade at Instituto Pedagógico Nacional. In this study, communicative activities were the methodology used to increase the possibilities of communication in the classroom and to get students to use the language to express themselves more frequently in classes. Through the research, the author was able to affirm the effectiveness of the implementation of communication activities in English classes to foster interaction between the students as well as their oral speech. This is important for the current research as it also seeks to involve the students in the development of communicative activities where they can put into practice the linguistic and grammatical component of the language to achieve better performance and use of English in a given context.

The second study was carried out in 2016 by the student Maritza Martínez Cely, from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Her research aimed to analyze the influence of implementing communicative activities in collaborative learning and oral communication processes in English

students in the Language Center of the Pedagogical University. After analyzing the results, it could be concluded that the implementation of communicative activities had a positive effect on the communicative and collaborative processes in the students since this allowed them to interact more with each other using the foreign language and in order to achieve a common goal in the development of activities. This research confirms the usefulness of communication activities to foster oral communication processes in English students.

The third study was carried out in 2017 by the student Mauricio Gómez Arévalo from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. The research is titled *Improving the communicative grammatical competence through games base on flashcards* and the purpose was to determine the impact of the implementation of different communicative games based on flashcards in students' communicative grammatical competence. As a result, it was possible to ascertain that implementing these communicative games helped students to strengthen their grammatical competence by addressing it through meaningful and communicative activities. This research is relevant as it addresses grammar from a communicative perspective and introduces the use of structures through different activities among them those that required the interaction and communication of students.

The fourth study is titled *Communicative grammar: An effective tool to teach a second language in today's classes*, it was carried out in 2013 by Damaris Cordero Badilla and Ginneth Pizarro Chacón from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. The study's main objective was to analyze the advantages of implementing the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in traditional grammar lessons. Within the conclusions, it was clear that language teachers must see grammar teaching strategies as a way to develop techniques to teach the grammar subjects by implementing communicative activities in the classroom. This research allows to analyze the

impact of the communicative language teaching approach in English classes. In this sense, the research provides knowledge and techniques to teach the language through communicative activities in the classroom.

The final study was carried out in 2012 by Luis Emilio Flores Leiva from the Alberto Hurtado College in Chile and is titled *Building communicative competence in EFL students*. The purpose of this study was to create communicative capacities in tenth graders students through social interaction and activities that will encourage the use of the target language. At the end of the study, the author could observe significant advances in the oral and written production of the students since, through the pedagogical intervention and the proposed activities, the students were able to explore the pragmatic uses of the language and also, were able to practice structures and vocabulary through tasks that resemble real-life that involve group work and that promote effective pronunciation. This research provides contributions in terms of activities and assessment to guide processes of communicative competence building.

The reading of the previous studies allows an approach to different perspectives on the teaching of English, especially those that favor the communicative teaching of the language and that rely on activities that promote the contextualized use of grammatical or discursive structures and create learning opportunities to develop communication skills. These two aspects are very important for the development and achievement of the current research; therefore, in the following chapters, it will be observed how both are integrated into the methodological and pedagogical proposal.

Rationale

In the field of English language teaching, the concept of communicative concept is of great importance since it sets together all the necessary knowledge to ensure good performance

in the target language. In the Basic Standards on Competence of foreign language: English, communicative competence appears as a central element to determine the performance levels of students.

In this sense, it is important to know how to make students achieve the required competencies and thus develop their language knowledge and communicative competence.

According to Richards (2005):

The notion of communicative competence was developed within the discipline of linguistics (or more accurately, the subdiscipline of sociolinguistics) and appealed to many within the language teaching profession, who argued that communicative competence, and not simply grammatical competence, should be the goal of language teaching. (p.9)

In addition, with the evolution of methods and approaches for teaching and learning English, different authors have given new perspectives for the teaching of English with an emphasis on communication and interaction; in that sense, approaches such as the Communicative Language Teaching have emerged pointing the importance of using language to communicate.

That said, the CLT teaching approach provided new classroom techniques and activities in which students could make use of the formal knowledge of the language through interaction with others: "Instead of making use of activities that demanded accurate repetition and memorization of sentences and grammatical patterns, activities that required learners to negotiate meaning and to interact meaningfully were required" (Richards, 2005, p.13).

Consequently, this research is worthwhile considering that it aims to develop students' initial EFL communicative competence through a teaching proposal based on the

Communicative Language Teaching approach and communicative activities in the classroom such as information-gap activities, role plays or dialogues, to use the language and exchange messages in interaction contexts. Hence, the impact of the current research will be to help students to foster their language and initial EFL communicative competence by learning and using English for different purposes and functions such as introducing themselves, providing personal information, making descriptions of people and places, or interacting with others.

Research question

What is the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching method over fifth graders initial EFL communicative competence at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño?

General objective

To establish the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching over fifth-graders initial EFL communicative competence at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño.

Specific objectives

- To describe the benefits and opportunities of a Communicative Language Teaching proposal along the 5th grade students' EFL learning process.
- To identify the effect of communicative activities on the development of students' grammar and functional knowledge.
- To analyze students' interaction in the foreign language while developing communicative activities

Chapter II: Theoretical framework

In teaching a language there are a variety of factors that influence the success of learning processes. Currently, some various methodologies and approaches postulate a series of strategies and techniques for teaching English and achieving the expected objectives with students. These teaching methods have evolved over the course of time, according to new beliefs and conceptions about what would be an effective way to teach the language. Fauziati (2008) said:

Improvements in language teaching is the result of the improvements in the quality of methods (...) The classroom teachers and program designers have various teaching methods to choose from to meet the particular needs of the learners, the condition of the school and the educational setting. (p.3)

In the XX century, didactics and methodology in teaching English focused around memorization or repetition with special emphasis on translation skills. Then, more attractive approaches appeared, with new techniques, that proposed a different vision of English in the classroom; among them, the Communicative Language Teaching, whose concern on students' communicative needs, interaction techniques and types of classroom activities makes it an ideal and widely used approach after many years of its origin. Richards and Rodgers (2001, as cited in Fenner and Newby, 2006) stated CLT "continues to be considered the most plausible basis for language teaching today" (p. 17).

For the current research, the CLT approach is the one that serves as the basis for understanding the teaching and learning processes of English as it offers the possibility to study and practice the language within real contexts of communication. Also, according to Richards (2005) some of the classroom activities of the Communicative Language Teaching approach "seek to develop students' communicative competence through linking grammatical

development to the ability to communicate” (p.23). This is relevant because the main objective of this research was the implementation of activities that involved communicative language use in order to develop students' initial communicative competence.

Assuming this, the following framework provides some theoretical supports that guide the research and that present essential information about the subject of study, its categories, and the main thrust of the pedagogical proposal. These concepts are related to communicative competence and communicative language use.

Communicative competence

Communicative competence is a concept that has evolved and developed differently according to the theories and postulates of several authors. On one side Chomsky (1965), proposed a distinction between competence and performance. For the author, competence is related to the monolingual speaker-listeners' knowledge of the language while the actual use of the language in real situations is called performance.

Other authors more inclined towards a communicative perspective of language opposed Chomsky's vision of competence and formulated the idea of communicative competence. Namely, Hymes (1972) defined communicative competence as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations; in that sense and according to Hymes, the inherent grammatical competence proposed by Chomsky is not the only relevant component for the use of language, but also the knowledge of the context in which the communicative situation develops; this brings sociolinguistics and the relevance of the appropriateness of language use in a variety of social situations, as a new look at language studies.

The construct communicative competence in second language teaching also refers to the ability to communicate in a foreign language in real situations of interaction. Lightbown and Spada (1999, as cited in Larsari, 2011) stated “communicative competence is defined as learners’ ability to efficiently express what they mean in the target language and successfully achieve communications in real-life situations” (p.161). To that effect, in the process of developing students' communicative competence, opportunities to learn the language should be provided according to the contexts of interaction in which it is used.

The communicative competence that was sought to be developed specifically in the classroom was an initial communicative competence, through activities involving certain linguistic and functional knowledge that can be applied in contexts or situations of interaction. This idea takes into account the specific needs of the students regarding their low level of expression in English. As a result of this, each one of the intervention phases contained a set of objectives and performance targets related to specific knowledge of the language. In the first phase, the aim was to familiarize the students with structures and chunks of language through listening exercises on conversations and dialogues. Also, structural and pre-communicative activities were carried out to promote the recognition of the elements of the language and their relationships, since the students had difficulties in creating linguistic structures. Therefore, at the end of this stage, the students were able to recognize linguistic structures to make descriptions of themselves, of other people and their school.

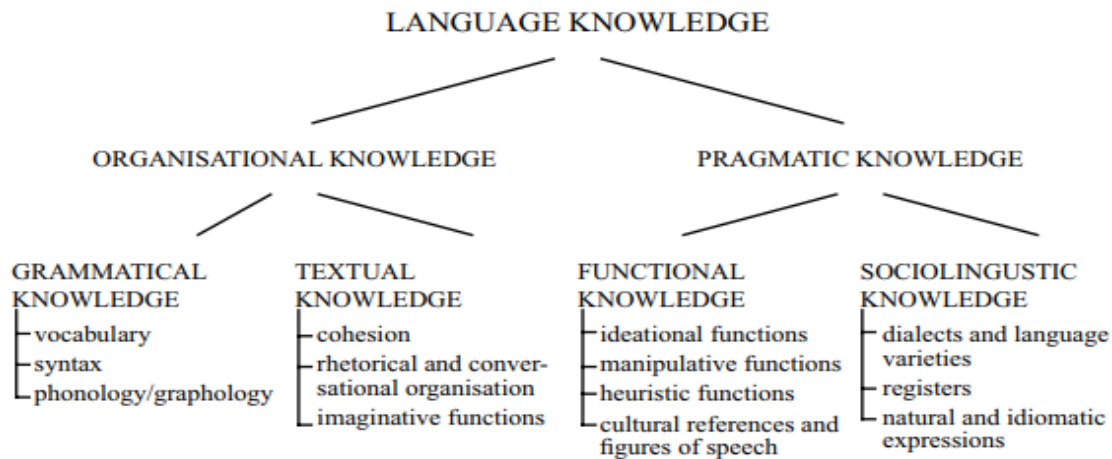
After the *Awareness-raising* phase, it came the second phase of *Unconscious competence*, whose objectives and activities focused on functional knowledge of the language. Thus, according to the age of the students, and the standards for English and the school's curricular program, there were established some basic language functions for contexts such as

greetings, introducing yourself, and providing personal information in English. Finally, the last phase *Conscious competence* was a phase of interaction in English in which the students were already able to communicate certain phrases in contexts of intercommunication and cooperation with others for purposes such as talking about oneself, talking about favorites and sharing routine information.

Model of communicative competence

As was said before, Hymes introduced the concept of communicative competence paying special attention to the sociolinguistic component. Bachman and Palmer (1996) proposed a model of communicative competence; according to their model, language knowledge consists of two main components: Organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge which complement each other in achieving communicatively effective language use. Organizational knowledge is related to formal language structures so it is composed of grammatical and textual knowledge; grammatical knowledge includes independent areas of knowledge such as knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology, and graphology. They allow recognition and production of grammatically correct sentences as well as comprehension of their propositional content (Bagarić, V., & Djigunović, J. M.;2007). Textual knowledge enables the comprehension and production of texts.

On the other hand, pragmatic knowledge refers to abilities for creating and interpreting discourse. It includes two areas of knowledge: knowledge of pragmatic conventions and knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions, as illustrated below.

Figure 1*Areas of Language Knowledge*

Note. From “Defining communicative competence” (p.101), by V. Bagarić, 1996, *Metodika*, 8, (14).

This regarding constitutes the starting point of the current research since, as previously stated, teaching for communicative competence bring learners new opportunities to use the language in a variety of situations, it means, developing communicative competence increases self-expression in English while involves social and cultural patterns about a particular context of interaction, then, this is why communicative competence is the main goal in the classroom.

For the purpose of this research, two specific components of the communicative competence, grammatical knowledge, and functional knowledge, will be analyzed below. It is appropriate to clarify that emphasis is given to these two components since the priority of the intervention is an introduction to reach grammatical and functional knowledge or understanding. Thus, although the source of origin is the communicative competence model grouped by grammatical, textual, functional, and sociolinguistic knowledge, for the purposes of this research, the emphasis is only placed on grammatical and functional knowledge.

Grammatical knowledge

Grammatical knowledge, as described above, is part of the organizational knowledge component and is related to the study of formal language structures. This knowledge is the one that studies the proper construction of sentences and the correct use of the language. Thornbury (1999) established that: “Grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences. Put another way, it is the study of linguistic chains and slots” (p.2). According to this, it is through grammar that it is possible to know the functioning and principles of a language.

With the emergence of the concept of communicative competence that Dell Hymes postulated as a complement to Noam Chomsky's theory, the role of linguistic and grammatical knowledge has taken different interpretations. According to Chomsky, linguistic knowledge was sufficient for language acquisition, while Hymes pointed out the importance of social factors for the proper use of language. According to Soler y Jordà (2007) the sociolinguist Hymes (1972) “argued that in addition to linguistic competence (the rules for describing sound systems and for combining sounds into morphemes and morphemes into sentences), one also needed notions of sociolinguistic competence (the rules for using language appropriately in context)” (p.42). It means, there must be a context for learning a language, which allows the application of linguistic knowledge according to certain rules of interaction and communication.

This perspective began to influence many linguists and language teachers thus the methodologies that focused on teaching grammatical knowledge gradually gave rise to new approaches with a more communicative view. Thornbury (1999) explained why other aspects besides grammar should be involved in the process of language acquisition: “An exclusive focus on sentences, risks under-equipping the learner for real language use. There is more to language

learning than the ability to produce well-formed sentences” (p.3). This means the learner must be able to put into practice such grammatical knowledge in communication contexts. Since knowledge in linguistic and grammatical terms matter, they should not be the only concern in the classroom.

All of these aspects are considered important for the current research as it sought to address grammatical knowledge in classes so that students could know how certain structures work in order to express ideas in English. It was also intended to put this knowledge into practice through the pre-communicative and structural activities proposed by Littlewood (1981, as cited in Richards, 2006) following the sequence of CLT activities. Some examples of the verbal forms used during these activities were the ones to make physical or personality descriptions *She has black hair* or *she is kind* and to make descriptions of places like the school *there is a chapel* or *there is an English lab*.

The structural aspects of the axis of the pedagogical proposal in the classroom are aligned with the curriculum of the educational institution as well as with the contents proposed by the National Standards in English for the cycle of primary school. Likewise, there are included other types of topics that allow students to respond properly to particular situations as meeting other people and making friends.

Functional knowledge

Having addressed the organizational component of the communicative competence through grammatical knowledge, the pragmatic component will now be discussed through functional knowledge.

Functional knowledge might be understood as the different functions that language has according to the communication context and use. "Language is functional, in that it serves basic human functions to represent experience and knowledge, to construct relationships, and to create meaningful messages" (Christie & Martin, 2009, p.5). According to this perspective, language is communicative in nature and it is through the configuration of functions that we can express ideas or build messages.

In this regard, the context of the communicative situation is an important matter for the functional viewpoint, as well as all the elements that become part of the communicative situation. Halliday (2002, as cited in Christie & Martin, 2009) said that "the study of language necessarily involved the study of language in use, as a part of the social system. What mattered about language was what people did with it" (p.6). This implies that not only the grammatical forms or structures should be analyzed but also the context, participants, and communicative event.

Bearing in mind all of the above, within the functionalist perspective, language variations are important according to social groups, the contexts in which it is carried out and the intention or communicative function: "The relationship of linguistic choices to the situational contexts in which the language is used can be explained in functional terms" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p.19). Also, regarding formal knowledge of a language, functionalism indicates that communicative events are the ones that determine grammatical structures, for this reason, Shleppegrell (2004) said: "Different lexical and grammatical options are related to the functional purposes that are foregrounded by speakers/writers in responding to the demands of various tasks" (p.18).

Functional and pragmatic knowledge are important components of the communicative competence since they seek to integrate socio-cultural, communicative, and discursive aspects

into the process of language acquisition. Similarly, they highlight the need to use grammar knowledge properly during real communicative situations. The functional aspects of the axis of the pedagogical proposal in the classroom are linked to the use of expressions in the students' context, such as the school context, giving personal information, and also in the context of greetings and presentations in English. Activities were aligned with those proposed by the Communicative Language Teaching, then the majority of times, students were asked to complete information-gap activities about personal information, also, they practiced short dialogues in English or performed role plays.

Interaction management

With the concept of communicative competence and approaches such as the Communicative Language Teaching that emphasizes the importance of communication when learning and teaching the language, it is now necessary to take a look at the dynamic aspects of interaction in the classroom.

Besides grammatical knowledge and functional knowledge, interaction situations are those that allow students to act and apply the knowledge learned around certain contents. Soler and Jordà (2007) established that interactional competence has three sub-components. The first is called actional competence, which is the knowledge of how to perform a language in interaction situations (information exchanges, expression of opinions and feelings, etc). The second is the conversational competence, it refers to the knowledge of social norms and conventions to participate assertively in different conversations; and finally, non-verbal/paralinguistic competence which refers to kinesics and proxemics.

Interaction is a very important factor when learning a language since it allows the application of linguistic factors to communicative contexts and stimulates the oral production of

learners. On this, Soler and Jordà (2007) said: “It is important, for example, for second and foreign language learners to understand how to manage social introductions, how to complain, how to apologize, and so forth, if they are going to achieve communicative competence in the target language” (p.49). Also, about the advantages of interactions in class, Long’s (1996) cited by VanPatten, B., & Williams (2014) said: “Interactions facilitate acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways” (p. 186).

Interaction management is important for this pedagogical proposal because the main objective is to develop learner’s initial EFL communicative competence through the CLT approach that allows them to learn language structures and functions to interact and communicate successfully. In this sense, class interactions become a way of observing how these processes of developing communicative competence are carried out. In the pedagogical proposal, interaction management takes place through role-playing activities, task-completion activities, dialogues, games, information gap activities, and class surveys.

As it was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the specific approach or method used to achieve the research objectives was the Communicative Language Teaching. Thus, the unit of analysis, as well as the categories previously explained, were addressed in the classroom through the techniques and strategies suggested by this approach, whose main objective is precisely the communicative competence: “The key concern for proponents of CLT is the development of ‘communicative competence’” (Field, 2000, p.22).

In this connection and according to Spada (2007): “A balance needs to be struck within CLT, one that allows for the integration of more direct instruction of language (including grammatical, lexical, and socio-pragmatic features) with communicative skills” (p.271). This

implies that one of the purposes of this methodology is to make the students learn linguistic resources to use them appropriately in communicative contexts. Consequently, grammar and communication are other terms that will now be discussed, since both complement each other within the CLT perspective and therefore, within the pedagogical proposal of the current research.

Grammar and communication

There are multiple approaches used in language teaching. One of them is the communication-based approach, which emphasized the importance of using the language in appropriate contexts. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) stated that the recognition of the language not only as the learning of rules or structures allowed the emergence of new theories that considered important the communicative context. Theories as the communicative approach highlight the role of the communicative context when learning a language. Widdowson (1978, as cited in Nassaji and Fotos, 2011) affirmed: "The communicative approach defined the aim of language learning as acquiring communicative ability, that is, the ability to use and interpret meaning in real-life communication" (p.6). It means not only structures knowledge is necessary but also how they are used in real or meaningful situations.

Considering this communicative vision of language, other opinions have defended the study of grammatical forms for the proper development of communicative competence. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) explained that: "In keeping with current developments and the recognition of the importance of grammar instruction, in recent years, many of the proposals in language teaching advocate an inclusion of a focus on linguistic forms in classroom instruction" (p.11). Because of this, methods that articulate both the teaching of grammar and its use in communicative situations have emerged to give a new perspective on grammar teaching in the

second language classroom. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) said: “Many authors have developed frameworks for grammar teaching that emphasize the incorporation of a focus on grammar into meaningful communication” (p.12). Similarly, Doughty & Williams; Fotos & Ellis (how it was cited in Hinkel & Fotos, 2001) argued that: “Considerable research followed on methods for integrating grammar instruction with communicative language learning in such a way that learners are able to recognize the properties of target structures in context and develop accuracy in their use” (p.5). These statements demonstrate the need for a language approach that does not prioritize linguistic knowledge over communicative knowledge but, takes both aspects into account to improve the quality of foreign language learning.

In line with the above, some authors have proposed communicative models for grammar teaching. For example, Larsen-Freeman (2001, as cited in Nassaji & Fotos, 2011), proposed a communicative model with three dimensions: form/structure, which refers to the formal knowledge of the language; meaning/semantics, which refers to the knowledge about the meaning of the language; and, use/pragmatics, which refers to the knowledge about how to use the language. There it is possible to see a complete proposal on the teaching of language, which integrates both linguistic and communicative dimensions.

For the purposes of this study, some of the components that are part of the communicative competence model presented at the beginning of this chapter were synthesized, so that the knowledge that will be taken to the classroom are mainly grammatical knowledge and functional knowledge both integrated through a communicative vision of the language. Having said that, the axis of the CLT methodology will finally be presented, which are communicative activities.

Communicative activities

Communicative Language Teaching has motivated the use of language by the implementation of communicative activities and oral communicative contexts in the classroom. According to Mitchell (1994, as cited in Field, 2000): "Classroom activities should maximize opportunities for learners to use the target language for meaningful purposes, with their attention on the messages they are creating and the tasks they are completing" (p.24). Hence, using the language as a tool to communicate with others is one of the CLT important aims. This role of communication in classroom activities changed the paradigm that other methodologies had on language teaching. Authors as Johnstone (1988, as cited in Field, 2000) said CLT methodology was different from traditional methodologies: "In terms of an increase in the amount of foreign language used for everyday classroom and personal purposes; the introduction of functions (asking for, offering, refusing, etc) and general notions (food, hobbies, time, travel, etc.)" (p.24). This demonstrates that according to the methodology of the CLT approach it is necessary that during classes the teacher provides scenarios in which students can use the language to meet particular communication needs or perform language functions.

Consequently, Richards in its "Communicative language teaching today" (2005), showed some examples of classroom activities that reflect the principles of the CLT methodology. The author mentioned activities such as information-gap activities, jigsaw activities, or information-gathering activities, including surveys, interviews, and searches in which students are allowed to practice and use the language to get information, complete an activity or collect information from their classmates. The application of these activities and techniques also required new roles for students and teachers in the classroom. In this regard, Richards claims that: "Learners now had to participate in classroom activities that were based on a cooperative rather than

individualistic approach to learning (...) And teachers now had to assume the role of facilitator and monitor" (Richards, 2005, p. 5).

The design and implementation of the communicative activities will follow the parameters established by Jack Richards in its book. Thus, classroom activities will involve two types of practice: Meaningful and communicative. These kinds of practice are further divided into two groups of activities: Pre-communicative activities and communicative activities; during pre-communicative activities, language control is provided, but students will have to respond and make choices according to the context of the practice; in communicative activities, students will have more opportunities to use the language in more real communicative contexts by providing information and exchanging ideas.

This is relevant to the population context as the main needs of students include their low production in English so these activities and this approach help facilitate communication and interaction processes between students to develop their initial EFL communicative competence. Similarly, activities are articulated with the proposed categories since they include the structural, functional, and interaction knowledge already mentioned. Structural knowledge is located in the pre-communicative activities while functional and interaction activities are part of the communicative activities.

Finally, in chapter four that describes the pedagogical proposal of the current study, the reader will find more details about the application of this methodology and the development of communicative activities in the classroom.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology by identifying the research paradigm, and the type of research. It also includes specific instruments for data collection and the categories of data analysis.

Research paradigm

The methodological approach that provides a framework for the current research process is the qualitative research. Different authors and researches have proposed a number of definitions of this research. According to Denzin y Lincoln (2008) “Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices, that make the world visible. These practices transform the world” (p. 4). One of the purposes of the current study is precisely to get involved in a particular scholar setting and try to build an interpretation of certain phenomena using materials such as field notes, interviews, conversations, and others.

Other definitions of authors like Heigham y Croker (2009) propose that qualitative research, as part of the constructivist paradigm, assumes that each individual constructs the meaning of their reality through direct interaction with it. This reinforces the previous definition by Denzin and Lincoln since it highlights the participation of the researcher in the reality of his environment to study and also to evidence the variety of interpretations that can be constructed depending on the circumstances. In the current study, the researcher needed to immerse oneself in the reality of the students, to know their context as well as their learning process to make interpretations of that and identify problems or needs that could be addressed in the most relevant way.

Bearing in mind the above, it can be said that qualitative research emphasis social experiences and the interactions with the participants. This means that “qualitative researchers are focused on how participants experience and interact with a phenomenon at a given point in time and in a particular context, and the multiple meanings it has for them” (Heigham y Croker, 2009, p.7). Therefore, the researcher of the current study was interested in the everyday school world of the fifth-grade students in the Liceo Femenino to understand how they were learning English, to make interpretations from those experiences and, finally to conclude on the topic of interest which is, the Communicative Language Teaching influence over fifth-graders EFL initial communicative competence.

Type of research

In the field of qualitative research approaches, action research is the most appropriate to address the current study. Action research has been a common mode of investigation in educational research, especially in the teaching practice; it represents a viable approach for social science studies and in the present, action research is one of the few research approaches with principles of participation and reflection (L. Berg, 2001).

Regarding the history of the action research method, L. Berg (2001) states that action research originated in different fields as physiology, sociology, and educational practices. The method has been defined by Heigham y Croker (2009) as: “A systematic and self-reflective approach to collecting and analyzing information to help teachers explore issues that they face in their classroom in order to change or improve their current practice” (pp. 14-15). In other words, action research allows designing effective solutions to address any dilemma or concern in the teaching practice. In the current case, while doing observation at school, it was possible to find a concern in the English class related to the low performance of students in English. Then, action

research enabled the researcher to find a plan or strategy to confront that problem, which was the implementation of a Communicative Language Teaching proposal.

In addition, and according to L. berg (2001) action research process involves four stages: Identifying the research question(s), gathering the information to answer the question(s), analyzing and interpreting the information, and sharing the results with the participants. This whole process is done in the current study for three semesters. In the first semester, from April until May 2019, it was possible to identify a problem through systematic observations and thus propose a research question along with a plan to address the problem. In the second semester, during September and October 2019, the plan and the intervention designed with the students was applied to observe the effects of the techniques implemented in English learning. Finally, in the last phase of the research, developed in February and March 2020, the analysis of data collected during the previous implementation phase was carried out and the final results were presented.

Concerning the role of the researcher, as this is an action research, the researcher has an active role. In support of this L. Berg (2001) states that: “The researcher stands with and alongside the community or group under study, not outside as an objective observer or external consultant” (p.185). Thus, for the effects of the current study, the researcher kept an active role with students while identifying a problem, developing a plan of action, and assessing how the plan influenced students' learning.

Participants

The current study took place at the Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. The group with which the research was started was 404, of the afternoon shift. The total number of participants were 39 girls of varying ages, between 8 and 12 years old. Then, for the second stage of the

research, the students began a new school year, therefore they changed to 504 grade and the total number of participants was 36. According to this, there were some changes in the population of the study including the number of students which decreased, since nine students who attended the previous year were no longer present in the new school year and six new students also came to the course. The level of language among the new students was varied and some of them showed better performances than the others. Taking all of the above into account the data for the analysis was collected from the students who were in fourth grade during 2019 and the students of fifth grade in 2020.

Unit of analysis and categories

Unit of analysis	Categories	Indicators
Communicative competence	Grammar knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student is able to use grammar structures worked during class activities. - The student applies the learned grammar knowledge for the construction of new messages.
	Functional knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student uses the language as an instrument of communication. - The student relates linguistic forms with their functions in a communicative situation.
	Interaction management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student is able to exchange messages or ideas. - The student participates actively in the development of communicative activities.

Data collection procedures

To promote the credibility of the results obtained through the data collection instruments, the data triangulation method was used. Fusch P., Fusch G., and Ness (2018) say triangulation is: “An important concept regarding data analysis for an empirical study. To be sure, multiple external analysis methods related to the same events and process validity can be enhanced by triangulation” (p.21). In this way, triangulation is a technique that allows validating data by comparing two or more instruments of data collection related to specific language components or categories.

Since the triangulation process requires the comparison between multiple viewpoints considering the participants involved in the research as well as the different types of data or data collections instruments; in the current study, the triangulation process was carried out taking into account the information collected through the instruments provided for each of the categories included in the research.

Therefore, from the categories: Grammar knowledge, functional knowledge, and interaction management, the different sources of information as field notes, artifacts, and recordings were displayed and it is through this contrast that the validity of the information can be determined and the presentation of the research results was generated. Each of the mentioned categories corresponds to a stage of the pedagogical proposal; the first stage was called *Awareness-raising*, and it was developed in September and October 2019; the specific data collection instruments used for the first phase of implementation were five field notes, three artifacts, and a video recording. The second stage was called *Unconscious competence* and was developed from February to March 2020; the instruments used were four field notes, one artifact, and one recording; and finally, the third stage was called *Conscious competence*, nevertheless,

this stage could not be developed due to the emergency of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

Data collection Instruments

Field notes

Field notes are important because they provide a written record of the experiences that are carried out with the participants of the research. According to Barz & Cooley (2008), “A field note represents the mediation between experience and representation” (p. 47). They are also an instrument that allows the reflection and analysis of the participants' attitudes, activities, the role of the teacher, and other important factors to take into account for the development of the research. Regarding this Barz & Cooley (2008) pointed out: “Field notes are products of observation and reflection, participation and interpretation, voices and sounds in the field” (p.48). For the case of the current research, field notes were the instruments that allowed the researcher to register what was developed during classes and therefore, reflect on important aspects such as the teacher's role, the classroom management, the relevance of the activities, the students' performance and the contributions of the sessions to the categories of analysis.

Artifacts

Artifacts are students' classwork such as worksheets, portfolios, test scores, among others; they are useful to review students' performance in the classroom and to observe how they manage to apply the knowledge seen in activities. “Artifacts capture aspects of authentic practice, yet by being removed from the immediacy of the classroom itself they can be examined and reflected upon in a more deliberate and considered manner” (Goldsmith and Seago, 2011,

p.170). The artifacts implemented during the intervention were mainly worksheets or posters that provided tangible evidence of students' performance and achievements during class activities.

Recordings

Recordings are useful to have a register of conversations or other aspects of interest in the investigation, in this case, oral interactions of the students. "Recording data objectively and comprehensibly, including the use of audiotapes, videotapes, and different levels of detail in the transcription of data" (Seale and Silverman, 1997, p.379). Recordings were important instruments since for the objectives of the current research, students were asked to practice dialogues and short conversations in the classroom, thus, the recordings were essential to analyze students' performance during oral interactions and communicative activities.

Ethical considerations

Finally, in qualitative research, the researcher must obey specific ethical guidelines for appropriate interaction with participants in the study. These considerations include: not publishing the collected material, anonymity of students, not recording or taking photographs of students without the appropriate permission and informed consent completed by the parents to authorize the project with the students.

Besides, due to the health emergency of the Coronavirus, it was important to make some modifications to the research, such as the adequacy of the third objective, which corresponds to the third category of the study, and that could not be applied. Similarly, an additional pedagogical proposal was prepared, this will be presented in the appendices, and it is intended to be a pedagogical resource so that teachers or student teachers might develop it with the students in the school in the future.

Chapter IV: Pedagogical proposal

This chapter presents the pedagogical proposal considering aspects as the pedagogical approach, vision of language, vision of learning, pedagogical intervention, lesson plan format, and possible impacts of the implementation.

Pedagogical approach

Communicative Language Teaching was the pedagogical approach selected for the current study. According to Littlewood & William (1981) "One of the most characteristics features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view" (p.1). This, taking into account that some studies have demonstrated that the structural view on its own is not enough to explain the language since it leaves communication aside.

Even though the approach began in the 20th century, CLT has evolved and has continued to have relevance in the present. Concerning this, Richards (2005) states that "communicative language teaching has continued to evolve as our understanding of the processes of second language learning has developed" (p.22). Similarly, the author points out the importance and influence of CLT for current methodologies: "Since the advent of CLT, teachers, and materials writers have sought to find ways of developing classroom activities that reflect the principles of a communicative methodology" (Richards, 2005 p.14). That means CLT principles and activities still relevant for language teaching today.

As language should be studied from both structural and communicative factors, in class activities, linguistic forms must be directly related to communicative functions (Littlewood & William, 1981). Also, it is important to analyze other criteria's when teaching under the communicative language learning approach. One is the level of linguistic complexity. Regarding

this Littlewood & William (1981) say: "This must clearly be adjusted to suit learning stage within the course" (p.8).

Another criterion is the relationship between linguistic form and response, which is related to the meaning rather than in the structure: "This is crucial in enabling the teacher to adjust the linguistic demands made on learners and gradually extend the linguistic competence on which their communicative ability will ultimately depend" (Littlewood & William., 1981, p.9).

Vision of language

According to the aim of this study, language was understood from the functional perspective; this approach allows to study language structures alongside the language function or communicative situation. Tomasello (2017) says: "One of the central goals of cognitive and functional linguistics was to reconfigure linguistic theory to provide accounts that incorporated simultaneously both language structure and language function" (p.9). In other words, the communicative function is essential to study and understand the language, which should be seen as a social instrument. Dobzhansky (how it was cited in Tomasello, 2017) believes that: "Nothing in linguistics makes sense except in the light of communication" (p.10). This last statement reinforces the previous idea about language as a social instrument and the importance of communicative purposes in linguistics.

Cognitive linguistics or functional linguistics emerged as new dimensions of language after Chomsky's postulates. Some linguists believed Chomsky's theory of language was not enough to explain some facts about language acquisition and production. In response to this and according to Tomasello (2017): "Linguists of the Prague School emphasized the importance of process of communication in discourse and language" (p.15). In this connection, cognitive and

functionalist linguists agree: “Language is not an autonomous “mental organ”, but rather that it is a complex mosaic of cognitive and social-communicative activities closely integrated with the rest of human psychology” (Tomasello, 2017, p.15).

Those cognitive and functional approaches to linguistic competence also oppose the vision of syntax far removed from semantics; from their perspective: “All language structures are symbolic instruments that serve to convey meaning” (Tomasello, 2017, p.18). This also helps to understand that structures are not aside from their meaning but they have a communicative purpose or function and they should not act independently. However, those functions depend on conventions, to explain this and according to Tomasello not all structures of language are related to specific functions, it depends also on the different communicative conventions of speakers.

Vision of learning

Learning was analyzed in this research from the social constructivist perspective. The Socio-constructivism had a prominent exponent who was Lev Vygotsky: “His studies emphasized the important role played by semiotic mediation in social interaction within social, cultural, physical, and historical contexts” (Mahn, 2012). In this way, social interactions play a significant role in learning processes. Lantolf & Appel (1994) state: “Since thinking is the function of the cerebral organ, the explanation of the process is not to be found in the internal structure of the organ, but in the interaction between thinking bodies” (p.4).

Consequently, social activities and interactions are crucial for the acquisition of knowledge and it is through them that learning is developed. “Although biological factors constitute the necessary prerequisite for elementary process to emerge, sociocultural factors, in contrast, constitute the necessary condition for the elementary, natural processes to develop”

(Lantolf & Appel, 1994, p.5). It means that biological factors need at the same time sociocultural factors to acquire and develop natural processes.

Another argument that supports the importance of social factors in human mental activity is given by Vygotsky (1981, as cited in Lantolf and Appel, 1994) who: “conceived the sociocultural setting as the primary, and determining, factor in the development of higher forms of human mental activity” (p.6). Following with Vygotsky, the author opposed the theories that analyzed the mental development of children through a series of evolutionary stages, instead, Vygotsky proposed what is known as the Zone of Proximal Development, to highlight the importance of social interactions in learning. Lantolf & Appel (1994) named two important features of this process: “It originates outside the individual, and it is directed by language as the most powerful of semiotic systems” (p.9). In this connection: “The sociocultural environment presents the child with a variety of tasks and demands and engages the child primarily through the use of language” (Lantolf and Appel, 1994, p. 9). It is when the child starts interacting with others that he is able to develop his potential.

Considering the theoretical references that have been described in this chapter and the theoretical framework, it is necessary to explain how the CLT methodology was applied in the classroom. Taking into account the pedagogical axis of the CLT approach, students were involved in different types of communicative activities such as information-gap activities, short dialogues, and surveys in which they needed to ask questions to the others or collect and exchange information to complete the activity. Following the distinction made by Richards (2005) pre communicative and communicative activities, were implemented in the first and second stages of the intervention. For the accomplishment of these activities, students had to use structural knowledge to perform a variety of language functions and communicate messages,

therefore, at the beginning of the classes, the teacher presented the topic and then, she built up the communicative scenario for students practice and language production.

Pedagogical intervention

The following intervention proposal was divided into three different stages according to some research and learning objectives. The first stage was called *Awareness-raising*. At this early stage, students did not have much knowledge about structures in English and could not express many ideas. There was no awareness of the different elements that must be put together to communicate an idea. It is for those reasons that activities in this stage sought to bring learners closer to grammatical forms by visual and listening input. This stage was carried out from September until October 2019, which meant a total of eight classes.

The learning objectives were focused on the exploration of grammatical knowledge and sentence formation in certain contexts according to specific grammatical topics in this case descriptions. Besides, structural or pre-communicative activities were implemented, attending to the sequence of CLT activities proposed by Littlewood. In accordance to this, students were also expected to practice the use of sentences for the creation of messages.

The specific contents that were studied in this first part and that are linked to the curriculum of the educational institution revolved around physical descriptions *I have, she has*; personality descriptions *I am, she is*; school places and expressions such as *there is and there are*. The central activities consisted of grammar games, controlled dialogues, and worksheets development to practice the use of sentence patterns.

The second stage was called *Unconscious competence*. At this stage, the students had already learned some things but they still had difficulties expressing themselves orally; therefore, communicative activities were implemented in which students tried to speak simple sentences or short language chunks according to certain communicative situations. This stage could be carried out from February until March 2020, which meant a total of 4 classes.

The learning objectives were focused on the exploration of functional knowledge by using the language for different purposes such as greeting other people, introducing themselves, giving and asking for personal information. Students were also expected to identify correct uses of language according to the context and to talk about everyday topics in a slow way.

The specific contents studied in this second part were common phrases for greetings, introductions, and farewells as well as questions and answers phrases to provide personal information in English, including nationality, city, neighborhood, and date of birth. The central communicative activities were information-gap activities, information-gathering, and short dialogues.

It is worth clarifying that the third stage of the pedagogical proposal could not be carried out since at the beginning of March classes were stopped because of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) that forced the government and the Ministry of National Education to establish a series of protocols and restrictions to stop the spread of this virus. To respond to this challenge, an additional proposal was generated, thus, in the forthcoming semesters, teachers or student teachers might work on this intervention proposal with the students. This proposal is a didactic unit divided into three different modules that aim to reinforce what is proposed for category three of *Interaction management* and that the reader may review thoroughly in the appendices (See appendix C).

This last stage was called *Conscious competence*; it allows students to interact by using a set of phrases or sentences with others. Activities focus on assessing the students' ability to exchange messages or ideas through dialogue activities and simulations.

The learning objectives are focused on participation in activities that encourage self-expression in English. Students are expected to understand how to manage social interactions combining grammatical knowledge and the use of language.

The specific contents, set in the didactic unit, are likes and preferences, daily and habitual activities, and free-time activities or hobbies. The central activities are surveys, short oral presentations, role-plays, and dialogues.

Chapter V: Data analysis

In this chapter, it will be found the analysis of the data collected for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the study and answering the research question *What is the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching over fourth-graders initial EFL communicative competence at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño?* The phases of the research were carried out over three semesters. The first phase, developed during April and May 2019; was an observation process to identify the research problem and also to design an intervention plan with the students to respond to the observed difficulties. This intervention plan was designed in accordance with the three categories of analysis of the research, therefore, each category corresponded to a different stage of the pedagogical intervention. The second phase of the research was carried out during September and October 2019. In this phase, the application of the pedagogical proposal started, specifically, the first stage of the proposal called *Awareness-raising*. The next two stages of the proposal were planned to be applied in the third and last phase of the research, nevertheless, due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) this phase could be carried out normally from February 18th to March 10th, 2020; and only part of the second stage of the proposal could be developed.

The data collection process was carried out through the implementation of different instruments such as field notes, students' artifacts, video recordings of students' dialogues, and pictures. For the first category of grammatical knowledge the data collection process was carried out until October 24th, 2019, and for the second category of functional knowledge, data was collected until March 10th. These instruments allowed the assessment of the activities proposed by the Communicative Language Teaching methodology for the development of the students' initial communicative competence, which led to the development of the triangulation process and the analysis of categories and indicators. This triangulation process was carried out by selecting three

data collection instruments for each category, to contrast the information obtained by each instrument and evaluate the achievement of the objectives and indicators.

Furthermore, for data collection, a table was designed with the unit of analysis, categories, indicators, and specific instruments to be used with the corresponding dates. Therefore, the unit of analysis of the research was the communicative competence, this was analyzed through different categories which were three: Grammatical knowledge, functional knowledge, and interaction management. Each category had some indicators to assess whether the learning objectives were met; in the case of the first category, indicators sought to demonstrate students' ability to use the grammar structures worked during class activities and students' ability to apply the learned grammar knowledge for the construction of new messages. For the second category, indicators were focused on the use of language as a communication tool and also, the use of language functions in communicative situations.

Finally, for the last category, indicators emphasized the importance of exchanging messages and ideas and participating in the development of communicative activities. Consequently, the current analysis is structured according to the different categories of analysis and their indicators, which allow measuring the progress of the students; each of the statements written in the presentation of the indicators is supported with excerpts taken from the field notes or descriptions of the students' performances during class activities.

It is important to mention at this point that since the implementation of the pedagogical proposal and the application of collection instruments were interrupted at the beginning of March due to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), only four classes of the second phase of *Unconscious competence* were applied and for this reason, some modifications were made to the indicators for this second category which will be presented in the analysis. Furthermore, the

application of the third and last phase of the pedagogical proposal corresponding to the third category of analysis *Interaction management* could not be implemented.

Consequently, the current analysis report will be presented with the data that was possible to collect and, additionally, a continuity proposal is generated so that in the forthcoming semesters, teachers or student teachers might work on this intervention proposal with the students.

Due to all the above, it can be said that the analysis and collection process carried out between September 2019 and March 2020 had several modifications during its implementation; this because it was not possible to apply the stages of the pedagogical intervention as planned and therefore, there were some changes in terms of concepts and implementation. In the case of the second category that could be completed only until March 2020, some adjustments were made regarding the data collection instruments, thus, the analysis will be presented with the instruments that were implemented in the school, similarly, some elements that were included in the indicators of the second category were modified according to the contents and activities that were developed with the students. In the case of the last phase, this was replaced by an additional proposal to the pedagogical chapter, as it was mentioned before, for future teachers of the institution.

Despite the difficulties that arose and that did not allow to carry out the process normally, the research also showed to have significant contributions to the study group, since at the beginning of the process it was evident that the students did not possess some basic knowledge to express themselves or to communicate in English, thus, the proposal allowed them to learn and practice the language in a different way, learning not only vocabulary or expressions in isolation but also putting their uses into practice in environments that required communication and students' interaction.

Communicative competence

Grammatical knowledge

This first category of analysis corresponds to the first stage of the pedagogical intervention called *Awareness-raising*. The time for the development of this stage was two months from September 2020, which meant a total of eight classes of one hour per week. It was expected that during this time the course could begin a process of exploration and awareness of the linguistic and grammatical knowledge of the language for their use in different scenarios. The recognition of structures and chunks of language was carried out through visual and listening input, and the development of the pre-communicative or structural activities proposed by the CLT.

The data collection instruments that enable the analysis of this category are five field notes, three artifacts, and a video of the students performing a dialogue; these instruments allowed giving examples of the results of the indicators to contrast the theoretical expectations with what the students managed to do in the classroom.

- The student is able to use grammar structures worked during class activities

For this indicator analysis, data was collected from three field notes and two artifacts which demonstrated that students were able to approach linguistic elements studied during classes. In the field notes, it was possible to notice that students could recognize different structures and expressions according to specific contexts: "The activity allowed students to remember vocabulary already seen and also, from the drawings that were being built, they could recognize differences to establish descriptions and to recognize structures such as "she/he - has - body part". (Field note 2, 2019)

In addition, it was also possible to observe how the students were able to identify key patterns for the formation of sentences and phrases in English, which helped them to express themselves and communicate an idea.

In this way, among the difficulties are precisely the students' doubts when producing a message, because for them it is still difficult to recognize the formation of sentences or chunks of language to express an idea. However, with the activity they did in class, the students demonstrated that they had learned some of the rules used in English, for example, regarding word placements, most of the girls managed to identify the appropriate order of the adjectives as "red eyes", "purple body", "black tail". (Field note 4, 2019)

In this awareness phase, the students also managed to identify grammatical concepts from their use and context through grammar games. There, the students demonstrated to have syntactic and semantic knowledge for sentence formation as well as an awareness of the meaning of words and elements they had to put together:

Students had to organize in pairs or groups (maximum of 3), each group received material with sentences containing nonsense words and in a separate envelope, they had words with which they could substitute the nonsense words in the sentences. The objective of the activity was that students could practice forms and structures by guessing their meaning from context. In this way, from the context of the sentence, they could guess whether they could replace nonsense words with adjectives, verbs, or places. The girls could place the elements in the right places. Known words and studied structures were easier to locate. During the activity, students were also able to answer questions about the meaning of the sentences. As an example, when the teacher asked "who is Jake?" the students answered, "Jake is a young boy". (Field note 5, 2019)

In contrast, artifacts collected during this stage also showed learners' progress in the recognition and assimilation of grammatical structures at the moment of writing and expressing themselves in English. For instance, in an artifact developed on September 19th students were asked to describe their personalities using some given adjectives as *honest, intelligent, shy, friendly, and others*. Then, they needed to select a classmate, write a list of adjectives that describe the physical appearance and personality of that student and later, interact with the others

asking questions to find someone similar to the friend they chose. In this activity the students could write sentences to describe themselves as *I am obedient, I am patient, I am popular* and they could also use the appropriate structures to give descriptions about their classmates as *she is shy, she is generous* or *she is optimistic* (See appendix D).

In the second artifact developed on September 26th, students were asked to perform language structures and vocabulary about descriptions in the designing of a poster about an imaginary monster (See appendix E). Students worked in groups, they drew the character and wrote physical and personality descriptions using *it has* or *it is*. The students succeeded in differentiating both verbs *to have* and *to be*. They could also recognize the different elements of a sentence such as the subject, verb, and adjectives to describe people. Some of their descriptions were: *He has green paws, he has red eyes, he has horns, he is fat, he is tall, he has black eyes, he is medium height, she is short*. In the end, students had the opportunity to show their work to the class and make their presentation of their posters.

To conclude, students demonstrated to have advanced in the achievements proposed by the current indicator since they could use grammatical knowledge and structures in class activities to communicate messages, for instance, giving personal descriptions in terms of personality and physical appearance as well as describing other people. This indicates progress in the knowledge of students about structures and sentences in English to communicate which was important in this first stage of *Awareness-raising*.

- The student applies the learned grammar rules for the construction of new messages

The data to analyze this indicator came from two field notes, an artifact and a video recording of students performing a dialogue. To begin with, in the artifact applied on October 24th (See appendix F), students were given in papers names of places in their school and they had

to write sentences about that place using the structures *there is* and *there are*. The students had previously studied vocabulary of places in the school as Chapel, computer room, cafeteria, English lab... and also through a video of a cartoon series they had studied the forms *there is* and *there are* to describe different objects of a place. During the exercise it was possible to notice that students were able to use the mentioned structures to describe places in their school, they wrote sentences such as *there are books, there is one library, there is one board, there are children, there is a ball, there are toys, there are trees, there is coffe, there are tichers*. Therefore, some of them had spelling mistakes but managed to apply the structures in order to describe a place.

This exercise was followed by a video recording of a short dialogue (See appendix G) in which students interacted with each other to identify the places they had described; this activity allowed to link the grammatical knowledge they had been studied with a controlled communicative activity. During the dialogue, students could greet and introduce themselves in English with *Hello, my name is* and they could differentiate *there is* for singular and *there are* for plural nouns. Similarly, they were able to identify better the use of both structures to express the existence of things and they could clarify some mistakes while speaking. In the end, the students guessed the specific place that the other person was describing and they finished the dialogue by saying goodbye to their partner.

Concerning the field notes (See appendix H), they also proved students' ability to apply the grammar knowledge learned for the construction of new messages. In a field note taken on September 26th, it was possible to notice that students' performance in class activities demonstrated they were able to use linguistic knowledge to describe themselves, other people, or to talk about places that are part of their school routine: "The activity also proved to be

appropriate as it offered students the possibility of applying their formal or grammatical knowledge of the language in the construction of new messages for a particular purpose of making descriptions in English". (Field note 4, 2019)

Likewise, it can be pointed out that students were able to make associations to use the vocabulary and grammatical knowledge studied in activities, to exchange ideas or messages in English:

By analyzing the performance of the students in relation to the objectives and categories of analysis, it is possible to say that in this session students managed to assimilate vocabulary about their environment, to facilitate the construction of subsequent messages and structures that allow the description of places in the school. (Field note 4, 2019)

Bearing in mind the above, it can be stated that students could apply the learned grammatical knowledge for the construction of new messages and thus, reached the learning objectives of the current indicator since they were able to understand structures such as *there is* and *there are*, singular or plural nouns as well as vocabulary related to their school; to make descriptions about their particular school context and environment. They also could apply the previous knowledge in controlled situations of interaction with their classmates, which proved students' ability for the recognition of certain language structures to communicate messages.

Having presented the above information on each of the proposed indicators for the first category of analysis it is necessary, now, to make a general assessment of the theoretical expectations and the evidence that was collected during the implementation stage of the pedagogical intervention. To begin with, following the objectives set out in the pedagogical proposal, the learning goals for this first phase of intervention were based on the awareness and development of linguistic and grammatical knowledge through the methodology and the pre-communicative activities proposed by the Communicative Language Teaching.

Considering the communicative competence model, it was expected that at this initial stage, students could progress in the area of organizational knowledge related to the formal structures of the language so that they could know about the construction of sentences or phrases for the formulation of messages:

Language knowledge consists of two main components: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge which complement each other in achieving communicatively effective language use. Organizational knowledge is related to formal language structures so it is composed by grammatical and textual knowledge. (Bachman and Palmar, 1996, p. 92).

Consequently, some verbal forms aligned with particular situations and contexts were selected, and therefore, the students could recognize the functioning of the language to produce and communicate meaningful messages.

Following the collected data, the students demonstrated significant advances in different aspects. One of them was the girls' ability to recognize the elements which are part of the context of the English sentences or phrases. This was significant progress since at the beginning the students could only recognize isolated words and did not know how to combine different elements such as a subject, a verb, or an adjective to form a sentence. In this sense, as a result of aids such as videos, listening practice, and CLT pre-communicative activities students began to recognize expressions and whole sentences that allowed them to formulate well-formed messages in English.

Another accomplished goal in the *Awareness-raising* phase has to do with the production of simple and logically linked sentences to talk about people around the students. This is precisely one of the learning descriptors proposed by the Basic Standards on Competence of foreign

language: English for fourth graders, that is why this knowledge was established as one of the objectives to work with the students: “I talk about myself, my classmates and our daily activities with simple sentences, logically linked and sometimes memorized” (Basic Standards of Competence in Foreign Languages: English, 2006, p.21). As a result, the students were able to describe themselves or their classmates through simple and short sentences, taking into account physical and personality characteristics.

The development of pre-communicative activities was also an important scenario within the pedagogical proposal as well as the interaction and participation of the students during these activities in the classroom since being able to use the language for meaningful communication is one of the objectives of the Communicative Language Teaching. To meet this objective an information-gathering activity and a short dialogue were carried out in this first stage. One factor that made it difficult for the implementation of communicative activities was time, therefore, it was not possible to accomplish them with all the students. Likewise, the students needed a controlled practice to participate in these contexts of interaction; so during the dialogue, the girls were able to speak and exchange descriptions about their school that they had previously prepared. However, it was the students' first attempt to use the language communicatively and interactively, consequently, in subsequent stages, they could have less controlled opportunities for production.

From the previous analysis, the decisions that were taken for the implementation of the next stage were to increase the number of communicative activities focus on the functional knowledge of communicative competence. In the first phase of *Awareness-raising*, pre-communicative or structural activities were implemented, in consequence for the second phase of *Unconscious competence* students could have more opportunities to develop functional communicative activities.

Functional knowledge

During the first implementation phase, students could have an early approach to linguistic and grammatical forms aligned with particular situations and contexts. This means, students started a process of awareness towards English structures to create new messages, and as a result, they showed progress when using simple structures to describe their school or to describe themselves and other people around them considering their physical appearance or personality. In this stage, students also had the first attempts of exploring the language communicatively participating in structural and quasi-communicative activities, this implied that students could continue to the second stage in which functional communication activities were included with a view to advance in the process of the initial development of the students' communicative competence. Consequently, the corresponding data analysis for the second category of this research will be shown below.

The second category of analysis corresponds to the second stage of the pedagogical intervention called *Unconscious competence*. The expected time for the development of this stage was of 8 classes from February to April 2020 nevertheless, as it was explained at the beginning of this chapter, classes were interrupted because of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), therefore, the application of this second category of analysis could be carried out normally until March 10th which meant a total of four classes.

It was planned that in this phase students could go deep in some language functions to meet immediate communication needs in certain communicative situations and activities such as information-gap activities, short dialogues, and surveys. In this connection, students were expected to identify correct uses of language according to the context and some sociolinguistic features of interaction, however, the elements presented in the communication exchanges that

took place during the four classes of this phase were reduced, therefore, the indicators for this category were also modified in some aspects according to the data that was collected.

The data collection instruments designed for this category were field notes, recordings of students performing different communicative activities, and two surveys; since the surveys could not be applied, these were exchanged for two artifacts, the first on greetings and introductions and the second on an information-gathering activity. All these instruments allowed the researcher to collect information on students' achievements and performances concerning the indicators that will be described below.

- The student uses the language as an instrument of communication

The data to analyze this indicator came from two field notes and a video recording about students' performance during an information-gap activity; these instruments were applied between February 18, 2020, and March 10th, 2020. To start in the field notes (See appendix I), students could use the language resources studied in class to obtain information from their classmates in an information-gathering activity:

The teacher divided the group into two, A and B. The teacher had copied two sets of paper sheets, one set for A students and the other set for B students. Group A received some identification cards that contained information with their names, country of origin, and nationality. For example, "Anna", "Korea", "Korean", each student assumed a different ID. On the other hand, the group B received sheets that contained a table divided into three parts, "name", "country" and "nationality", therefore, students had to ask this information from their classmates to complete their tables. Once they had finished, the roles were exchanged, the first group was in charge of asking the questions and the second group was in charge of answering them. (Field note 2, 2020)

Students' performance during the previous activity demonstrated that they managed to practice the contents of the class in a conversational setting to exchange information asking and answering questions, that is to say, students could use the vocabulary and lexical content of the

class in a communicative situation in which they needed to ask simple questions to the others about personal information related to the place of origin and nationality:

Through this information-gap activity, students managed to ask questions to try to find out the information they need about their classmates' names, country of origin and nationality, consequently students could ask questions such as "what's your name?", "where are you from?", "what's your nationality?" while the others answered according to the information they had been provided in different cards, for example, "My name is Vanessa, I am from Peru and I am Peruvian". This gave to the students the opportunity to use the language to communicate and to fill a common necessity which is to exchange information. (Field note 2, 2020)

It was also noticed, that students were motivated to communicate with their classmates and developing the exercise, even though some of them had difficulties understanding the others or expressing themselves they were encouraged to ask for clarification when it was necessary or to repeat when someone did not understand something:

It was observed that girls felt motivated to exchange information with their classmates and to communicate in the language. At first, when some girls did not understand the questions clearly, their classmates wanted to explain the meaning of the question in Spanish. For this reason, it was established as a general rule not to speak Spanish and the students were advised to always clarify their information in English, so when some of them found it difficult to understand they asked for clarification by saying "can you repeat, please" and their partner repeated the question more slowly. Similarly, the teacher was aware of how the students were developing the exercise by moving constantly around the classroom and checking that the girls were doing the activity correctly, always communicating in English. (Field note 2, 2020).

Similarly, another field note taken on March 10th, 2020, also showed that students were able to use the language as an instrument for communication when conducting a survey (See appendix J) in which learners had to interview each other to find information about their birthday dates:

In the third part of the class, it was developed an information-gathering activity in which students conducted a survey to find out the dates of her classmates' birthdays. For this activity, students were given some worksheets with a chart divided into two columns, one to write the name of at least 8 classmates and the other column to write the date of their birthdays. Through this activity, it was expected that students could practice the topic of the class, involving communication, and functional knowledge. The activity proved to be

relevant since students managed to use the language to find information about their classmates. (Field note 4, 2020)

Accordingly, students were able to ask and answer questions using simple phrases such as *When is your birthday?* and *My birthday is on...* relating as well the studied vocabulary about days of the week and months of the year to complete the given survey. Thus, students could develop language and communicative competence asking and giving information in the context of an information-gathering activity:

In doing the activity the students demonstrated they were able to use the vocabulary of the class related to days of the week and months of the year, and also, they could put into practice question and answer structures such as “when is your birthday?” and “My birthday is on...” (...) All the students successfully collected the information they needed about their classmates using the language and the contents studied in the class to communicate and exchange the required information. (Field note 4, 2020)

Students' performance and interaction along this exercise were also recorded on a video, while they were filling the survey and once they had finished. It was observed how students were able to greet each other first, saying *hello*, then, they started asking for their names saying *What is your name?* and answered with *My name is Daniela* or *I am Luisa* also, they could ask for their birthday dates using the appropriate question phrase: *When is your birthday?* and answering *My birthday is in June* then, they asked back the same question, taking turns listening and talking. Despite some of them had pronunciation errors, students demonstrated being able to formulate simple correct questions and answers to communicate and collect information from their classmates.

To conclude, students demonstrated to have advanced in the achievements proposed by the current indicator since they could use language resources to communicate during class activities; for instance, to get the information they did not possess or to find out information about the others, students had to formulate simple questions and answers phrases considering the

studied vocabulary and linguistic forms and participating in activities proposed by the Communicative Language Teaching method.

- The student relates linguistic forms with their functions in a communicative situation

In this indicator analysis, the data came from two field notes, an artifact and a recording about students' performance in a dialogue. First, based on the field notes, it can be stated that students could relate linguistic forms with their functions in communicative situations, as in the case of common phrases for greetings, introductions and saying goodbye in English:

Based on the video, the students carried out the second exercise of the class, which consisted of a "gap-fill worksheet" to be completed individually. The worksheet had the dialogue presented in the video with some blank spaces that students had to complete with the studied expressions. The girls' performance was satisfactory, thanks to the context of the dialogue they were able to properly identify and complete the expressions used in English to greet and introduce themselves in a group. (Field note 1, 2020)

Students' performance in this gap-fill worksheet (See appendix K) showed they managed to identify and determine the appropriate expressions in English to greet other people and introduce themselves, this means that students could complete the dialogue in the worksheet using simple phrases such as *Good morning, how are you, nice to meet you, nice to meet you too, I am fine, thank you, my name is*. Thus, students proved to be able to understand the meaning of common phrases for greetings and introducing themselves in English as well as some ways to respond to them by listening to how they are used in the context of a conversation at the school and filling a dialogue.

In addition, students were also allowed to recognize formal and informal phrases for greetings and introductions, in this way, they understood some expressions are used according to the context of communication. This was made through a flashcards activity in which students participated by saying greetings forms appropriate for formal contexts such as *good morning,*

good afternoon, how are you, my name is, and also expressions for less formal contexts such as *hi, hey* or *what's up*.

The students could also learn, the distinction between formal and informal language for greeting someone and making introductions. The language covered was *hello, hi, hey, good morning, good afternoon, how are you, nice to meet you, I'm good, goodbye* after all the expressions were covered, students were shown different communication scenarios in flashcards and they had to choose the appropriate expressions according to the contexts. For example, one of the flashcards had the image of a group of friends, the teacher asked *What people do we see in the image?* the girls answered *a group of friends*, then the teacher asked *what greetings could we use if we are talking to our friends?* the students answered *Hi* or *hey*. Then, the teacher showed the image of a teacher and asked the same question the girls identified it was an authority figure, therefore, they should use other kinds of greetings such as *good morning* or *good afternoon*. (Field note 1, 2020)

Furthermore, in another class activity, the students were given a dialogue with some guiding questions they had to complete to ask about where people live and study, after that, they needed to practice the dialogue with a classmate. Students managed to complete questions such as *where do you live? do you live in a house or an apartment?* and *where do you study?:*

The teacher explained the students the instructions for the activity, then, she gave them some paper sheets with the dialogue they needed to complete and practice in pairs. It was a brief dialogue of two friends talking about the places where they lived and the name of the school where they studied. The dialogue started with a greeting, then one friend asked the other *where do you live?* and she answered with the name of the city and neighborhood: *I live in Bogota, in Antonio Naranjo neighborhood*, then she asked the same question back, and also, she asked if her friend lived in a house or an apartment. The last question was about where the two friends studied and finally, they said goodbye. This was the situation and the function was to give and to ask information about the city, the neighborhood they live, also, the place, if it was whether a house or an apartment and finally ask and mention the school where they study. (Field note 3, 2020)

Afterward, students were asked to practice the dialogue once again but making substitutions and thus talking about the place and neighborhoods where they lived as well as mentioning the name of the school where they studied:

Once the students had finished practicing the dialogue, they were encouraged to use their substitutions in the dialogue according to their personal information. Therefore, students

had to practice the dialogue again but changing the answers about where they lived and where they studied (...) The teacher's role during the activity was to encourage students in establishing a good communicative exchange, maintaining students' motivation, and monitoring students' performance. The dialogue activity proved to be relevant since it involved students in the practice of the language with a functional and communicative purpose. (Field note 3, 2020)

In the audio recording, it was evident that students tried their best to give and ask for information when they had to practice and reconstruct a brief dialogue with their classmates about where they lived and studied; even though some students had pronunciation difficulties they were able to role-play the dialogue using the appropriate question and answer phrases. In the dialogue, the students started by greeting each other and asking how they were feeling; after, they asked: *Where do you live?* and they answered mentioning the city, neighborhood, and place: *I live in Bogotá, in San José neighborhood* and *I live in a house* or *I live in an apartment*. Another question they asked was: *Where do you study?* and they answered *I study at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño*. With the activity, students could also be aware of different communicative functions such as greet, introduce yourself, ask where someone lives and where someone studies.

Taking into account all of the above, the students demonstrated they could recognize the function or communicative purpose of certain language forms, for instance, when greeting someone and making introductions, as well as, using the appropriate question and answer phrases to give and ask for personal information.

At this point, it is important to make a comparison between the theoretical expectations and the evidence that was collected during the implementation of this second stage of the pedagogical proposal. To start with, it was planned that during this stage the students could have more opportunities to communicate and express themselves through communicative activities,

using simple phrases. Furthermore, the learning objectives were focused on the exploration of functional knowledge and language uses according to specific situations to express a communicative intent and exchange messages. Students were also expected to identify correct uses of language according to the context and to communicate about certain topics in a slow way.

Additionally, as the current research sought to develop student's initial communicative competence considering some areas of language knowledge, the specific component which was analyzed during this second stage was the functional knowledge; consequently, students had to be able of recognizing different functions that can be carried out in the foreign language to meet communicative needs such as greeting, introducing oneself, giving and asking for personal information following some of the communicative activities proposed by the Communicative Language Teaching method.

Based on the collected data, the group of students demonstrated to have progressed in different aspects. To begin with, one important achievement was related to students' communicative competence. It was evident that during this second stage students improved their knowledge to communicate effectively with their classmates in situations that involved listening and responding to messages. In that sense, students could learn and use vocabulary and phrases studied in class as an instrument to communicate with others in communicative activities such as class surveys, information-gathering, or dialogues, and even though they may have had errors in their pronunciation they managed to hold simple conversations using appropriate language resources.

Another important step achieved in this stage was the ability to perform language functions effectively since this is an essential factor in the development of communicative

competence. Therefore, besides the linguistic contents studied in this stage, functional contents such as greeting, introducing oneself in a group, and giving or asking for personal information were also included. As a result, students were able to identify the appropriate expressions in English to greet other people and introduce themselves as well as recognize formal and informal phrases for greetings and introductions; also, they could make questions and formulate answers about where they came from, where they lived, where they studied and when they were born. This type of performance is mentioned in the Basic Standards on Competence of foreign language: English for fourth graders, thus, concerning the conversation skills, some of the descriptors say students must be able of answer personal questions such as name, age, nationality and address, with support for repetitions when necessary; additionally, they can greet according to time of day and to the age and rank of the other person; and lastly, they should be able of having a simple conversation in English with a partner when they develop a classroom activity (Basic Standards on Competence of foreign language: English, 2006).

From the previous analysis, it can be said that most of the learning goals for the second stage were fulfilled, nevertheless, the pedagogical proposal could not be fully implemented and as a consequence, some contents and data collection instruments could not be applied as expected. In any case, it is hoped that the complementary proposal presented in the appendices would contribute to continuing working in the development of students' communicative competence in the future.

Chapter VI: Conclusions

At the beginning of this research project, some objectives were set to be met during the development and implementation of the study. The general objective was to establish the influence of the Communicative Language Teaching approach over fifth-graders initial EFL communicative competence at Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño. In order to achieve this goal, some specific objectives were formulated, which in turn described the expectations for each stage of the research. Thus, a review of the fulfillment and scope of these specific objectives is made hereunder; as well as a review of the learning outcomes, the pedagogical intervention, and the research experience.

Based on the above, the first specific objective was to describe the benefits and opportunities of a Communicative Language Teaching proposal along the 5th grade students' EFL learning process. During the pedagogical intervention and data analysis, it was observed that CLT had a variety of benefits for students including advances in their initial communicative competence, the use of language for spoken exchanges as well as students' motivation and collaboration during class activities.

Throughout the CLT approach, students could learn not only language forms but also its use while communicating and interacting with others, as a result, they had the opportunity to practice and interact in the target language naturally and communicatively in the classroom. This also enhanced students' motivation during activities that involved their participation and interaction with their classmates which proved to be positive for their learning process and interest in the English language.

Therefore, students' abilities to use the language for meaningful purposes was a relevant consequence of the application of the CLT proposal, since students demonstrated they could

listen and answer messages to their classmates, hold simple conversations and use a set of structures or phrases to communicate at the moment of developing communicative activities in the classroom.

Another specific objective had to do with the effect of communicative activities on the development of students' grammatical and functional knowledge. The implementation of communicative activities in the classroom was meaningful in students' appropriation of formal language structures and language functions since they demonstrated to have more knowledge in the construction of simple well-formed messages to express ideas and likewise, they were able to use the language for different purposes such as introducing themselves and giving or asking questions about their personal information.

In this connection, students improved their ability to formulate simple and logically linked sentences when making descriptions about people or when talking about their school. Also, in different communicative settings, students demonstrated they were able to use the appropriate structures to communicate other types of messages such as questions or answers about personal information.

Communicative activities were therefore an important resource to provide students with communication needs in which they could make use of linguistic elements and perform important language functions in the context of the students such as making descriptions, asking questions or collecting information.

The last specific objective is related to the intervention proposal focused on the last category of *Interaction management*, which can be developed with the students when the situation at school returns to normal. Hence, having covered a process of awareness and

appropriation of language resources and their functions in communicative settings, students will continue exploring the language and performing in particular interaction situations in which they must demonstrate their ability to express themselves in English and manage social interactions. This, following the criteria of the Basic Standards on competence of foreign language and the Basic Learning Rights (in Spanish DBA) for primary school.

This didactic proposal has a total of ten lesson plans and is divided into three modules. Also, the including topics are daily routines, students' favorite activities and hobbies, each module has a set of objectives, contents and the corresponding communicative interaction activity to be carried out to achieve the purposes of the third category of analysis. Hence, the proposed contents and activities within the unit provide continuity to what the students accomplished during the first two stages of the intervention.

To finish, it can be said that the implementation of the pedagogical intervention based on the CLT methodology and communicative activities helped students to increase their language knowledge to formulate and exchange simple messages or ideas in a given context. This was good progress in students' learning process since at the beginning, they could not comprehend or respond to basic questions in English. Therefore, the conducted research was a meaningful and enriching process that allowed the researcher to analyze and reflect on the processes that take place in the classroom as well as on the effectiveness of communicative approaches in English language teaching.

General recommendations

With the research findings and the previous conclusions in mind, it is now important to present some investigative, disciplinary, and teaching recommendations for all the actors involved in the pedagogical process that was carried out during the development and implementation of the conducted research.

To begin with, it is suggested to the future teachers to reflect on the importance of communication in teaching a language since it is through communicative exchanges that students have the opportunity to formulate, understand and interchange meaningful messages in a given context. Communicative practice and interaction between students in the classroom are essential in order to help students to achieve a good performance in the target language and encourage natural language production.

Based on the above, the researcher strongly recommends the implementation of communicative approaches such as the Communicative Language Teaching to build up communication and interaction strategies among students in the EFL classroom and guide them to practice the language socially. Even though the research faced limitations such as the limited time at school, it was evident the positive impact that the CLT approach had on students' understanding and self-expression in the English language. Furthermore, it allows students to learn both language resources and their use to be able to communicate with others which is an important goal to promote the learning of the language. Because of this, it is relevant to suggest this methodology in the EFL classroom.

In addition, the school should continue encouraging the development of students' communicative competence, to promote the learning of different resources or knowledge of the language that allows students to foster their communication skills through messages exchanges

and participation in interaction situations. It is also suggested to continue with the implementation of communicative activities as a way to motivate students towards English learning, also, to build up their confidence when communicating in English, and finally, to engage students' interest in classes.

To conclude, in the field of research, it would be important to keep exploring the impact of the CLT approach and the communicative activities it proposes, in the development of students' communicative competence, since it is an approach that addresses the needs of students and offers them opportunities to participate and interact in situations that require the use of language as a communication tool. Likewise, it proposes didactic strategies and activities in the classroom that promote the motivation and collaboration of the students, which has positive effects on their learning and their interpersonal skills. Thus, further research is recommended to determine communicative approaches relevance in EFLT.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Filled survey

9. ¿Te gusta venir al colegio?

Sí No

¿Por qué?

porque comparto tiempo con mis compañeros
y disfruto cosas nuevas

10. ¿Te llevas bien con tus compañeras de clase?

Sí No

Appendix B: Diagnostic test

Lee la historia y enumera las imágenes de acuerdo a la secuencia de los eventos

THE LIFE OF DAVID

- 1 David lives in a big city.

David is with his brother and his parents at home.

- 2 David's brother reads a book about the circus.
- 3 His mother is in the kitchen. She makes pancakes.
- 4 His father is in the living room. He cleans the window.
- 5 David is in the garden. He waters the plants.



3. Completa con tu información personal

What is your name?

How old are you?



What is your phone number?



Where are you from?



Where do you live?



Who your family members are?



What is your favorite free time activity?

4. Encierra la palabra correcta



in/on



in/on



under / in



in front of / behind



between / in front of



in front of / behind

6. A continuación, encontrarás palabras en desorden que debes organizar para formar la oración indicada



Escribe aquí la oración en orden



Appendix C: Didactic unit

Didactic unit

As mentioned at the end of chapter four, the didactic proposal that responds to what was planned for the third stage and category of analysis of the current research will be presented below. Furthermore, some indications will also be explained in the next paragraphs in order to understand the designing of the lesson plans that are part of the teaching proposal.

To begin with, it is important to clarify the extent to which it was possible to apply what was indicated in the chapter of the pedagogical proposal. In this chapter, the intervention was divided into three different stages according to each of the categories of analysis. The first stage called “Awareness-raising”, was developed in the last two months of 2019 and the second stage “Unconscious competence” could be developed from February to the beginning of March 2020. Consequently, the stage that remained to be developed was the final one called “Conscious competence”. This stage, corresponded to the final category of analysis focused on interaction management, and the aim at this point was to assess students’ interaction in English while using a set of phrases and sentences with others.

Based on the above, the didactic unit is designed in order to reinforce what had been proposed for the third stage of the implementation and likewise, to provide a resource to the school and the student teachers in the English area, thus, they can implement in their practice with their students, the activities and methodology that are recommended in the unit.

The didactic unit is addressed to fifth-graders since this was the level of the research population, and in its design, the Basic Standards on competence of foreign language, the Basic Learning Rights (in Spanish DBA), and the learning curriculum proposed by The Ministry of National Education have been taken into account. Therefore, the contents, learning objectives, activities, and some of the materials described in the lesson plans are related to what is indicated in the mentioned documents for the teaching and learning of English in primary school.

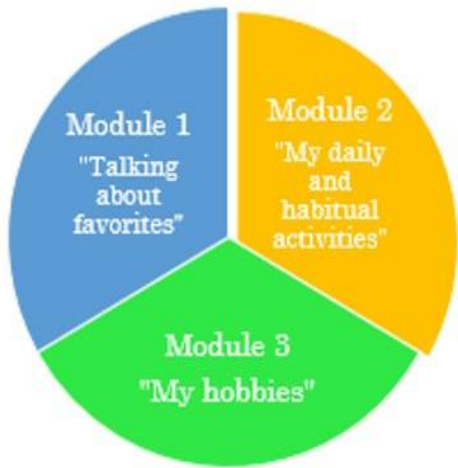
Regarding its structure, the proposal contains 10 lesson plans in total and is divided into three different modules. The first module is called “Talking about favorites”; the second, “My daily and habitual activities”; and the final “My hobbies”. The fixed duration of each module is of three class sessions and in each one the contents to be developed are indicated, these contents are related to vocabulary, expressions, grammar, and the activities of communicative interaction to be carried out. Considering the length of the institution’s English classes, each class has three main activities, the first is a Warm-up activity, the second part is when the topic is presented and finally, classes end up with an activity to practice the topic. The last class of the module, is intended for an evaluation where students will be able to demonstrate what they learned during the application of the didactic unit. Lastly, this didactic unit is expected to be a useful tool and resource for teachers or student teachers who want to include it in their classes and teaching practice and is also expected that this proposal can contribute to the advance and development of students’ communicative competence in English.



DIDACTIC UNIT
"Let's get to know each other!"



Sequence





Module 1

“Talking about favorites”



Contents

Time: 3 sessions

Vocabulary

- Types of music: Electronic, pop, vallenato
- School subjects: Dance, English, art
- Games: Chess, domino, lottery

Expressions

- Do you like...?
- What is your favorite...?
- I like, I don't like

Grammar

- Simple present
- Simple WH-questions
- Do, don't

Communicative interaction

- Survey in English
- Simple conversation in which students introduce a new person





1

Ask questions to the students about their favorite music, school subjects and games. Then, show some flashcards about vocabulary related to types of music, school subjects, and games, and ask questions such as:

- What do you see in the pictures?
- What is your favorite type of music?
- What is the music you don't like?
- What is your favorite subject?
- What is the subject you don't like?
- What is your favorite game?

2



Introduce the topic with a game based on likes and dislikes. Give students some worksheets with the three categories, music, subjects, games, and examples for each category. They will need to answer and draw a happy or a sad face next to each item to show that they like or dislike each one.

Type of music	School subjects	Games
Pop ☺	Spanish ☺	Chess ☺
Salsa ☺	Art ☺	Domino ☺
	Do you like...?	
	Yes, I do ☺	
	No, I don't ☹	

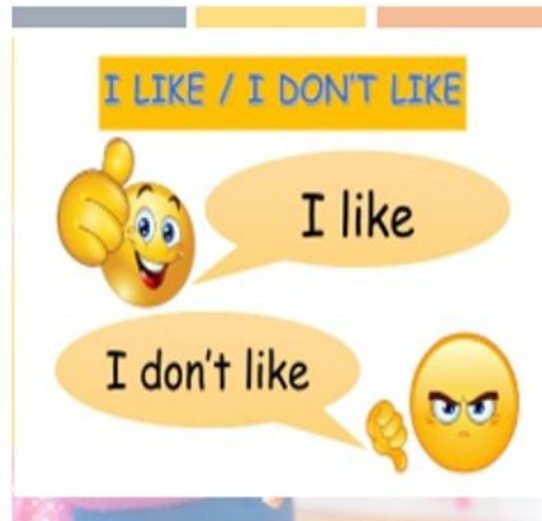
3

Design a simple survey in English, with the help of the teacher, to ask questions to classmates.

Example:

What type of music do you like? What type of music don't you like? What is your favorite subject? What is the subject you don't like?

Students can ask these questions in English to their classmates and write the answers in a simple table like the one presented below. Collect the data in the table to present the results in class.



Music you like	Music You don't like	Subjects you like	Subjects you don't like	Games you like



1

To start the class, show the following video about a short dialogue:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3XraQMEal4>

“What’s your favorite subject”



2

- After watching the video, the teacher can divide the group into two and students can role-play the dialogue.
- Then, ask the students to prepare a simple conversation in which they introduce a new person to their classmates. For this purpose, they can ask for personal information through vocabulary studied.



Example

- Hello
- Hi
- How are you?
- Fine, and you?
- I'm fine. Listen, this is my new friend Sara, she is a new student.
- Nice to meet you Sara
- Nice to meet you, too
- How old are you?
- Eight, and you?
- I'm nine
- Do you like to play domino?
- Yes, I do
- Ok! Let's play domino!
- Great!

3

Check students' work and tell them to present the dialogue for the next class.



1

Ask students to organize into their groups to present their dialogues.



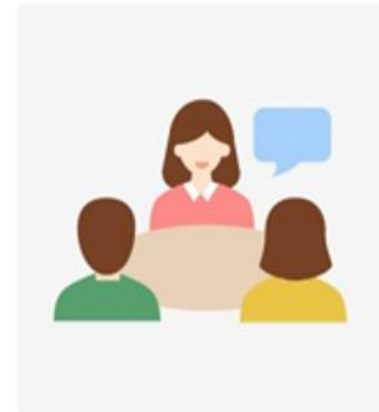
2

Listen to the students' dialogues and monitor the use of the studied vocabulary and language structures.



3

Give feedback to students about their performance.





Contents

Vocabulary

- Wake up, have a bath, have breakfast, brush my teeth, go to school, do the homework

Expressions

- Take a shower, brush teeth, have breakfast, get dressed
- In the morning, at night, before bedtime

Time: 3 sessions

Module 2

“My daily and habitual activities”



Grammar

- Simple present
- Information questions: What do you do in the morning? What time do you wake up?

Communicative interaction

- Survey in English about classmates daily routines and presentation about the obtained information



1

Bring images to the class that represent a routine of hygiene and care (getting up, bathing, changing, having breakfast, etc.). Ask the students to organize the activities in the order in which they normally develop them.

Brush my teeth	Help my mother at home	Do my homework	Watch TV
Play sports	Take a bus	Go to bed	Have lunch

2

Show the following videos to the students in order to reinforce vocabulary about personal routine:

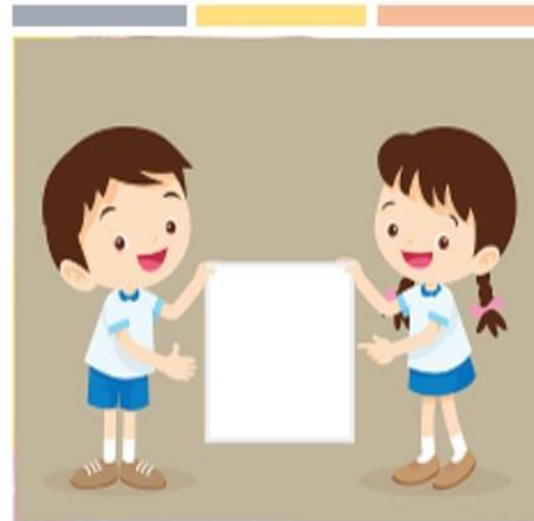
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evPfpSt-SXc&index=2&list=RDajg1ebnm3lo>

"The morning routines song"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlkJRzAwgd0>

"Morning routines song"

Through body language, students can mimic routine actions and so that the rest of the group can guess and say in English what they are doing, while using the vocabulary studied.



3

Ask students to create posters that represent important actions of their daily routines and guide them to present their own routine orally.





1

Show a video about a father who narrates his routine. In it students can review this topic and also the words that indicate sequence in a story.

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/short-stories/my-dad>



2

Ask students to design a small survey in English, with your help, that must be applied in class, to establish the routines developed by the group.

Students should use questions such as:

What is your daily routine?
 What time do you do _____?



Example

Activity	Name	Time
Wake up	Lola	At 6:00am
Have a bath	Juan	
Have breakfast		
Brush my teeth		
Go to school		

3

Check students' work and tell them they must report their surveys for the next class.



1

Ask students to present the information obtained in the previous class through a simple graph.



2

Listen to the students and monitor the use of the studied vocabulary and language structures.

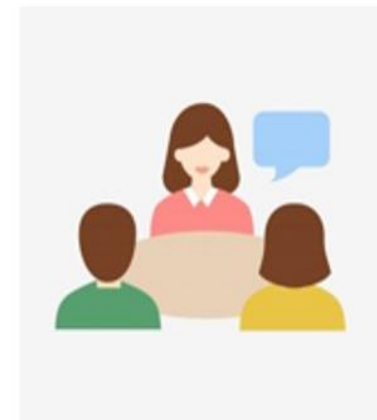
Students can describe the information obtained by saying:

5 children wake up at 6:00 a.m. 2 children brush their teeth at



3

Give feedback to students about their performance.





Module 3

“My hobbies”



Contents

Vocabulary

- Sports: Soccer, swim, basketball, volleyball, cycling
- Hobbies: Go to the park, play videogames, play with friends

Expressions

- Do you like...(to play, to walk, etc)
- I like, I don't like
- What are your hobbies?
- What do you do in your free time? I play soccer, I read a book, I watch TV

Time: 3 sessions



Grammar

- Simple present
- Simple WH-questions

Communicative interaction

- Classmate's descriptions
- Role-play



1

Trough flashcards present vocabulary in English of the most common sports in the context of the school. (soccer, basketball, baseball, volleyball, etc.).



2

Ask students to develop a worksheet activity, they need to ask and answer questions about which sports four people like and dislike to complete a chart.

Students can ask questions such as: Do you play football in your free time? Do you like to play basketball?



3

Ask students to describe their classmates' according to their answers.

Example:

This person likes to play basketball

This person doesn't like to play soccer





1

Play “Simon says” with the students to reinforce the learning of vocabulary, combining English pronunciation with body language.



2

Show a video about free time activities and hobbies.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z595z_DmpmQ

“Talking about hobbies and free time activities”

Bring some flashcards to support the vocabulary showed in the video.



3

Ask students to make two ID cards with information from different famous people. Students should write their names and likes or hobbies. In pairs, students exchange the information they wrote of one of the famous people they have prepared ID cards for. Students also ask questions about their likes and hobbies.





1

For the final class, students will be evaluated through a short oral presentation to their classmates.



2

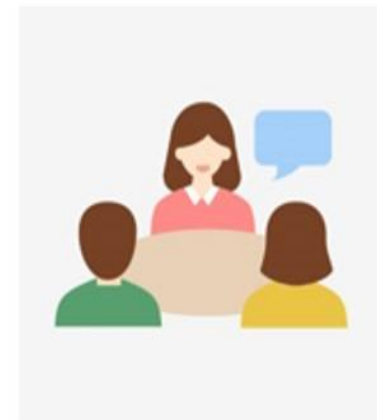
Ask students to organize a simple oral presentation in English, in which they explained what they have learned through this unit.

They can present information about their likes and preferences as well as their favorite activities and hobbies.



3

Support the students in their presentation and give the corresponding feedback about their performance.



Appendix D: Artifact 1 "Describing character"

i am Generous
 iam optimistic
 iam happy
 iam Friendly
 iam Intelligent

I am friedly
 I am Intelligent
 I am happy
 I am optimistic
 I am Generous

Attentive Intelligent Friendly Good tempered Happy

patient Polite Popular Obedient Optimistic

Honest Shy Disobedient Generous Impatient

I am intelligent
 I am honest
 I am happy
 I am optimistic
 I am patient

Personality

1. She is Intelligent
2. She is happy
3. she is obedient
4. She is generous

Personality

1. She is attentive
2. She is Friendly
3. she is Happy
4. she is Honest

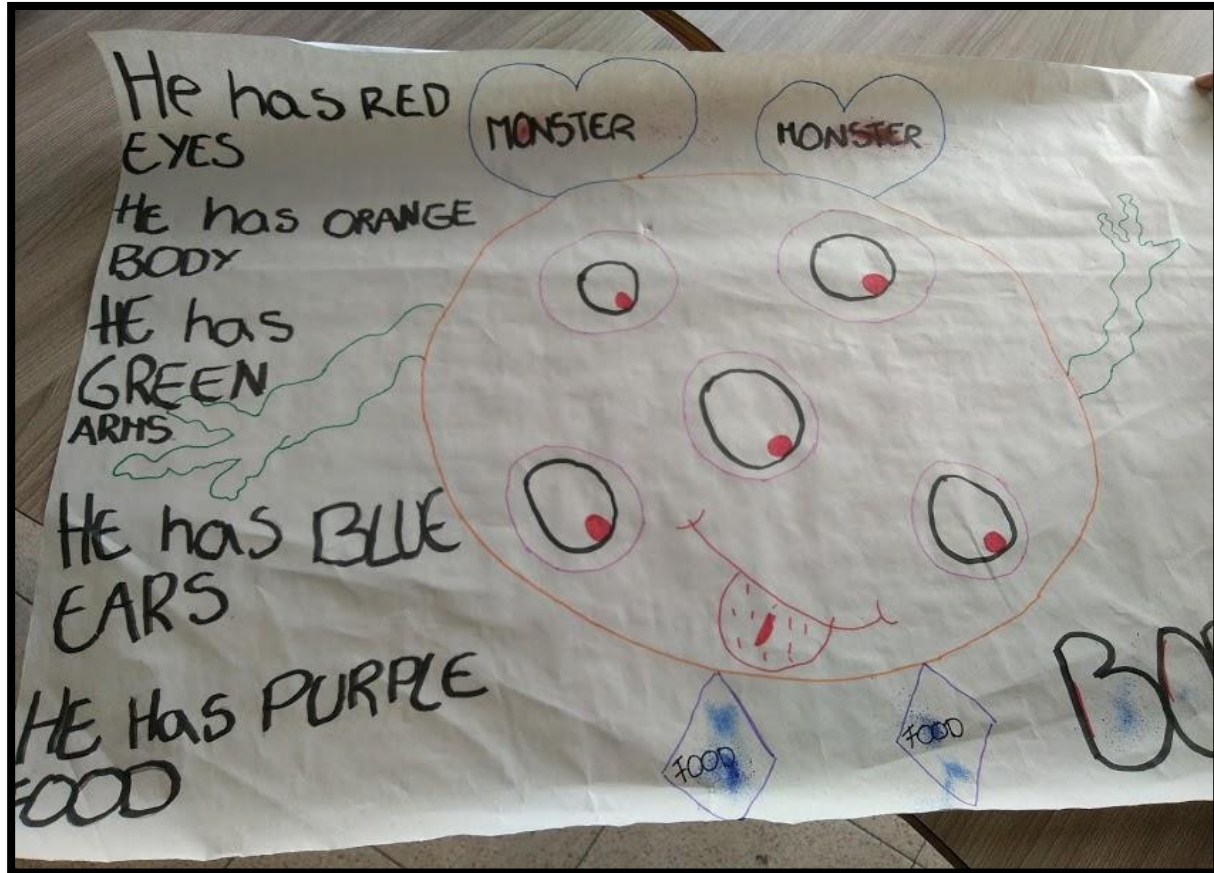
Personality

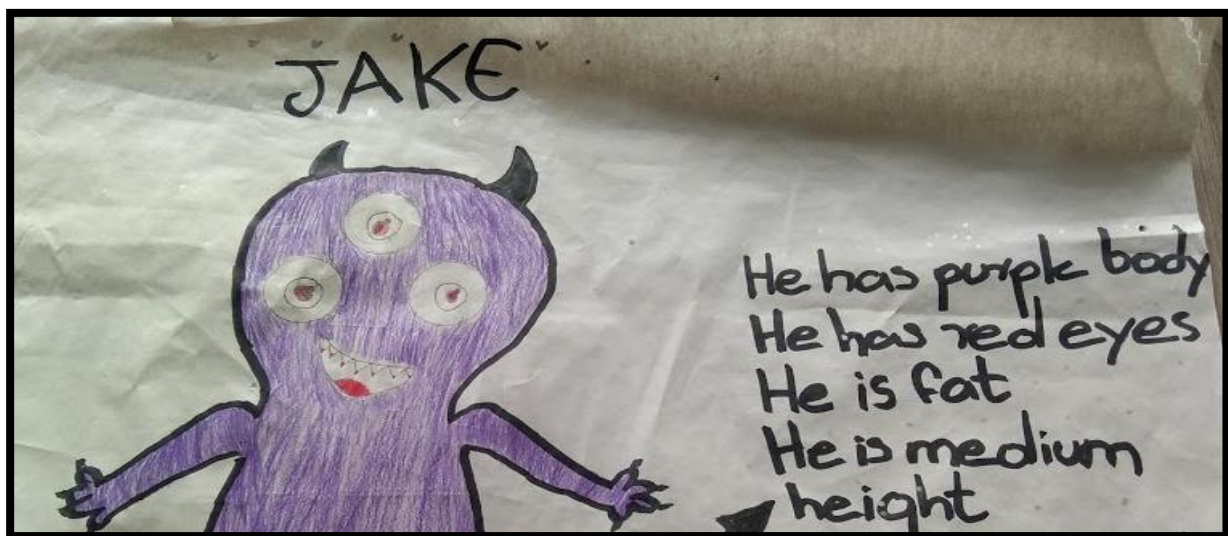
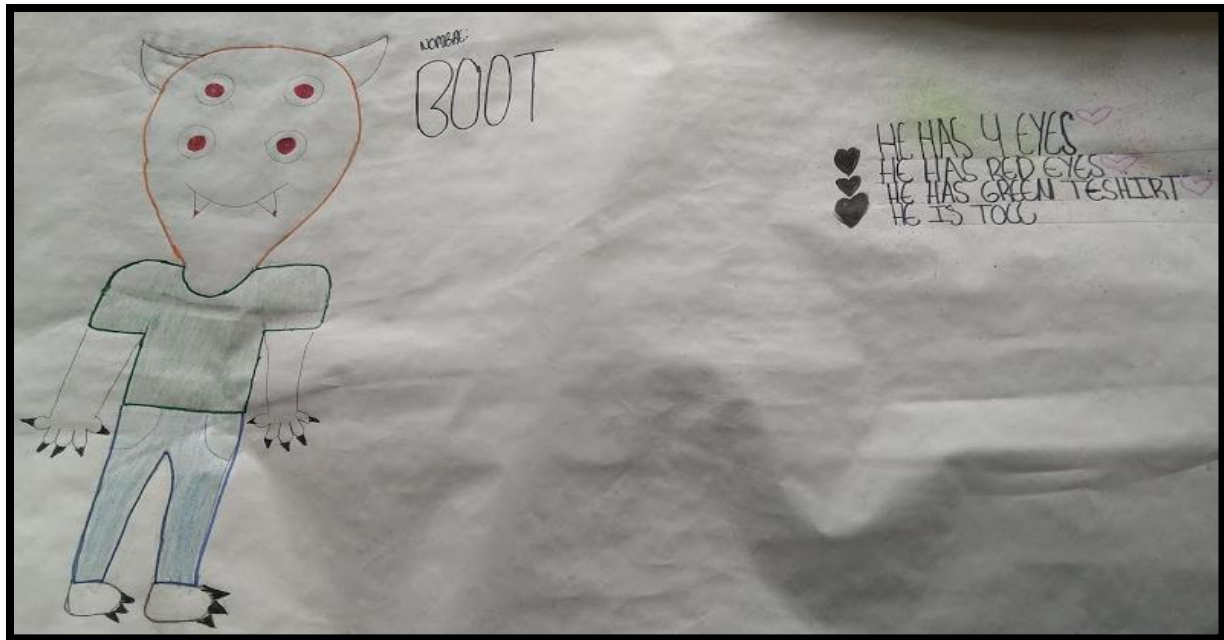
1. She is intelligent
2. she is shy
3. she is honest
4. she is obedient

Personality

1. ~~Impatient~~ She is impatient
2. ^{act} ~~Angry~~ She is angry
3. ^{scare} ~~Shy~~ She is shy
4. ~~Obedient~~ She is obedient

Appendix E: Artifact 2 "The monsters"






Appendix F: Artifact 3 “What am I thinking of?”

What Am I Thinking Of?


1) Choose a place in your school and write five sentences describing that place using the structures: There is and there are.

There is one library
There are two Boots
there are three tables
-there is one board
there three S is for students



2) Now, look for a classmate and try to guess what she described.

There is / There are Ximenna Gamba



1. How many boats are there?
 A. There is one boat
 B. There are two boats
 C. There are three boats ✓

2. How many cars are there?
 A. There are four cars ✓
 B. There is one car
 C. There are three cars

3. How many eggs are there?
There are six eggs ✓

4. How many cars are there?
There are four cars ✓

5. How many birds are there?
There are three birds ✓

6. In the library:
 A. There are dogs
 B. There is a ball
 C. There are books ✓

7. In the classroom:
There are two chairs ✓

8. In the computer's room
There are three computers ✓

9. In the playground
There is a ball ✓

Appendix G: Students' recordings link

<https://audiorecording3.blogspot.com/2020/07/blog-post.html>

Appendix H: Field note 7

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS FIELD NOTE – PEDAGOGIC AND INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICE	
Date: October 24th, 2019	
Pre-service teacher: Milena Bernal Aguirre	
Institution: Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño	Population: 404
1. Learning objectives of the class	
1. To use simple structures as <i>there is</i> and <i>there are</i> to make descriptions of the school environment 2. To apply simple vocabulary, expressions and familiar structures in the performance of different activities 3. To practice the construction of sentences to describe places in short dialogues	
2. Main activities of the class	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video <i>How many are there?</i> • Discussion about the video and worksheet • Presentation <i>Places of the school</i> • Activity <i>What am I thinking of?</i> 	
3. Students present in class and absent students	
Total number of students: 34 Absent students: Laura Valentina Camargo, Paula Valeria Garay, Ana Maria Herrera, Alisson Paola Olarte, Jaidy Yisela Torres.	

4. Class evaluation (teacher's role, group management, academic and coexistence performance of children, relevance of the activities, achievement of the proposed objectives)

Taking into account the objectives of the class, it was divided into two exercises. The first was to watch a video to introduce the topic *there is/there are* and based on the video develop some exercises of closed questions and open questions where students should build sentences with *there is/there are*. After the video, the teacher showed a presentation with images about places of the school to explain to the students the structures there is and there are taking into account the objects that were in those images. The thematic of the video allowed students to identify grammatical structures in a particular context and put it into practice. Subsequently, it was hoped to relate this content to the topic of the previous class about places in the school so that girls could talk about their school context and describe it, this was also put into practice by describing images that the teacher showed in her presentation.

After that, *what am I thinking of?* was developed. The objective of this activity was that students could describe a particular place in the school through five sentences in which they used the structures there is and there are. After that, students practiced those structures through a dialogue they developed in pairs and in which they had to find out the place of the school that another classmate had described. This activity allowed to link the grammatical knowledge that had been seen with a controlled communicative activity.

5. Tangible evidences about children's experiences

Regarding the video, students could identify the use of there is and there are to describe the things they could see in the video, the evidence of this were the worksheets of questions and sentences. Also, during the activity *What am I thinking of?* Students could write some sentences describing the places they were given; the pieces of evidence were the students' papers about their descriptions as well as a recording of the students while interacting to identify the place their classmates described.

6. Reflection on the role as teacher (questions and decisions regarding the professional future)

Some reflections are to have better management of the time in the classes and during the planning, to better consider the estimated time for each of the activities, as this may affect the achievement of them and the students' understanding of what they should do in the class. It was also possible to notice that the implementation of structural or pre-communicative activities proposed by the CLT could facilitate the students' recognition of structures and the appropriation of linguistic knowledge for the creation of messages, in this case, descriptions.

7. Reflection as researcher (Contributions of the session to achieve the specific objectives and the data for each one of the categories of analysis)

Analyzing the students' performance during the first activity. All the closed questions were answered correctly, in the open questions, a little more errors were observed especially in spelling, for example, some students answer "the are chairs", "the are board" instead of "there are chairs" and "there is a board"; "there 3 birds" instead of "there are three birds"; most of them had errors with adding "S" for plural statements, for example, "there are computer" or there are three bird" probably because for some of them it was difficult the difference between "there is" for singular and "there are" for plural. However other students answer all questions applying the rules correctly.

In the second activity, students' performance was also varied. Here the students randomly chose a place of the school and had to describe using the structures there is and there are, the objects that are in that place so that later their classmates could guess which place they described. In some cases, students had difficulties because they did not understand well the objective of the activity and they just wrote "there is classroom" or "there are classroom" instead of describe which objects are in classrooms. However, most of students did understand the activity, they wrote for example "there are chairs", "there are studnts", "there is coffe", "in my classroom there are notebook", "there is one computer", "there are three tables", "there is desk", "there are children", "there are tichers", "there is a ball", "there is l board". Therefore, some of them had spelling mistakes but managed to apply the structures in

order to describe a place. Perhaps in some cases, there were difficulties in identifying differences between there is and there are but they were able to recognize that either one or the other are used to express the existence of things.

Another objective was to implement these structures through a teacher-guided dialogue in which students interacted with each other to identify the places they had described. Also, through these exercise, it was expected to feedback students' errors and help students to better identify the uses of both structures.

Appendix I: Field note 9

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS FIELD NOTE – PEDAGOGIC AND INVESTIGATIVE PRACTICE		
Field note # 9	Date: February 25th, 2020	Class time 2:15
Pre-service teacher: Milena Bernal Aguirre		
Institution: Liceo Femenino Mercedes Nariño	Population: 504	
1. Learning objectives of the class		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To learn vocabulary related to different countries and nationalities - To talk about where people come from and their nationality - To practice the names of countries and nationalities in a conversational setting - To complete an information-gap activity about countries and nationalities 		
2. Main activities of the class		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To introduce and show countries and nationalities vocab through flashcards and two video songs - To complete an information-gap activity by asking and answering questions about where people come from and their nationality 		
3. Students present in class and absent students		
Total number of students: 36		
4. Class evaluation (teacher's role, group management, academic and coexistence performance of children, relevance of the activities, achievement of the proposed objectives)		
<p>In general terms, the class was developed as planned and the proposed objectives were achieved. As a warm-up activity, the teacher showed the students a world globe where she randomly pointed out different countries and asked the students the name of the country. After this, the teacher explained to the girls that in class they would study about countries and nationalities, so the teacher proceeded to show the students two different videos with vocabulary and songs. The first video was entitled <i>where are you from?</i> and it had different countries with their corresponding flags, the song presented the question <i>where are you from?</i> and different answers with the structure <i>I'm from Brazil</i> or <i>I'm from Canada</i>. In the second video, the students were able to listen to vocabulary about nationalities and then practice their pronunciation with a song.</p> <p>For the development of the activity, the teacher divided the group into two, A and B. The teacher had copied two sets of paper sheets, one set for A students and the other set for B students. Group A received some identification cards that contained information with their names, country of origin, and nationality. For example, "Anna", "Korea", "Korean", each student assumed a different ID. On the other hand, the group B received sheets that contained a sample of the dialogue they had to carry out with their classmates to find out their names and nationalities; and the sheet also contained a table divided into three parts, <i>name</i>, <i>country</i> and <i>nationality</i> so that the</p>		

students had to ask this information from their classmates to obtain the information and complete their tables. Once they had finished, the roles were exchanged, the first group was in charge of asking the questions and the second group was in charge of answering them. The role of the teacher and the management of the group was essential in the execution of the activity; the division of the group was done properly to not cause much disorder in the classroom. Similarly, the teacher was aware of how the students were developing the exercise by moving constantly around the classroom and checking that the girls were doing the activity correctly, always communicating in English.

During the activity, it was observed that girls felt motivated to exchange information with their classmates and to communicate in the language. At first, when some girls did not understand the questions clearly, their classmates wanted to explain the meaning of the question in Spanish. For this reason, it was established as a general rule not to speak Spanish and the students were advised to always clarify their information in English, so when some of them found it difficult to understand they asked for clarification and their partner repeated the question more slowly.

To end up the class, the teacher gathered together the students and asked them what countries and nationalities did they learn that class, students answered with the vocabulary of different countries and nationalities. After that, the teacher gave them some photocopies as a piece of homework for the next class.

It is possible to say that the objectives of the class were met since the proposed contents were studied and the planned activities were carried out. Thus, the students could learn vocabulary about countries and nationalities, also, language forms to talk about where people are from and they were also able to put this into practice in a communicative setting.

5. Tangible evidences about children's experiences

During the first part of the class students could identify some vocabulary and expressions to talk about where people come from and their nationality, then, students developed an information-gap activity in which they had to obtain information from the others to fill some paper sheets. In that sense, the pieces of evidence of the class were the information-gap sheets and recordings of students while performing the activity.

6. Reflection on the role as teacher (questions and decisions regarding the professional future)

During the completion of this class, I could reflect on the importance of the role of the teacher as a guide, advisor, and facilitator when conducting communicative processes in the classroom. I could also notice how the implementation of communicative activities can foster students' motivation when they are learning a second language since during the class the students were interested in establishing exchanges with classmates and expressed their satisfaction with the exercise.

7. Reflection as researcher (Contributions of the session to achieve the specific objectives and the data for each one of the categories of analysis)

By analyzing the performance of the students concerning the objectives and categories of analysis it is possible to say that on the one hand, in this session students could learn vocabulary related to different countries and nationalities in English, as well as language forms to ask and answer questions about where people are from. On the second hand, the students managed to practice the contents of the class in a conversational setting to exchange information asking and answering questions to their classmates. Therefore, students participated in an information-gap activity in which students communicated in order to obtain information. For that purpose, students had to bring to the activity the vocabulary studied about countries and nationalities and the language forms to make questions and formulate answers about where people come from.

Through this information-gap activity, students managed to ask questions to try to find out the information they need about their classmates' names, country of origin and nationality, consequently students could ask questions

such as “what’s your name?”, “where are you from?”, “what’s your nationality?” while the others answered according to the information they had been provided in different cards, for example, “My name is Vanessa, I am from Peru and I am Peruvian”. Then, students exchange roles so that all students could ask and answer questions. This exercise demonstrated that students could put into practice the vocabulary and lexical content studied in the class in a communicative situation in which they needed to ask simple questions to the others about personal information related to the place of origin and nationality. This gave to the students the opportunity to use the language to communicate and to fill a common necessity which is to exchange information.

Appendix J: Artifact 4 “My birthday survey”

Name	Month
Jordy	October / 5
Isabella	April / 22
Yusbeily	July / 12
Paula	February / 15
Juliana	May / 21
Kareen	August / 12
Graciela	December / 8
Ana Maria	June 9

Appendix K: Artifact 5 “Introducing myself”

Good Morning

Good Morning
everyone

How are you ?

Nice to meet you
My name is Kate

Nice to meet you

Sit down please