

Impact of Communicative Activities supported by Technological Resources on Listening  
and Speaking Processes in an EFL Classroom

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and Speaking Processes in an EFL Classroom

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### Resumen Analítico en Educación RAE

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<b>2. Descripción</b>	
<p>El presente estudio es un proyecto de investigación acción cualitativo en pequeña escala, que busca describir el impacto que las actividades comunicativas tienen en los procesos de escucha y habla de los estudiantes de séptimo grado, aprendices de inglés como lengua extranjera, en el Colegio Prado Veraniego. Como los problemas de escucha y habla fueron generalizados en los salones, este estudio los aborda al fomentar un ambiente comunicativo que permita a los estudiantes asumir un rol más activo en sus procesos de aprendizaje. Para identificar el impacto que las actividades comunicativas tuvieron en los procesos de escucha y habla, este proyecto implementó una intervención pedagógica basada en actividades de escucha y habla dentro de contextos comunicativos, realizadas con la ayuda de recursos tecnológicos. Con la implementación de estos enfoques pedagógicos, los estudiantes mejoraron en sus habilidades de comprensión auditiva y la producción oral en inglés como lengua extranjera, al asumir un rol más activo e interactivo en su proceso de aprendizaje.</p>	
<b>3. Fuentes</b>	
<p>En el presente trabajo se citan 34 fuentes bibliográficas. Aquí se presentan las diez fuentes más relevantes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Burns, A. (1999) Collaborative Action Research for English Language Teachers. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.</li> <li>2. Cheung, Y. (2010). The importance of teaching listening in the EFL classroom. Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). ERIC Number: ED512082. Retrieved from <a href="http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED512082.pdf">http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED512082.pdf</a>.</li> <li>3. Freeman, D. (1998). <i>Doing Teacher-Research: From Inquiry to Understanding</i>. Canada: Heinle &amp; Heinle Publishers.</li> <li>4. Harmer, Jeremy. <i>The practice of English Language Teaching</i>. England: Longman, 2002.</li> <li>5. Hodges, G. C. (2009). Speaking and listening. <i>Learning to Teach English in the Secondary School: A Companion to School Experience</i>, 179.</li> <li>6. Littlewood, W. (1981). <i>Communicative Language Teaching: An Introduction</i>. Cambridge University Press.</li> <li>7. Lynch, T. (2009). <i>Teaching Second Language Listening</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</li> <li>8. Mitchell, R. (1994). The communicative approach to language teaching. <i>Teaching modern languages</i>.</li> <li>9. Rost, M. (2013). <i>Teaching and researching: Listening</i>. Routledge.</li> <li>10. Tsui, A. (2001). Cap. 17: Classroom interaction in <i>The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to</i></li> </ol>	

*Speakers of Other Languages* (pp. 120-125). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

#### **4. Contenidos**

Este trabajo está dividido en seis capítulos: el primer capítulo presenta los contextos interno y externo del Colegio Prado Veraniego, su población, características cognitivas, socioemocionales, culturales y lingüísticas, así como un diagnóstico general de dicha población específicamente en el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera, el planteamiento del problema evidenciado en la fase diagnóstica, la pregunta problema, sus objetivos (tanto general como específicos) y la justificación de dicha problemática. En el segundo capítulo, se contemplan aspectos teóricos que sustentan el trabajo como el estado del arte y el marco teórico. En el tercer capítulo, se presenta el diseño metodológico de la investigación, compuesto por tipo de estudio realizado, instrumentos y procedimientos para la recolección de datos, validez y unidades de análisis que se tienen en cuenta para realizar la investigación. El cuarto capítulo trata sobre la intervención pedagógica donde se describen las bases pedagógicas y el diseño pedagógico tenidos en cuenta para su implementación en el aula. En el quinto capítulo se desarrolla un proceso de análisis que responde a los planteamientos problemáticos previamente mencionados. Para finalizar, se describen las conclusiones obtenidas a lo largo del proceso investigativo y se mencionan algunas recomendaciones que pueden ser tomadas en cuenta en futuros estudios sobre el mismo tema.

#### **5. Metodología**

Este trabajo se desarrolló a la luz de la metodología de investigación-acción, la cual comprendió tres momentos: un primer momento caracterizado por el diagnóstico hecho por los profesores investigadores a la población objetivo, donde se implementaron encuestas, pruebas diagnósticas y diarios de campo, que llevaron a evidenciar el problema a trabajar. En un segundo momento, se dio la implementación de dicha planeación y se repitió el proceso de observación para evidenciar los posibles avances de la población respecto al problema suscitado; prueba de ello fueron los diarios de campo, las encuestas y la producción escrita de los estudiantes. Por último, en el tercer momento, se completó todo el proceso investigativo con una mirada reflexiva a través del análisis e interpretación de los datos obtenidos en la fase de aplicación, que consecuentemente evidenció el impacto de la propuesta sobre las habilidades de escucha y habla de los estudiantes.

#### **6. Conclusiones**

En primer lugar, la realización de actividades comunicativas es una herramienta eficaz para trabajar en las aulas de inglés como lengua extranjera, ya que ayudan a fortalecer la escucha de los estudiantes y la habilidad del habla, que son el foco de este estudio. Por otra parte, estas actividades sirven como una herramienta significativa para los estudiantes mediante su inmersión en un entorno comunicativo y por lo tanto mejoran sus habilidades lingüísticas.

Se considera que las actividades comunicativas y precomunicativas aplicadas fueron apropiadas para el fortalecimiento de la escucha de los estudiantes y la habilidad del habla, en primer lugar, ya que condujeron a los estudiantes a estar en contacto con la lengua extranjera, lo que les permitió interiorizar en diferentes niveles; el aprendizaje de vocabulario, estructuras, esquemas, colocaciones, rasgos fonológicos, entre otros. Se observó que al final de la ejecución, los estudiantes fueron capaces de comunicar sus ideas de una manera sencilla, haciendo uso del vocabulario y el lenguaje aprendido; así mismo, mejoraron su capacidad para comprender las ideas generales de mensajes cortos, al escuchar videos y canciones. Del mismo modo, se fortaleció su capacidad para reconocer palabras, a pesar de que es necesario seguir trabajando estas habilidades con ellos. Por otra parte, estos resultados fueron confirmados por las percepciones que los estudiantes tuvieron sobre su propio aprendizaje, como la gran mayoría de las encuestas lo evidenció.

Por otra parte, el uso de los recursos tecnológicos captó la atención de los estudiantes más fácil, más rápido y mejor, debido al impacto visual y auditivo que tuvo en sus mentes, lo que les condujo a mejorar sus habilidades de escucha y más tarde su habla.

Específicamente, se considera que el uso de los recursos tecnológicos ayudó en la creación de un entorno significativo para el desarrollo de las habilidades comunicativas de los estudiantes, no solo porque fueron elegidos de acuerdo a los gustos de los estudiantes, sino también, porque el uso de ayudas audiovisuales

sirvió como conocimiento previo que hizo más fácil para los estudiantes entender y aprender el nuevo idioma. Del mismo modo, se considera que el empleo de los recursos tecnológicos, alternando diferentes recursos a través de la puesta en práctica, dio lugar a clases más dinámicas y más atractivas debido a la "novedad" de los materiales didácticos. Además, el uso de los recursos tecnológicos facilitó el trabajo de las diferentes habilidades comunicativas (escuchar, hablar, leer y escribir) en su conjunto, en lugar de trabajar cada una aislada.

Por último, los investigadores concluyen que trabajar en contextos comunicativos ayudó a los estudiantes en la práctica de significados, ideas, gustos, hacer y responder preguntas, etc., todo esto para el fortalecimiento de su desempeño comunicativo.

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<b>Revisado por:</b>	Abella Hernández, Fanny.		
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### **Abstract**

The present study is a small-scale qualitative action research project that search to describe the impact that communicative activities has on the listening and speaking processes of the EFL seventh grade students at Prado Veraniego School. As listening and speaking issues were generalized problems in classrooms, this study intended to address these problems by fostering a communicative environment that allowed students to assume a more active role in their learning processes. In order to identify the impact that communicative activities had on the listening and speaking processes, this project implemented a pedagogical intervention based on the Communicative Approach along with listening and speaking tasks, and implemented with the support of technological resources. The application of these pedagogical approaches improved the students' listening comprehension and speaking production skills in English as a foreign language as they assumed a more active and interactive role in their learning process.

*Key words:* Communicative Activities; Pre-communicative activities; Technological Resources; Communicative Approach; Listening Skill; Speaking Skill.

## Resumen

El presente estudio es un proyecto de investigación acción cualitativo en pequeña escala, que busca describir el impacto que las actividades comunicativas tienen en los procesos de escucha y habla de los estudiantes de séptimo grado, que aprenden inglés como lengua extranjera, en el Colegio Prado Veraniego. Como los problemas de escucha y habla fueron generalizados en los salones, este estudio intentó abordarlos al fomentar un ambiente comunicativo que les permitiera a los estudiantes asumir un rol más activo en sus procesos de aprendizaje. Para identificar el impacto que las actividades comunicativas tuvieron en los procesos de escucha y habla, este proyecto implementó una intervención pedagógica basada en el enfoque comunicativo y por tareas, con la ayuda de recursos tecnológicos. Los estudiantes mejoraron sus habilidades de comprensión auditiva y la producción oral en inglés como lengua extranjera, al asumir un rol más activo e interactivo en su proceso de aprendizaje.

*Palabras clave:* Actividades comunicativas; Recursos tecnológicos; Enfoque comunicativo; Habilidad de escucha; Habilidad de habla.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1. Context and problem

In order to develop this project, the researchers give a detailed summary in terms of the internal and external context, about the target population; some cognitive, socio-emotional, cultural, and linguistic characteristics, and a description of the research problem as follows.

#### 1.1. Context

Prado Veraniego School is located in the north of Bogota at Prado Veraniego neighborhood; therefore, it belongs to the district of Suba, the 11<sup>th</sup> locality in Bogota.

This is a public school with two shifts: morning and afternoon, from Monday to Friday. In the physical aspect, the school is composed by two branches, one for primary school and another for fifth to eleventh grades. For the English classes, Branch A (Sede A) has an English Room, equipped with a smart board, a video beam, a computer, and a television.

The school focuses all its actions towards the human development, for which the educational community assumes quality as a way to proceed and the continuous improvement as the strategy to develop effectively the Institutional Educative Project (PEI, for its initials in Spanish): “*Quality communication towards human development*” (Institutional Educative Project, PEI, 2014). On one hand, the mission of Prado Veraniego School is to build and strengthen, in the educational community, cognitive, social, and practical processes oriented to the training of competent human beings through communication with quality; this, in order to interiorize values inside the classes that encourage a healthy coexistence among the school population. On the other hand, the institutional vision is to position itself at local and national levels in 2016 as an institution that prepares committed people to their human development, who

continue their academic learning and lead positive social changes, making possible a harmonious coexistence that allows the construction of a fair and solidary country.

The pedagogical model adopted by Prado Veraniego School is Social Cognitive, whose major exponents are Piaget, Makarenko, Reigeluth, Bruner, Vygotsky, Bandura, Feuerstein, Ausubel, Novak, Freinet, and Freire (PEI, 2014). The school paradigm refers to knowledge and learning as social constructions that evolve with every experience, allowing the maximum and multifaceted development of students' capabilities and interests.

To develop the school PEI and the pedagogical model proposed, it adopts a curricular organization based on cycles. These divide the students' academic processes into five stages as follows: the first one that goes from preschool to second grade (ages between 5 and 7 years old); next, the second cycle is composed of the third and fourth grades (students' ages from 8 to 10 years old). Students in fifth, sixth and seventh grades are part of the third stage (between 10 and 12 years old). Eighth and ninth graders belong to the fourth cycle (from 12 to 15 years old); and finally, the fifth stage goes from tenth to eleventh grades (ages between 15 to 17 years). In this study, the population is framed in the third cycle; therefore, according to *Secretaría de Educación del Distrito Capital*, the objectives in language development deal with processes of inquiry and experimentation in order to use the language with social interaction purposes, as well as to help students to build possible worlds through the improvement of their language skills. (Guzmán, Varela, and Arce, 2010)

For this reason, students at this school take English classes for three hours per week in high school from sixth grade to ninth grade; in tenth and eleventh grades, students only have two hours of English class.

The school syllabus of English is based on the *Basic Standards of Competences in Foreign Languages*: there is a guiding question, topics, achievement indicators, strengths, and improvement strategies. In the case of seventh grade, the guiding questions centers the school work on “the city” as the immediate students’ context to reflect upon daily situations in life.

In regard to the topics that the syllabus shows, it proposes grammar affairs (like simple present, present progressive, verbs to be, to do, to have, can, etc.) and vocabulary themes (such as sports, description of places, food) that aims at developing the language skills through different real situations, including the comprehensive reading ability.

## **1.2. Population**

The characterization of the group was made during the second semester of 2014 based on the observation registered in field notes and a survey (see Annex 1).

The population of this study is composed of two groups of seventh graders at Prado Veraniego School, 701 and 702 respectively. The whole group consists of 79 students: 38 boys and 41 girls aged between 11 and 14 years old; most of them live in Prado Veraniego neighborhood and others in Ciudad Jardín Norte, a close neighborhood. The great majority of students belong to the third social stratum and some to the second stratum. To obtain a broad understanding of this population, they were characterized from a cognitive, socio-emotional, cultural, and linguistic perspective, as follows.

**According to cognitive characteristics**, the majority of students are in the right age to study on this cycle, since the age of students in the third cycle (6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades) varies from 10 to 12. All of the students attend to classes on a regular basis; however, their performance in class differ from one group to the other. On one hand, the 701 graders tend to avoid participation, class work is evaluated depending on the exercises they do; thus, participation just consists in sharing

their homework and exercises with their classmates. In 702 grade, on the other hand, participation is not remarkable, as only a few students participate and work in class, even though almost all of them have books to work with. During classes, most of the students are able to concentrate in their activities; nevertheless, there are some who are not able to do it, and sometimes talk, which could be considered as a normal behavior, since preadolescents are at a stage where socializing and forming groups is important in their development (Guzmán et al., 2010). Students' lack of concentration could be also caused because some of them do not bring the school implements and thus, they have to walk around their desks trying to find what they need, in order to complete the activities.

It is important to mention that students like to watch movies, play games, and talk during the English class. Moreover, many of them expressed that they preferred listening activities while others expressed their preference for speaking and writing ones.

Regarding Piaget's stages of cognitive development (in Wadsworth, 1996), he states that children from 11 years on (until their adulthood) are in the Formal Operational Stage. At this point, children are able to think about abstract concepts and come up with creative solutions to different problems, hypothesize, and manipulate ideas in their heads, which leads to more sophisticated and advanced thinking (like metacognition, or the ability to think about their own and other people's ideas), not having perceptual nor physical constraints for doing so.

**With regard to socio-emotional characteristics,** students have an appropriate relationship among them, yet sometimes they scream and yell at each other. Their relationship with the teacher reflects in some instances lack of respect. Most of them live with their families (mother, father, and siblings), and there are a few ones who live with other family members.

According to the Morning Day Academic Coordinator (see Annex 2), one of the biggest problem of the students is the fact that their parents are often absent of their educational process. There are some students who do not pay attention in class due to their indiscipline and lack of listening disposition, which affect English classes considerably.

As stated by Guzmán (2010), students of the third cycle (5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade) are in a transitional stage where changes in their way of socializing and feeling towards others are changing; in this stage, same gender groups of friends grow stronger, where they get a sense of belonging, which ultimately strengthens their self-esteem. Likewise, in this stage, the pre-adolescents start to feel attracted towards other people.

**Regarding cultural characteristics**, most of the students like Physical Education and Computer Science subjects as well as others like Arts and Biology; some of them like English and Spanish classes. In regard to their hobbies, students like listening to music, using the computer and surfing the net, playing videogames and football, as well as watching TV and talking to their friends (inside the school and outside through social networks like Facebook), among other activities.

**Talking about linguistic characteristics**, it is relevant to highlight that during the observation period (second semester of 2014), students in 701 grade were learning vocabulary such as food, professions, sports, and objects of the house. They were learning the morphological part of words through lexical activities like word search games and drawing the words; nevertheless, this vocabulary was neither used in a communicative level nor in a meaningful way for them, since they did not create their own phrases. Besides, they did not have a proper listening comprehension level, which might be caused by their lack of vocabulary and the lack of listening activities that could enhance this skill; either way, this issue made translation into

Spanish mandatory most of the times. In the case of 702 students, they lacked of writing activities, because they just jotted down what the teacher wrote on the board and followed her instructions about what to write; when it came to speaking, students were capable to pronounce some words clearly, and even short sentences with their teacher's guidance; thus, their accuracy and fluency was quite poor. Moreover, students' listening skills in English were not evidenced, as it was necessary for their teacher to translate almost everything she said in the classroom. At that moment, students were using simple present tense through the implementation of different activities such as short stories -read by the teacher- which included comprehension tasks, writing, and creating sentences based on their own reality, and so on.

According to the Standards, in terms of the listening skill, seventh graders should be able to comprehend short texts (like descriptions of places and people) with certain level of difficulty on daily routines and students' social environment, as well as understand the general ideas of a narration. Likewise, related to the speaking skill, students at this level should be able to express their thoughts, likes, and feelings with simple vocabulary, as well as making simple presentations with comprehensible pronunciation and participating in simple communicative situations, such as greeting and apologizing. Moreover, in regard to the reading skill, students should identify the meaning of words depending on the context, extract general and specific information from a short, easy text. Furthermore, in relation to the writing skill, students should be able to write short texts in which they narrate stories and describe things and people that are close to their social environment.

Finally, this is an EFL group because English is not the country main language and English is only taught as a foreign language, according to Oxford University Press ELT (2011),

English as a Foreign Language is when the language is taught to people whose mother tongue is not English and who live in a country English is not the main or official language.

### **1.3. Diagnosis**

The diagnosis of this study is based on the observation process in two groups of seventh grade, developed in two phases. The first one was held during the observation process in the second semester of 2014; the second, made during the first school period (February of 2015).

In the first phase, the observations were registered in field notes, which took into account the students' performance on their speaking skill, an interview to the English homeroom teachers, and two diagnostic tests that were applied to the students in order to check their performance in the listening, writing, and reading in English as a foreign language. The first test was based on a Cambridge University listening test for children in basic (starters) and ten questions were selected from that test with the purpose of determining the students' listening skill level. The exam intended to identify if students were able to understand short and simple dialogues in simple present and present continuous tenses; these dialogues were presented in a slow rate of speech and were based on basic vocabulary such as objects and parts of the house, food, and clothing (see Annex 3).

The second test was based on the school syllabus, which took into account the Standards, and it was composed of a set of fifteen questions, including a short reading. Firstly, for the writing skill, the test aimed to identify if students were able to describe their daily routine using at least four phrases, and secondly, for the reading skill, it proposed -literal and inferential- questions in order to determine the students' reading level.

The diagnostic tests in this study were carried out to determine the level of students in the mentioned skills. The levels were determined according to the number of questions answered:

high level if the students answered between 80 to 100% of the questions, medium level for 60 to 79%, and low level for scores from 0 to 59%.

The results of the listening comprehension test revealed that only one student had a high level, which means that only him was able to understand dialogues that used simple present and present continuous tenses easily; four of them had a medium level, meaning that they partially understood dialogues and managed somehow vocabulary such as food, clothing, and parts of the house; the rest had a low level, that is to say, they were not able to understand short and simple dialogues in simple present and present continuous tenses, even if they were uttered in a slow rate of speech and used basic vocabulary. Besides, the students not only had a low level in their listening skills, but they also had problems with listening to each other. For example, during an activity in which some students were answering different questions posed by the researcher, other learners were talking among themselves and did not even try to listen to their classmates' answers. Therefore, it was seen that, apart from the difficulties evidenced in the listening comprehension skills, the students also had difficulties at a pragmatic level, since they did not always follow a social code of behavior when communicating (see Annex 4).

With respect to the reading skill, the test had a short text with four literal questions and one inferential question. The results evidenced that there were few (6) students who reached a high reading comprehension level, some (14) were in a medium level, and the majority (57) of the learners had a low level. Only few (17) of them answered the inferential question, which showed that it was difficult for a big number of students to recognize literal information in a text, and very few were able to identify the implicit information of a text. In reference to the writing skill, it was observed that just a few students (13) were able to express their ideas in full

sentences, and the rest of the learners answered the writing part of the test in Spanish or did not answer at all.

Additionally, in regard to the speaking skill, it was observed that students were not able to answer basic questions related to themselves. For instance, they could not answer questions about their names, ages, or likes, with complete sentences, and when they understood the questions, they answered in Spanish. “They lack the vocabulary necessary and the practice in common communicative situations such as getting to know another person and presenting oneself. Even when the questions were explained in Spanish, they were not able to speak or answer the questions and used Spanish to answer them” (see Annex 4). Besides, when asking to the English homeroom teachers in an interview about students’ speaking skill, they said the lack of listening caused a low speaking performance (see Annex 5).

On the other hand, on the second phase of the diagnostic process, developed throughout the first academic period of 2015, two diagnostic tests were applied in order to corroborate the results obtained in the first phase, bearing in mind the English syllabus of the school. Firstly, a listening test was applied to confirm the students' current level in this language skill; it was based on a listening exercise from the students’ current book *Easy English 6*. Taking into account some achievement indicators from the Standards, the exam was divided into three parts: the first one evaluated students’ word recognition capability by a fill-in-the-blank exercise in two short paragraphs; the second one revised the comprehension of an oral description of people’s physical appearance; and the third part intended to determine students’ ability to identify specific information in a short oral presentation. It is important to mention that it was implemented after helping students to familiarize with the vocabulary uttered in the oral presentation, with the aim

assuring that the lack of vocabulary would not interfere with the assessment of the listening skill (see Annex 6).

Besides, the second test was composed of a set of eleven questions, divided into two parts: the first one aimed to assess the writing skill by evaluating if students were able to describe people through the use of short phrases as the Standards suggests for students of the third cycle, and the second one aimed at evaluating some vocabulary that the students were supposed to manage, in this case, some adjectives used for describing physical appearance and some verbs managed throughout the first school period (see Annex 7).

The results of the second phase of this diagnostic process shows that regarding the listening skill and taking into account all the questions as a whole, only eight students out of seventy-four that took the test were in a high level, which means that they were able to understand oral descriptions of people, identifying the general topic and relevant details of a short oral presentation; some of them (17) were in a medium level, meaning that they could only reach those achievement indicators in a partial way, whereas the majority of the students (49) were in a low level in their listening comprehension skill, which indicates that they could not reach those goals.

Analyzing the listening skill in detail, it was found that some students (17) reached a high level when recognizing words from a short oral presentation; few of them (10) had a medium level in word recognition, and the majority (47) were in a low level when recognizing words. Besides, the results showed that it was easier for students to understand people's descriptions when the vocabulary was familiar to them; in this way, thirty-six students were able to understand the description, nineteen were able to do it partially and the other nineteen were not able to understand it. In regard to identification of details in a short oral presentation, few of

them (12) reached a high level, eleven reached a medium level and the majority (51) were in a low level.

Furthermore, the results of the second test evidenced that with respect to the writing skill, the majority of the learners (48) were in a low level, and were not able to use short phrases to describe themselves; some of them (14) reached a medium level, describing themselves partially using short phrases; and some (14) had a high level, which indicates they could successfully describe themselves using short phrases. Finally, in relation to their vocabulary knowledge, the great majority (64) were in a low level, seven students achieved the medium level, and only four students had a high level.

#### **1.4. Statement of the Problem**

Based on the data gathered throughout the observation process, the use of field notes to register those observations, the diagnostic tests, an interview answered by the English homeroom teachers, and a survey answered by the students, it was determined that, in fact, most of the common problems inside the classroom, and specifically in the English classes, are related to the listening and as a result, their speaking process and their capacity for learning the language were reduced.

As stated in the diagnosis, the majority of the students (67%) are in a low level in their listening comprehension skill, some (23%) are in a medium level, whereas only few students (10%) are in a high level, becoming almost mandatory to address this problem to help the pupils to improve in their English language learning. Besides, the listening process is a big issue for these students in their English language development, due to the fact that they lack practice on how to pay attention to what their fellows and teacher say; some students do not often follow the teacher's directions when doing activities, and some also interrupt when a peer is answering a

question, which end up hindering their learning process as well as the development of their language skills. The lack of listening comprehension makes that almost everything during the classes is translated into Spanish, hindering thereby the internalization process of the language, because Spanish, and not English, is used for classroom interaction. Besides, as explained in the diagnosis, students are not able to communicate using English, as they cannot answer simple questions about themselves, such as “How old are you?” or “How are you?”

In addition, both homeroom teachers agree on their students’ listening skills as the most difficult ability for them to work on, since they are not usually able to concentrate on listening, and the weakness in this skill make more difficult the development of the other communicative skills including speaking. In the same way, the teachers also say that students are not able to learn a foreign language in the no-listening-to-each-other condition that they live every day in their classrooms.

Bearing in mind that, the main purpose of the language learning process is developing the ability to interact with other people using the target language, it is pertinent to give learners the ability to communicate by enhancing their listening and speaking skills. Consequently, it is considered that the creation of communicative activities with real input provided by technological resources will help to create a meaningful environment where students will be able to develop their communicative skills. As Richard (2006) states that a language can be easily learned through the process of communicating in it, and that meaningful communication for the learner provides him with better opportunities to learn the language; thus, communicative activities are expected to help students to enhance the use of English, and more specifically to improve their listening and speaking skills, which are at the core of the communicative methodology.

Besides, Rost (2011), from a neurological perspective, explains that listening occurs when language perception and processing is carried out, which only occurs when the listener's model of the surrounding world is activated. He explains that this model is related to other factors in language learning experience, and it is constructed from perceptual contact with external events, in this case, communicative activities based on oral input.

Likewise, Swain (2000) mentions that correct development of the listening capability requires an extensive exposure to L2 input, but he goes on to say that successful language learning requires opportunities for output, that is to say, to enhance as well the development of speaking skills along with the listening ones. Furthermore, according to Zhang (2009), EFL teachers should provide rich listening input that contains familiar vocabulary and pronunciation, as well as useful models of culture and interaction styles, which consequently help the learners' emergent speaking to be modeled upon this input.

Moreover, it is considered that the use of technological resources is going to help the students to develop their listening and speaking skills, because as the learners stated in the survey, most of them like activities related to videos and songs; as stated by Pozo (2008), students' interests makes it easier to focus their attention on learning materials, and in the case of developing listening skills, it is mandatory to help students to focus their attention on the input managed in class. As Rost (2011) explains, attention and consciousness are key factors necessary to initiate and achieve both listening and speaking.

All in all, this study considers that addressing students' difficulties regarding their listening and speaking mechanisms will help them to improve their learning processes, and to strengthen the development of communicative skills in English as a foreign language.

Considering that communicative activities might help to tackle these problems, the following research question leading the study is stated:

### **1.5. Research Question**

What is the impact that communicative activities, in a meaningful environment supported by technological resources, has on an EFL group of seventh graders' listening and speaking skills at Prado Veraniego School?

In order to answer the research question stated above, the following general and specific objectives were also set:

### **1.6. Main Objective**

To identify the impact that communicative activities, in a meaningful environment supported by technological resources, has on an EFL group of seventh graders' listening and speaking skills at Prado Veraniego School.

### **1.7. Specific Objectives**

- To propose communicative activities supported by technological resources with the aim to strengthen students' listening and speaking skills.
- To determine students' insights in respect to the use of communicative activities on their listening and speaking processes.
- To establish the relevance of working within communicative contexts in order to strengthen students' communicative performance.
- To identify how communicative activities supported by technological resources provide students a meaningful environment of learning.

## 1.8. Justification

Taking into account that this study intends to address the difficulties observed in seventh graders' listening and speaking processes through the implementation of communicative activities supported by technological resources, this following section aims to give strong reasons why this study is developed.

It is considered that this study is pertinent at Prado Veraniego School, as it intends to support the school Institutional Educative Project PEI ("*Quality communication towards human development*") by integrating it with communicative activities supported by technological resources; thus, creating a proper environment of interaction that not only helps to develop basic listening and speaking skills by using English as a foreign language, but also benefits social and human cooperation.

Thus, communicative activities are seen in the current study as a possible tool that may help to strengthen Prado Veraniego students' communicative and social skills, since communicative language teaching fosters students' development of communicative and interactional skills (Littlewood, 1981).

On the other hand, Guzmán, Varela, and Arce (2010) affirm that students on the third cycle (from fifth to seventh grades) are in a period of transition where socializing and forming groups are very important for their social development. Likewise, the authors state that language should be used to learn and should not be separated from its communicative function, since language is internalized through its use. Consequently, these aspects of socialization and communicative interaction specified for the third cycle are expected to be addressed in this study through the use of communicative activities.

Moreover, in terms of the field of language teaching and learning, it is believed that the current project would be useful to address students' listening and speaking skills. In this case, it is important to clarify that listening for this research is not only seen as a linguistic skill, but also as a communicative skill where the individual listens attentively to others, valuing the other as a person. Hence, it is the wish to go as deeply as possible into this problem so that this study could bring about new possibilities for Colombian teachers to boost up the listening and speaking skills in the EFL classrooms.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. Literature Review

Taking into account that the main problems evinced throughout the observation process to the population of the current study are related to students' listening and speaking skills, and this intends to address these issues through the implementation of communicative activities supported by technological resources, this research takes into consideration some previous researches that have addressed these issues in similar EFL contexts.

#### 2.1. State of the Art

Research on students' listening and speaking process has been conducted extensively; for instance, Romero (2010) conducted an action research project regarding the development of listening skills in an EFL classroom through task-based approach, specifically, the use of songs, which required some contextualized and authentic materials. As results, the improvement of not only the communicative listening skill, but also the reading, speaking and writing, were perceived in her study. Hence, her statements are important for this study, since she used technological resources, specifically songs in English, to help students improve their listening skill. Thus, the use of songs in her study was helpful, as students' music likes catch their attention and create a comfortable English learning environment.

However, Peñaloza (2012) focused her study on the improvement of eighth graders' listening and speaking skills with the use of artistic projects. She states that this technique has not been deeply explored in the language field, which allows her not only to reach the goal of developing students' communicative skills but also helps them to develop their creativity through working on projects. Besides, she highlights that identifying learners' interests is a helpful step to involve students in teaching and learning processes. Therefore, her contributions are very helpful

for this study, as it takes into account the use of artistic media (like music and short videos) chosen by the researchers and students to boost up the development of their basic listening and speaking skills, including the importance of these skills for their everyday life inside and outside the classroom.

Furthermore, Romero's (2011) findings are important for this project, as she intends to develop communicative skills based on cooperative working and cartoon videos; she declares that group activities actually worked through interesting TV cartoons for students, that led students to be conscious about other ways to learn a foreign language. She observes that the use of videos in class is useful for students, as it helps them to recognize the relation between spoken words and the images presented. Moreover, regarding the listening skill, she indicates that it is important to select acoustic materials that have familiar vocabulary for the students. These indications serve for this study as it tells that audio-visual texts help students to understand and learn vocabulary easier and also, that it is necessary to elaborate pre-listening activities that allow students to become familiarized with the vocabulary they will hear during the exercises. Furthermore, it should be highlighted that this project was able to develop the four communicative skills in a way that listening, speaking, reading, and writing were integrated in language learning activities efficiently.

In addition, Cruz (2014) gives great importance to the use of technological resources, especially videos, as they are a very useful tool for the learning-teaching process, which caused her target population (first graders) to be more involved in the English classes by participating, interacting, and developing communicative skills. Additionally, in terms of the listening and speaking skills, she used on-line songs in order to improve their levels on these skills, resulting in a very successful way of teaching EFL, since students learned contextualized vocabulary and

came up with short phrases. This study is relevant for the current research since it provides some tools and proofs that listening and speaking can actually be improved in a context where the implementation of communicative activities is difficult.

## **2.2. Theoretical Framework**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, this study is based on specific constructs: listening and speaking processes, communicative approach as language approach, and technological resources. A review on the theory that surrounds these concepts was done to provide a stronger ground to this study. This section comprehends the notions that some authors have on each specific element.

### **2.2.1. Listening**

Along with speaking, listening is a fundamental part of language learning and communication, and helping students to develop these skills is necessary if they are going to use the foreign language in a communicative way.

In terms of the listening processes, Anderson (1985) and Levelt (1993) in Lynch (2009) affirm that spoken language processing is developed into three stages: first, the perception of ‘input’, which refers to the verbal (significant and insignificant noises) and non-verbal information (facial expressions, gestures) that the listener perceives. Second, the ‘decoding process’ which is associated with the significant elements that the listener hears; some of this information is directed to the short-term memory and to different parts of the brain cortex where the mind recognizes significant items in regard to the language levels (phonological, lexical, semantic, and syntactical), originating an interpretation of what the speaker expresses; in order to comprehend what the speaker have said, the listener takes into account as well what the listener knows about the speaker: accent, age, sex, attitude, status, the knowledge they share with each

other, and so on. And third, the ‘output’, which consists in the production of an appropriate response to the speaker (that might be verbal and/or non-verbal).

In addition, Lynch (2009) mentions three stages that cover the listening processes basing their description on Levelt’s model of spoken communication: Recognition, which basically consists of all the aspects previously described on the Information Processing theory. Next, Interpretation, that represents the understanding of what the speaker has just said, in terms of the context (when, where, how, why, what, who... is speaking), the background knowledge, or schematic knowledge, perceived through the listener’s perspective in a schema, or “a mental structure consisting of relevant individual knowledge, memory and experience, which allows us to incorporate what we hear into what we know” (Anderson & Lynch, 1988, p. 139), and the sociocultural knowledge (or cultural background), including aspects like religion, customs, and linguistic elements like sayings or proverbs. Finally, the Participation stage closes the listening process, in which the highlighted topic is the “two-way listening, also known as reciprocal, interactive, bi-directional, or conversational listening” (Lynch, 2009, p. 60), as well as the negotiation of meaning, defined by Lynch as the way of adjusting what and how we say things to make these understandable for the listener by monitoring our speech.

Furthermore, Segalowitz (2008) in Rost (2011) affirms that the basis of spoken language comprehension is recognizing words in fluent speech, and the developing automaticity in word recognition is a crucial aspect of first language acquisition and second and foreign language learning. Cutler and Broersma (2005) in Rost (2011) manifest that word recognition is a process that involves not only identifying a word during the listening task, but it is also related to recognizing lexical units and boundaries within larger phonological groupings. That is to say, that phonological words and lexical phrases are recognized amidst phonological units such as

intonation units or phonological phrases and utterances. This explanation shows as well that word recognition includes identifying the boundaries that exist among words in speech, taking into account that there are not identifiable pauses between words when a speechmaker speaks fluently, as there are in written language. Hence, as speech is processed essentially in a sequence (word by word), word recognition has the fundamental goal of locating the beginning of the immediate succeeding word or lexical phrase; in this sense, words are accessed from the mind lexicon through the sounds that initiate the word.

Rost (2011) uses Morton's (1969) Logogen model to explain the word recognition process, which declares that each person has a neural representation for each word he has stored in the long-term memory, hence, Morton names the representation of the word 'logogen' (for genesis of the word). It is considered that each word has a resting level of activity in the brain, and this level of activity can be increased by the contextual information that surrounds the word during the interaction; in this way, every logogen has a threshold that helps the mind to recognize the word when reached. Taking into account that every word has a resting level of activity, words that have phonetic similarity get activated during the phonological perception, and the word is only recognized above the others when all other contenders are excluded either by phonological or contextual evidence, or both. Rost (2011) points out that subsequent models added the notion of feature inhibitors which helped to explain the process in real time; word recognition is accelerated by eliminating the competing words that would infringe the phonotactic rules of the language. It is important to mention that the threshold of the logogens is related to word frequency, which means that if a word is more frequently used or heard, it would be activated easier in the mind of the listener; thus, it is important for foreign language teachers to

help students interact with the oral language, since the more familiarity the learner has with a word, the easier he will recognize it when listening.

Up until now, it has been explained the first part of word recognition -the identification of words and lexical phrases-, but it is just the surface of the process of recognition as when the word is validated; in the listener's mind the knowledge associated to those words and phrases gets activated. In this way, word recognition is more than remembering a single sense of a word. As Rost (2011) enounces, word recognition summons a frame for the word, which includes its admissible word forms, its principal sense or lemma, grammar likelihood for its usage, as well as other associations of semantic meaning such as collocations with other words, case relationships and extended senses. The activation of these word frames helps language comprehension in two ways: firstly, the syntactic information that becomes available for the listener helps him to predict new words that could be uttered by the speaker, thus, providing new constraints for the recognition of subsequent words as it narrows the possibility of hearing words that are out of the logical context of the utterance; secondly, it helps language comprehension because it provides meaningful information for understanding the utterance as a whole, taking into account that words become semantically linked in the short term memory.

All in all, this theoretical description on the listening process is quite important for this study, as it shows some aspects that were unknown for understanding, in a clear and precise way, what happens inside the listener's mind when the listening processes take place, as well as other pragma-linguistic elements that surround the listener and affect the comprehension of a message. Thus, this theory helps the researchers to design strategies that could help to solve the listening problems evidenced in the target population.

In this way, it is important to create a propitious environment where students can be constantly exposed to English input through songs, videos, and the classroom interaction; as it is stated previously, the phonological excitation patterns will become automated in the learner's brain through experience with stimuli. In the same way, the design of listening activities will allow the students develop strategies to recognize words and lexical units easier; to do so, students first will have pre-listening activities that allow them to become familiarized with words and lexical units, taking into account that the recognition of words is directly related to word frequency. Then, the comprehension process of the input will be guided by questions and exercises that will help them recognize words and boundaries among them, as well as understanding specific and general ideas of the aural texts they came across. The activities in the proposal are going to help the students to identify contextual information as well, such as who, where and when is speaking. Finally, these activities will serve as a model and input that would allow the students to use the vocabulary and structures learned in a communicative way.

Apart from the previous theoretical background on the listening skill, the following one about the speaking skill is given.

### **2.2.2. Speaking**

The speaking skill can be defined as the ability to produce utterances (communicate) with an intention and a purpose; that is to say, what a person genuinely wants to communicate in order to achieve a particular objective, which can involve expressing opinions, ideas, wishes, as well as negotiating, solving problems or establishing social relationships like friendships (Harmer, 2002).

In that sense, Levelt (in Bygate, M., 2001) explains that speaking is composed of 4 main processes: in the first place, conceptualization, which is the process of planning the content of

the message. This process is based on the knowledge the speaker has on the background, the topic, the communicative situation, and discourse patterns. The second process is formulation, which allows the speaker to organize his ideas by deciding on the appropriate words and phrases he will use in order to express the intended meanings, and placing them as well in a grammatical and discursive sequence; it is also the moment where the speaker prepares the speech sound patterns. In the third place, the articulation relates to the actual use of the articulatory organs (tongue, lips, teeth and so on.) In the last place, self-monitoring deals with the mind capacity to monitor speech and allows the speaker to identify and correct mistakes in real-time.

Bygate (2001) clarifies that these four processes happen very fast and almost simultaneously, and they must be automated in the speaker's mind in order to be able to speak and interact efficiently in real time. This is so, because the human brain does not have the attentional capacity to focus consciousness in each process at the same time. Besides, Bygate explains that development of fluency, accuracy, and complexity in the learner speech cannot take place at the same time, and class materials and activities must focus on the improvement of one or two of them at the same time.

Bearing in mind that the population of this study is in a basic level of their English learning process, this study considers the theory proposed by Littlewood (1981) which explains that in order to bridge the gap between fluency and accuracy, pre-communicative activities can be used to help the learners to learn and automate the partial skills needed in communication, as it will be explained further on. Likewise, other details regarding the speaking skill will be provided in the following section.

Moreover, as Communicative Approach is a very important concept for this study, its theoretical background is given as follows.

### 2.2.3. Communicative Approach

In regard to the Communicative Approach (also known as Communicative Language Teaching), Mitchell (1994) explains its origin: it appears after the World War II, when people started to feel more interested in learning foreign languages with different purposes (like access to higher education, business etc.), due to the economy growth and the drastic changes in the educational systems around the world. In the 1960s and 1970s especially, this phenomenon was extended in order to improve the education for people in general, regardless their social strata or their education. Therefore, some drastic changes in the curricula (by adding active and experiential modes of learning, which are very different from the traditional one, the inclusion of new population into the language learning process, and the interest for the learning outcomes) were implemented and created new pressures and expectations in the teaching of foreign languages.

Moreover, Mitchell (1994) states that there is still a lot of debate on the classroom activities that could make a communicative methodology recognizable. However, he summarizes three aspects that have to do with the educational process in schools: the first one states that the classroom activities should maximize the use of the target language by the learners, including their attention on tasks and messages rather than on correctness; the second one explains how normal and counterproductive making errors is in the learning process, and the third one explicates the importance of extensive experiences in the target language use rather than grammatical explanations and language analysis.

In relation to the communicative approach, the concepts of linguistic competence and linguistic performance arise. As Brumfit and Johnson explain (1979), on the one hand, the linguistic competence “is understood as concerned with the tacit knowledge of language

structure, that is, knowledge that is commonly not conscious or available for spontaneous report” (p. 7), which means that having a sort of an explicit, innate theory is the reason why one can understand and create infinite sentences. In other words, this has to do with the *grammaticality* that a sentence can have; moreover, its acquisition requires the suitable environment in which the child lives. On the other hand, the linguistic performance has to do with the use of language that a person makes in certain situations, which might also be the reflection of the competence previously mentioned. These processes, from Brumfit and Johnson’s perspective, have been affected by the social interaction that people have. It means how acceptable a sentence can be.

Littlewood (1981) explains that CLT intends to help the learner to use the language to communicate meanings and ideas effectively and appropriately. To achieve this goal, the learner must develop four broad domains of his or her communicative competence: firstly, the apprentice must learn to manage the linguistic system to the extent of using it flexibly and spontaneously so as to express a determined message. Secondly, the student must be able to relate the linguistic forms to the communicative functions they perform. Thirdly, the learner must develop a social awareness that helps him or her to use socially accepted language forms and vary his speech if necessary to suit diverse social situations. And fourthly, the pupil must gain specific communicative strategies that help him or her to use properly language in specific social situations, for instance, using feedback to avoid or correct misinterpretations.

Littlewood (1981) asserts that when learners are in a basic level they must develop a set of partial skills of communication before they are actually able to use language communicatively and interactively. He suggests a set of pre-communicative activities which allow the learner to develop the partial skills of communication without actually demanding him to executing communicative acts. In this way, these activities aim not only to assist the student to learn

linguistic forms and vocabulary, but also to help him develop links between the linguistic structures learned and the functional meaning they perform, which will later enable him to use language for communicative purposes. Besides, the pre-communicative activities intend to help the learner to relate the structures and vocabulary learned to the actual use of language in social contexts and non-linguistic reality.

Thus, the activities in the current proposal should be designed in a way that exercises reflect a real environment of communication, giving the students the opportunity to practice the language forms recently acquired with exercises that would be realistic communicative acts, and in social situations they might come across in their future. Also, it is important to mention that pre-communicative activities should be created with the intention of regulating the linguistic requirements made on the learner, to gradually develop the linguistic competence that is the base for the communicative competence.

In reference to this study, it is important to mention the previous aspects, as they guide the process are going to be developed throughout the implementation.

Furthermore, since technological resources is another construct taken into account in this project, its theoretical background is given as follows.

#### **2.2.4. Technological Resources**

Area (2009) states that technological resources, in the context of education, are devices with specific material support (such as hardware) that convey information that is codified by means of symbolic systems and forms that provide the student a learning experience. He also asserts that digital media used as didactic material allows teachers to use, create, and combine different formats of information such as textual, visual, auditory, and iconic; thus, creating a more meaningful environment for learning. Furthermore, depending on their use, technological

resources can not only be used as a way to transmit information, but they can also act as a means for structuring learning activities and learning processes as well.

In this way, software such as Microsoft Power Point and Microsoft Word are an appropriate resource in this study as ways to structure communicative activities, provide visual input, and allow interaction among the students and the teacher. These technological resources are used along with different videos and songs that are projected through a video beam. As video is a very significant device to create a meaningful learning environment for the development of the listening and speaking skills, it will be described more deeply as follows.

Secules, Herron, and Tomasello (1992) state that video can bring educational opportunities when it is used appropriately, specifically for teaching or learning a second or foreign language: video permits learners to witness the dynamics of real interaction among native speakers in authentic settings, which use different accents and paralinguistic elements of communication like gestures and posture.

Besides, Rost (2011) explains that listening involves the use of both verbal and non-verbal information: the listener uses the visual information provided by the media to interpret the information listened in a faster way than by auditory input alone. In this way, visual cues help the listener to have a context that is used to interpret what is listened, as it helps to provide constraints to the different possible interpretations. He goes on to say that visual signals should be considered as the co-text that listeners use for interpretation, which can be exophoric signals, that is to say, deictic information that makes reference to something uttered by the speaker, for instance, words on a journal that are the topic of a conversation among people; visual information can be kinetic signals as well, or the body language used by the speaker while

presenting the oral text, like hand or head movements, as well as the direction where eyes are directed during the utterance.

Furthermore, the use of video chosen according to the students' likes can help students to diminish aversion towards listening tasks and gaining more out of their learning experiences; besides, using students' appealing videos can help them to focus their attention on the input, which is a cognitive process that activates language comprehension (Rost, 2011). If a student is interested on a specific learning material, his attentional mind mechanism will get activated and directed towards it, as attention and motivation are interrelated cognitive processes (Poza, 2008).

In summary, the communicative approach has been selected as the pedagogical methodology that might help this population improve their listening and speaking skills, as well as getting a more active role in their learning and communicative processes, by means of the exposure to the language, along with technological resources as a strategy to make students realize the importance of these skills not only for academic purposes, but also for their own lives.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Methodological Design

This chapter includes a brief description of the type of study, its data collection instruments, procedures for applying them, their consequent units of analysis, and the ethical considerations taken into account within the study.

#### 3.1. Type of Study

The present study is a small-scale qualitative type of research which follows Action Research as its method of investigation.

*Qualitative research* is used to understand complex phenomena such as classroom interaction in a holistic way instead of breaking it down into parts to be studied. Its main aim is to describe and interpret social phenomena in its specific context. This type of research allows the researcher to become part of the explored community, allowing him to observe closely social interactions in order to pose research questions that lead to a better understanding of the object of study. The data collected through observational instruments is analyzed and interpreted by its categorization (Mckay, 2006).

Based on what Burns (2010) states, *action research* is an investigative approach that, founded on the qualitative paradigm, aims to address teaching-learning problems of immediate and practical interest. This methodology is characterized for being a self-reflective and critical process that allows teachers to identify a problem or area to be improved by means of a systematic observation process. Likewise, action research process includes the identification of a problem and elaboration of a plan of action with the intention of generating improvements or solutions; the implementation of an action plan during the teaching interventions, and the

collection of data that must be systematically analyzed in order to understand better the research phenomenon.

Consequently, the present study is a small-scale qualitative action research, since it followed the mentioned investigative phases mentioned by Burns. First, in planning phase, the researchers characterized the Prado Veraniego School seventh graders systematically by means of field notes, surveys, and diagnostic tests on their communicative skills. Hence, during this diagnostic stage, it was identified that the population needed to enhance their listening and speaking abilities. Thereupon, throughout the action and observation stages, communicative activities supported by technological resources were proposed to tackle the observed problems; likewise, the effects of its implementation were registered through surveys, field notes, and students' artifacts. Finally, in the reflection phase, the data collected was systematically analyzed and interpreted by its categorization in order to understand the impact that communicative activities in a meaningful environment provided by technological resources had on seventh graders' listening and speaking skills.

### **3.2. Data Collection Instruments**

This study used field notes, surveys, and classroom documents (or students' artifacts: listening and speaking activities and tests) in order to collect data to analyze the specific phenomenon.

Emerson (1995) defines field notes as ethnography tools which serve to give account of the experiences and observations that the researcher has made while actively participating along with the target population. This instrument helps the teacher to recognize which the research problem is by taking notes about the behaviors, interests, and values of the students, and the preoccupations they generate to the teacher. This is a proper way to analyze what occurs in the

classroom and the teacher's own perceptions of the situations found in the pedagogical work. Besides, Burns (1994) explains that field notes are characterized by a factual and objective style, which can include reports of non-verbal information, physical setting, group structures, and records of conversations among participants. In the same way, field notes can be used to describe general impressions of the classroom and its climate, they can provide a continuous description of an individual or a selected group amenable for interpretation; field notes can record teachers' development as well and can be used to improve the pedagogical implementation (Hopkins, 1995). These were used in the current project in order to register and analyze the development on students' listening and speaking skills, as well as their attitudes and reactions towards the communicative activities proposed (see Annex 13).

With respect to surveys, Marshall and Rossman (1999) explain that they can be used to enquire for the characteristics, attitudes, and beliefs of a certain population, taking into account the population's self-report. Surveys basic aim is to describe and explain statistically changes of certain characteristics of a population; for instance, they can be used to survey the population at several points in time, allowing the researcher to understand and describe the evolution of the specific items investigated.

Even though data collected through surveys can be statistically and quantitatively analyzed, Rothwell (1996) states it can be used qualitatively as well. Therefore, surveys help to gain a broader understanding of the phenomenon by the recognition and description of factors involved. Furthermore, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) assert that surveys help to collect data with the objective of describing the nature of conditions present in the phenomenon studied, and to determine existing relationships between particular events. In relation to the present project, surveys were taken as a tool that allowed the researchers to identify students' insights on

their learning process in listening and speaking skills and their interest on the communicative activities proposed (see Annex 9).

Regarding classroom documents, Burns (2010) states that classrooms have different written documents such as syllabus guidelines, textbooks or students' exercises, which can eventually serve to collect data and to recognize key issues. Besides, collecting periodically students' exercises over a specified period of time helps to identify learners' main improvements and to diagnose the elements where the teacher should focus to help students improve in their learning further on (Burns, 2010). In this study, the students' performance regarding listening and speaking skills were analyzed through the examination of didactic materials such as worksheets and tests implemented during the communicative activities proposed. Thus, listening comprehension test and activities were applied in order to determine the students' performance in word and phrasal recognition, as well as in the comprehension of main ideas from short audio-texts. In the same way, some activities encouraged students to model and create dialogues that would be rehearsed and acted out (see Annex 9).

### **3.3. Validity**

Validity was achieved in this study through triangulation of data. According to Denzin, (as cited in Freeman, 1998, p. 97), the *data triangulation* technique is used for authenticating the findings collected after the application of some data collection instruments; however, *methodological triangulation* is also presented in this study, as there were several sources to collect data, like field notes, surveys, and students' artifacts in order to bring about multiple points of view on the phenomena investigated. All in all, the evidences collected were corroborated by these kinds of triangulations, which helped this study to be more reliable and find coincidences, patterns, and frame categories to analyze the results.

### 3.4. Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study were related to the speaking and listening processes; therefore, these are presented in the following chart:

Table 1

#### *Units of Analysis*

<b>Units of Analysis</b>	<b>Criteria to Evaluate</b>	<b>Instruments to gather data</b>
<b>Listening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students' understanding of basic patterns.</li> <li>- Students' discrimination of words and phrases.</li> <li>- Students' ability to comprehend/interpret the main ideas of short aural and video text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field notes.</li> <li>- Surveys.</li> <li>- Students' artifacts (Listening activities/test).</li> </ul>
<b>Speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students use English for classroom interaction (in situations like asking for permission to go to the toilet and asking for the meaning of words).</li> <li>- Pronunciation of words and phrases.</li> <li>- Students' responses to basic information questions.</li> <li>- Vocabulary in oral contexts learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Field notes.</li> <li>- Surveys.</li> <li>- Students' artifacts (activities/test).</li> </ul>

### 3.5. Ethical Considerations

For this study, to comply with ethical considerations, consent forms were handed out to students in order to obtain theirs and their parents' permission to use data obtained from the intervention. Besides, confidentiality about students' identification was kept by labeling their data with the letter S (for student) and a corresponding number (S1, S2, and so on). Finally, in accordance to the twelfth article of the Colombian National Decree 1337 of 2013 that rules the protection of personal data, this study respected the high interest of the children and their fundamental rights; both parents or legal representative and students were informed about the use of data collected from the video recordings for research and educational purposes, and a consent form was provided to ask their authorization to collect data (see Annex 10).

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. Pedagogical Intervention

The pedagogical intervention in this study aims at the development of communicative activities supported by technological resources (such as videos, songs, PowerPoint presentations, digital images, etc.) that provide a meaningful environment that allows seventh graders to develop their listening and speaking skills (see Annex 11).

#### 4.1. Pedagogical Basis

In order to create the appropriate environment for learning English as a foreign language, this study takes the Communicative Approach as the leading teaching-learning methodology, since its main aim is the development of communicative skills by providing extensive experience with the target language, and the use of real input materials as a way to allow learners to interact with real native-like language. Besides, this study takes into account Littlewood's (1981) view on language learning to propose communicative and pre-communicative activities.

Moreover, Meaningful Learning becomes relevant for the proposal as theory of learning. Based on Ausubel (1976), Diaz (2001) explains that meaningful learning is related to the incorporation of new knowledge into previous one, which organized in cognitive structures serves as a frame of interpretation for the incoming information. In this way, the student's context and prior concepts and experiences serve to analyze, compare, and transform the new data. Thus, new ideas and concepts come to anchor in the existent cognitive structures, but at the same time, those structures are transformed as well.

Meaningful learning becomes a very important concept that is expected to enhance the teaching process, as this study intends to create a meaningful environment that allows students to learn in a meaningful way through the use of technological resources, as the learners manifested

in a survey that they preferred learning by the use of videos and songs, and as stated before, Pozo (2008) explains that the use of material that is interesting for students become meaningful for them as it helps them to concentrate their attentional processes on the learning activities and materials. Moreover, the use of visual aids that support the listening experience makes the use of the technological resources meaningful for the students as it presents students with images that have information already known to them, helping them to anchor what they listen to the prior knowledge that is recalled when seeing the images. Furthermore, the communicative activities created in this study are expected to help students to experience language through practice and not only by the use of theoretical classes, as it is stated by Vygotsky (1926) in Diaz (2001) that social practices regulate, give expression and transform the human psych.

Furthermore, the exposure to the language through communicative activities is expected to contribute to build a meaningful environment for language learning as, Rost (2011) explains that the exposure to stimuli helps learners to learn and automate the phonological excitation patterns that make easier word recognition and therefore language comprehension and learning.

#### **4.2. Pedagogical Design**

In order to apply the pedagogical basis presented above and also to achieve the research aim proposed, there are some objectives that guide this pedagogical intervention. By the end of the interventions, the students would be able to:

- Recognize phonemes, words, and phrases when listening.
- Comprehend the main ideas of short aural and audio-visual texts.
- Pronounce words and phrases.
- Ask and answer basic information questions.
- Learn vocabulary in oral contexts.

- Use English for classroom interaction in basic situations (like asking for permission to go to the bathroom and asking for word meanings).

The pedagogical basis depicted earlier, the teaching objectives proposed, and the English Class Syllabus from Prado Veraniego School are taken into account for the design and later implementation of the lessons. The proposal is divided into two main phases.

**The first phase** is primarily focused on the development of the listening skill through listening activities that demand students to listen to videos and songs attentively in order to recognize words, boundaries among words, as well as some collocations; the activities are also designed in a way that allows the students to develop the capacity to understand general ideas of the input listened, as well as identifying some specific ideas.

Besides, the language input is the basic component of the pre-communicative activities implemented, so that students learn vocabulary and language structures in context. In this way, the teachers ask students to identify language structures and repeat words presented in the didactic resources (videos and songs). Moreover, students are requested to use the language learned to create their own written phrases, and share them with their classmates orally.

Furthermore, as it has been stated before, pre-communicative activities instruct the students in the development of partial skills of communication, making possible that students learn linguistic forms and link them to the communicative function they perform, to specific meanings, nonlinguistic reality, and social contexts, which would eventually enable the learners to use language with communicative purposes (Littlewood, 1981).

**The second phase** is a cyclic implementation of the listening and pre-communicative activities mentioned earlier, followed up by communicative activities. With respect to communicative activities, Littlewood (1981) states that they allow students to use the language

learned in order to communicate meanings and ideas effectively to a partner. This study takes into account two different types of communicative activities proposed by Littlewood: functional communication activities and social interaction activities.

**In this way, functional activities** provide students with opportunities to use the linguistic forms learned during previous classes to convey specific meanings to others. This kind of activity uses techniques like exchanging information, where asking and answering questions become the motive to use language communicatively. Besides, learner success is assessed not for their grammar accuracy, but for their ability to transmit meanings as effectively as possible.

Moreover, **social interaction activities** not only aim to help students develop their capability to convey meanings, but they also give students the occasion to become aware of social situations, and therefore learn to use language appropriate to different contexts. Success, in this kind of activities, is related to conveying effectively meanings, producing language appropriate to the social situation, and a certain degree of accuracy in pronunciation and grammar. Social interaction activities use techniques like simulation and role playing, which help to create specific social situations and foster different types of relationships.

Furthermore, a typical lesson in this pedagogical intervention (independently of the type of activity to develop) is divided into three moments which support the achievement of the lesson objectives. The first moment is a *warm-up activity* that lead students to understand the main purpose of the upcoming activities, and gives them the opportunity to recall their previous knowledge, as well as become familiar with vocabulary and language structure they might come across during the main activity; for instance, a word search activity with some of the vocabulary they will hear in a video. Then, during a second moment called *controlled practice*, depending on the type of activity, students work by themselves or in groups in order to fulfill the activity

proposed; for instance, they answer the questions proposed for the interpretation of a video or ask and answer questions to a partner. Lastly, the third moment is a *free practice* where students share the work carried out during the previous activities with others, or practice with other assignments to do at home in order to reinforce the new knowledge they have acquired. Moreover, it is important to mention that all classes have didactic materials that help to structure the classes; for example, worksheets or Power Point presentations. Likewise, all classes are guided by lesson plans that include lesson objectives, a clarification on the grammar, key vocabulary, materials to be used during each class, as well as the moments mentioned above with the expected time for each activity (see Annex 12).

The pedagogical intervention lasts around 28 weeks, with classes of seventy-five minutes per week. Some of the resources that are used during the intervention are songs and videos, computers, speakers, video beams, worksheets, Power Point presentations, among others.

### **4.3. Curricular Plan**

It is important to bear in mind that the development of these phases is made by implementing a series of activities that are shown in the following curriculum created by the teachers-researchers, which contains aspects like time of implementation, achievements that are expected, achievement indicators, activities, resources, and evaluation.

Grade 701 - 702		Curriculum Prado Veraniego Shool IED			
Time	Achievement	Achievement indicator	Activities	Resources	Evaluation
Week 7 Mar 16 - 20	To develop communicative processes by asking and answering questions concerning people's personalities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognizes the use of the verb to be when asking about people personalities.</li> <li>2. Describes his / her own personality, and ask questions to others to find out about theirs.</li> <li>3. Participates during class by doing the written and oral activities.</li> <li>4. Helps others to achieve the class objectives.</li> </ol>	- Guide - Exercises creating yes/no questions about people's personality	Guide	Guide
Week 13 May 11 - 15	To quantify objects and people through the use of there is/there are	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognizes and uses prepositions of place</li> <li>2. Elaborates affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences to queantify and locate people and objects in space.</li> <li>3. Participates actively in the activities proposed.</li> </ol>	TPR: Preposition of place Video: modeling a conversation Role play: preparing a conversation Activity based on a video, comprehension and word recognition	Powtoon Video	Preparing the conversation to be evaluated the following class
Week 17 June 8 - 13	To identify and use the simple present tense through a song	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognizes some words and specific ideas of the song</li> <li>2. Sing the song out loud.</li> <li>3. Engages in the process of interpretation and sings with their classmates.</li> </ol>	Activity based on a video, comprehension and word recognition	Music video (Moonshadow by Cat Stevens). Song lyrics.	Accuracy in pronouncing words
Week 28 - Sept 28 - Oct 2	To develop the links between the vocabulary, structures, and phrases and the intended meanings they convey in the context of a moral story.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognizes the pronunciation of some words and phrases and links them to the intended meaning they convey.</li> <li>2. Expresses complete sentences through a role play performance.</li> <li>3. Collaborates with some team members to perform a role play.</li> </ol>	Video: modeling a conversation. Rehearse the script for the role play.	YouTube Video. Script	Communicative activity evaluated by their development of speaking skills during the role play.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. Analysis and Interpretation of Results

This section describes the analysis and interpretation of the data collected during the implementation of the pedagogical proposal in order to shed light on the impact that communicative activities, in a meaningful environment provided by technological resources, has on an EFL group of seventh graders' listening and speaking skills at Prado Veraniego School. For this purpose, this study took into account Freeman's (1998) theory of data analysis which is depicted as follows.

#### 5.1. Triangulation

According to Freeman (1998), triangulation is used in investigation in order to make the resulting findings more reliable by using multiple sources of information and points of view on the phenomenon investigated. Thus, in order to avoid bias during the analysis of data, this study intended to bring together different perspectives on the impact that the activities proposed had on the developmental process of the students' listening and speaking skills using field notes to collect the teachers' views on the phenomenon, surveys to gather students' perceptions on these processes, and students' artifacts (notebooks, worksheets, and tests) to provide a clearer view on the impact of the implementation.

#### 5.2. Data Analysis and Interpretation

In matter of the procedures followed to analyze and interpret data, this study took into account the four key concepts in data analysis proposed by Freeman (1998): naming, grouping, finding relationships, and displaying.

First and foremost, Freeman (1998) explains that in order to understand reasons and explanations that lay beneath a certain phenomenon, it is necessary to disassemble the data

collected so that it can be examined closely, and then the data must be reassembled in a different manner that gives new light on the subject.

On one hand, naming is a process that allows the researchers to disassemble the data by labeling the information collected in each instrument with codes or key labels. In this study, the names are given by the researchers to parts of the data as the analysis unfolds. On the other hand, grouping is a process that helps the researcher to reassemble the labeled portions of the data into categories by finding patterns and similarities among them. Freeman (1998) advises that any names that do not fit into the arising categories should be considered as outliers and they should not be discarded, as they can help to redirect the analysis if needed.

Furthermore, in order to strengthen the findings in the previous processes, the researchers must examine what the grouped information is saying about the categories, and must be aware of the patterns that exist among them in order to find relationships amidst the categories.

Finally, the last step in the analysis is called data display, and it aims at putting together the results attained, evidenced in the categories and the patterns and relationships among them; making visible in this way the interpretation of the data in a concrete and tangible way. The data display can be done through flow charts, diagrams, or a matrix.

Moreover, it is important to explain that this process of analysis must respond to the research question and research objectives, and that as the analysis goes by the researchers can restart the procedure or any of its parts as a cyclic process of interpretation in order to strengthen the findings and give a proper answer to the question.

### **5.3. Categories of Analysis**

After analyzing and labeling the data collected, some categories were selected to describe the project feasibly way. The categories and subcategories are explained in the following chart:

Table 2

*Interrelation of categories and subcategories for the current research project*

Research question: What is the impact that communicative activities, in a meaningful environment supported by technological resources, has on an EFL group of seventh graders' listening and speaking skills at Prado Veraniego School?			
Categories			
Communicative activities design as promoter of basic listening and speaking skills	Technological resources as a meaningful instrument for foreign language learning	Teacher as a learning facilitator	Classroom Interaction as a booster of basic speaking skills development
Subcategories			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening Activities.</li> <li>• Communicative and pre-communicative activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological resources as an engaging tool to teach EFL.</li> <li>• Technological resources as a tool to provide input.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's role as an overseer on students' learning and classroom manager.</li> <li>• Teacher's role as a language instructor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's talk and questions</li> <li>• Turn allocation in different types of activities</li> <li>• Teacher's feedback</li> <li>• Basic conditions for classroom interaction</li> </ul>

### 5.3.1. Communicative activities as promoter of basic listening and speaking skills

This category displays the role that communicative activities have on the development of listening and speaking skills. As it was explained earlier, this development is only achieved when students come into contact with the propitious environment where the specific needs of the inner processes of communication are met (Littlewood, 1981). Taking into account theoretical and pedagogical aspects of the enhancement of the mentioned skills, the researchers designed listening, pre-communicative, and communicative activities that help students interact with and through the foreign language, so that the cognitive processes of language comprehension and production take place in the target language. It is important to highlight that students' lack of

vocabulary (mentioned in the diagnosis) made necessary the implementation of pre-communicative activities.

### **5.3.1.1. Listening activities**

In the study, pre-listening activities were used so that a main listening task would become easier for students, and therefore reduce frustration and increase motivation (Rost 2011). The teachers used warm up activities such as PowerPoint slides to show vocabulary and phrases supported with images that would help to explain meaning, asking for hypotheses about the content of the video or song, or asking the students to write down as many words as possible from the song they have to listen:

**T (pointing at the image and phrase): “Say: the forest was thick and dark”.**

**Students: “The forest was thick and dark”.**

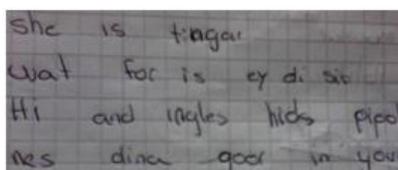
**S13: “El bosque era oscuro y ¿qué?”**

**T: “Thick. What’s the meaning of thick? [...]” Showing that the student not only repeated the words but he was using the meaning of the words *forest* and *dark* which had just been explained with a previous slide.**

**(Field Note 6, Annex 14)**

It is considered that presenting the vocabulary from the audio helped the students to recognize easier words and comprehend; as Rost (2011) explains, listening is facilitated by the knowledge of vocabulary the learner has because it not only activates background knowledge (schemata) for the interpretation, but it also makes the recognition of words easier as it augments immediate word frequency, increasing constraints that speed up the word recognition process.

Likewise, asking the students to write down what they heard served them to sharpen their cognitive processes of perception, as they focused their mental capacity on recognizing sounds and words. Students' artifacts revealed that this kind of warm-up exercise helps them to recognize the language at the phonological, morphological levels, as well as recognizing the complete oral form of some words. Allowing them to write what they heard using the Spanish phonology if they were not able to write the proper English form was a proper strategy, because many of them were able to write what they heard even if they did not know the correct words:



*Figure 1: A student using his mother tongue to express the words heard in English*

As for the listening activities, they intended to put students in contact with the language so that their perception and interpretation of language would be developed. The listening tasks were guided by questions and worksheets (see Annex 9) that helped students to focus their attention and minds on the specific processes of perception and interpretation: word recognition, identification of specific information, as well as comprehension of main ideas.

It was found that when the task seemed to be difficult for the student, he or she tended to lose motivation to complete the activity; therefore, simplifying the listening task by making pauses during word recognition exercises was implemented:

**When checking students' answers, it was seen that the majority was able to organise phrases. Some more phrases than others. The majority was able to understand first words from sentences even if they could not understand the whole phrase. Understanding the first words from phrases shows that the pauses given among the phrases help them to understand easier.**

### Field Note 6, Annex 14 (Artifact on Annex 9)

It appears that adding these pauses help students to recognize the beginning and end of sentences, as it helps to divide the continuum speech into processable chunks, making possible to identify boundaries among lexical units easier, which according to Rost (2011) is a key process of word recognition.

The surveys revealed that regarding the perception of words and phrases, the majority of the students considered they have improved in their capacity to recognize words and phrases, some believed they have improved a lot and some enough, just few of them considered they had improved a bit. Likewise, the great majority of students considered they have improved in their ability to comprehend general ideas from videos and songs, while just few said they still were not able to understand:

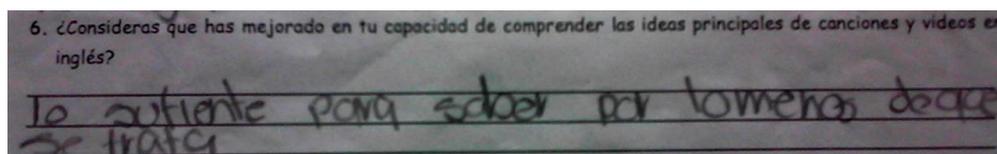
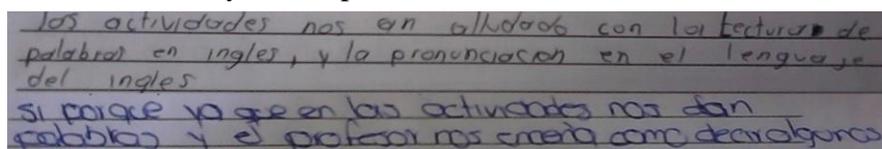


Figure 2: A student says that he is able to comprehend general ideas from videos and songs

Students' impressions are confirmed when analyzing an artifact on listening; the majority were able to comprehend the main ideas from a short video with familiar vocabulary; some were able to do it partially, while only few could not comprehend them (see Artifact on Annex 10).

#### 5.3.1.2. Communicative and pre-communicative activities

As explained earlier, according to Littlewood (1981), pre-communicative activities are used for teaching vocabulary and language forms that will be used communicatively later. In this way, most of the times this kind of activities were implemented intertwined along with listening activities, as videos and songs provided the necessary input. Students considered activities helped them to learn vocabulary and its pronunciation:



*Figure 3: Students express that activities help them to learn vocabulary and pronunciation*

Besides, it is important to remark that language structures must be explained along with its corresponding functional use, because it enables learners to implement them later correctly during communicative activities. For instance, when creating a conversation, a student stated:

**S21: “O sea que ¿que tenemos que colocar cosas en algún lugar?”**

**T: “Yes! That’s right!”**

**Extract from Field Note 5, Annex 15**

As for communicative activities, it was evidenced that using vocabulary and language forms learned during pre-communicative activities help students to internalize the language easier (Richards, 2006), as activities help students to link the language with its functional and contextual meaning (see example of communicative activity on Annex 9). When this activity was performed by the students, it was evidenced that some students were able to ask and answer questions about basic information easily; nevertheless, many students still needed to read from the worksheet to be able to interact.

Moreover, role playing activities were very appealing for them, and they allowed to strengthen their communicative skills, especially pronunciation and fluency (see Annexes 15 and 16). The following extract shows a small part of a role play practice:

**Students listened to the teacher reading the lines, and repeated them. Some of them repeated with accurate pronunciation; it was necessary to correct their pronunciation as well.**

**T: “Repeat after me: <He held his breath and laid on the ground, pretending to be dead.>” (in low speech rate)**

**Ss: “He held his breath and laid on the ground, pretending to be dead.”**

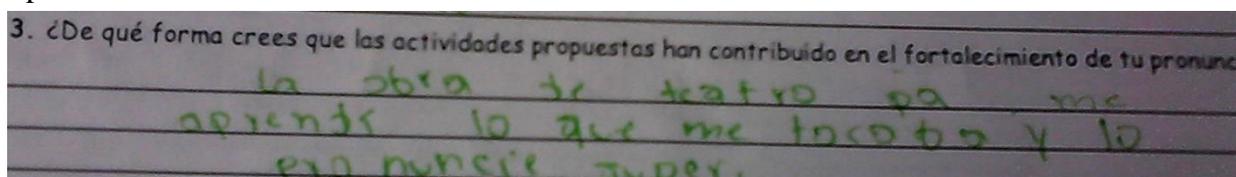
**T (points at the word “breath”): “No, guys. You say breath –emphasizing on the /th/ sound.”**

**Ss: “Breath” (with accurate pronunciation).**

**T: “Excellent, guys!”**

### **Field Note 7, Annex 16**

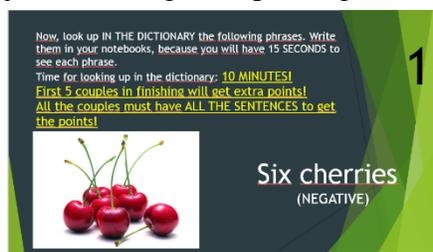
Students considered that role play activities helped them to learn vocabulary and improve pronunciation as well:



*Figure 4: A student’s opinion on learning vocabulary and pronunciation through role plays*

### **5.3.2. Technological resources as a meaningful instrument for foreign language learning**

This category highlights the most important benefits of the use of technological resources in supporting communicative activities to develop listening and speaking skills within an EFL classroom. As stated by Area (2009), technological resources used in the educational field as a didactic material allow teachers to use, adapt, and combine textual, visual, auditory, and iconic information for structuring learning activities and processes, which creates a more meaningful environment for learning. Thus, the teachers-researchers implemented communicative activities that included the use of technological resources to make the process richer and therefore enhance the two major skills for this project: listening and speaking.



*Figure 5: PowerPoint presentation about countable nouns*

### 5.3.2.1. Technological resources as an engaging tool to teach EFL

This subcategory refers to the role of technological resources as an engaging tool during the whole implementation process and according to the data collection instruments, activities that include videos or songs, for example, serve as engaging tool to learn and improve English in a better way. For this purpose, it is required to review the theory proposed by Hampel (2006), Lamy (2007), and Ortega (2009), cited in Roessingh (2014), who state that there are “possibilities of ICT (information and communications technology) [...] to enhance not only language learning, but students’ sense of agency, identity, self-confidence and motivation, as these in turn might contribute to the development of language proficiency.” (p. 7).

Therefore, the role of these kind of resources is very important for the present study, since it helped students to feel engaged with the activities, enhancing not only their listening and speaking skills in the EFL classroom, but also their motivation for doing the activities:

**T: “Now, we’re going to see a PowerPoint presentation about countables with *there is and there are.*”**

**S1: “Uy, sí, profe, más chévere que las guías que hacemos en clase.”**

**T: “Why?”**

**S1: “Pues profe, porque es más llamativo ver colores y dibujos que un poco de letras ahí en una hoja.”**

**T: “Excellent, guys!”**

**Field Note 9, Annex 17**

As expressed by some students throughout the sessions, audiovisual resources like videos were attractive for them, which permitted the researchers to notice that these are motivating tools for students, thus helping them focus their attention which is needed for comprehending.

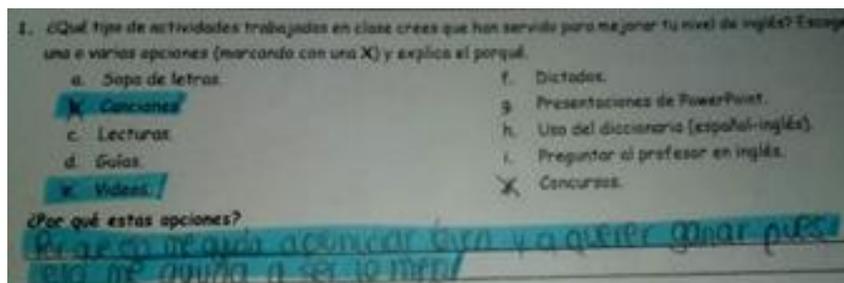


Figure 6: Student's answer to a survey about resources that help to improve English (Annex 9)

### 5.3.2.2. Technological resources as a tool to provide input

As stated by Clark et al., (2006) and Jones and Plass (2002), cited in Rost (2011), input can be aural, written, or even both, and context should be also given in order to make the perception process more reliable. Besides, they mention that “input with visual and other sensory support will tend to be more comprehensible”, such as videos with subtitles, as it increases context and comprehension.



Figure 7: U2's “With or Without You” video song with subtitles

Regarding the current project, and taking into account what is mentioned above, videos like music videos and fables, both with subtitles, were shown in order to train students' listening skill, bearing in mind that students' likes were taken into consideration when choosing these resources so that English contents would be presented in a meaningful way.

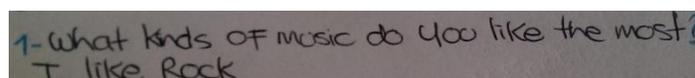


Figure 8: Student's answer to a question on their music likes

### 5.3.3. Teacher as a learning facilitator

This category is related to the teacher's role as a learning facilitator in the development of listening and speaking skills in an EFL context. Littlewood (1981) explains that the development of communicative skills only happens inside the learner's mind, and through cognitive processes that are not under the direct control of teachers. Therefore, the teacher can only act as a facilitator of learning by providing a propitious environment where the learners come across the right stimulus and experiences needed by those inner processes to develop their listening and speaking skills.

Therefore, the teacher plays a major role in the development of their communicative skills, since he is the one that plans the sequence of the classes, allowing them to learn and train partial skills (teacher as a trainer of the skills) that will be used during communicative acts and activities as a whole skill practice (see Annex 14).

Thus, in order for the learning process to occur, the teacher must perform a series of roles which will be seen as subcategories in this study: overseer of the students' learning and classroom manager, as well as language instructor.

#### **5.3.3.1. Teacher's role as an overseer on students' learning and classroom manager**

Littlewood (1981) states that the teacher must coordinate activities that allow him to increase gradually the demands made on the students' linguistic and communicative capacities. He also explains that the selection of the activity type depends on understanding the students' improvements and needs.

In this study, the teachers played a major role in the development of the students' listening and speaking skills through the planning process of the cycles of listening, pre-communicative, and communicative activities (see Annex 14). Supported by technological resources, these activities provided a proper environment where students interacted with and

through the language, allowing them to automate some processes needed to achieve listening comprehension like perception, recognition, and memorization of words, identification of main and specific ideas (Rost, 2011).

Likewise, the activities allowed students to train in partial skills of communication like learning vocabulary and language structures, and use them orally to convey meanings when interacting during the activities, like asking and answering basic questions among themselves (Littlewood, 1981):

Name: Valentina Castro Medina Date: 28/08/15  
 Place: in the bank participants: the bank manager customer  
 Situation: opening a bank account

BM: Good morning / Good afternoon / Good night  
 May I help you?  
 C: Good morning / Good afternoon / Good night  
 Yes, thank you. I need to open a bank account  
 BM: Sit down please, I will ask you some questions.

What's your name? I am Valentina Castro Medina  
 How old are you? I am twelve  
 Where do you live? I live at Pardo Velazquez neighborhood.  
 What is your address? My address is 131 Avenue 46 Street.  
 What do you do? I am a student  
 Where do you work? I at school  
 What's your phone number? my phone number is (3002302060) 5209421  
 What's your mobile phone number? my phone number mobile is 3002302060

BM: Your bank account is now opened. Please sign up here Valentina Castro  
 C: Thank you so much

Figure 9: Basic oral interaction in a bank account situation

In this matter, it is important to mention that, as classroom managers, the teachers selected, modified, and created videos taking into account the students' current listening level in terms of speech rate, vocabulary, and language structure, as well as their interests, and pedagogical needs. Besides, it was realized by the researchers that considering the students' attention issues in the classroom, and that attention is an underlying psychological process of perceptive listening (Rost, 2011), it was mandatory that every video would be presented with clear instructions delivered through printed worksheets that would guide their experience when interacting with the videos, and helped them to focus their attention on the activity:

**Teacher was acting more as an observer rather than correcting them, so that students were able to rehearse their lines without being corrected all the time. Field Note 8, Annex 13**

### 5.3.3.2. Teacher's role as a language instructor

In regard to the teacher as a language instructor, for this study, the teachers presented new language by means of videos, songs, and PowerPoint presentations, in conjunction with pre-communicative activities. For instance, the teachers used PowerPoint presentations in order to explain the use of *there is* and *there are* as useful structures to quantify objects and people and locate them in space. Besides, teachers' talk became an input source that served as a model for students' incipient speaking skills, especially for pronunciation (see Annex 14). Littlewood (1981, p. 92) mentions that "he will present new language, exercise control over the learners' performance, evaluate it and correct it":

**T: "Repeat after me: <He held his breath and laid on the ground, pretending to be dead.>" (in low speech rate)**

**Ss: "He held his breath and laid on the ground, pretending to be dead."**

**T (points at the word "breath"):** "No, guys. You say breath –emphasizing on the /th/ sound."

**Ss: "Breath" (with accurate pronunciation).**

**T: "Excellent, guys!"**

#### **Field Note 7, Annex 16**

Moreover, the teachers considered important to adjust their speech to the students' level, taking into account their vocabulary knowledge and listening capability in terms of speech rate (see Annex 14). For instance, it was observed that during the practice sessions for a role play activity, the way the teachers read the script had a significant impact on students' pronunciation and fluency. As they adjusted their speech rate by making small pauses among collocations, allowing students to find boundaries among words and lexical units easier. According to Rost

(2011), listening comprehension is strengthened by differentiating and learning collocations as it helps the learner to form schemata that plays a major role during the cognitive processes of listening.

Besides, the importance of the teacher for the development of their communicative skills was perceived by the students. Some answered in the survey, for instance, that the teacher helps them to learn, write, and pronounce vocabulary, or that his explanations helped them to comprehend the main ideas of videos and songs:

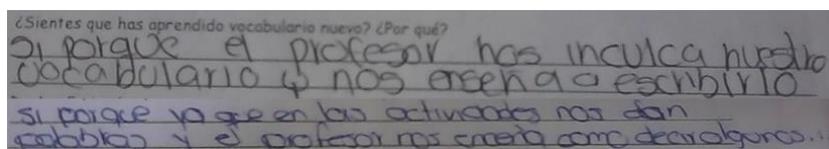


Figure 10: Students express that the teachers' help improved their vocabulary learning

In addition, it is considered by the researchers that the role of the teacher as a language instructor played a major role for the development of learners' linguistic and communicative skills by evaluating the students' performance during the activities and correcting mistakes when needed; for instance, pointing out to the students the right pronunciation of words and phrases during activities, or signaling mistakes in the worksheets, evaluations, and notebooks (See Annexes 14 and 16). Besides, some students considered the teachers' correction during activities as important for the development of their speaking skills (pronunciation):

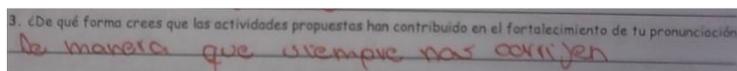


Figure 11: The importance of teacher's correction revealed by a student

#### 5.3.4. Classroom interaction as a booster of basic speaking skills development

In accordance with Tsui (2001), classroom interaction is related to the interaction between teacher and students and among students themselves, seeing interaction as the interrelationship between the language used by the teacher and the language produced by

students. In foreign language learning, classroom interaction is linked to different aspects that foster the learners' production of language as well, such as questions posed by the teacher, turn distribution for participation in the class or activities, types of tasks, among others.

In this way, this category presents some aspects of classroom interaction that had an impact on the student's basic speaking skills.

#### **5.3.4.1. Teacher's talk and questions**

Teachers help students to develop their oral skills, not only because they provide input that serves the students to construct their own speech, but also because the instructions and questions given provide opportunities for learners to produce their own language (Tsui, 2001).

In this research, it was noticed that teachers' talk had a major impact on students' production of words and phrases, especially when they had to repeat what the teacher was saying. For instance, when using Total Physical Response as a warm-up activity, students engaged with the activity by repeating the teachers' words and movements, showing that the teacher's non-verbal communication helps them as well to engage in the production of language and understanding of word meanings:

**T: "Repeat after me: hands in my pockets" (placing the inside the pocket)**

**Ss: "Hands inside my pocket" (placing them inside their pockets)**

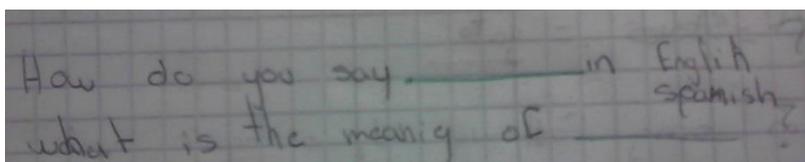
**T: "Hands behind" (placing them behind his back)**

**Ss: "Hands behind" (putting their accordingly).**

**T: "Hands in my pockets" (without moving his body)**

**Ss repeated and placer their hands in their pockets (without the need of observing the teacher's movement). The teacher used the same procedure with different prepositions. Field Note 5, Annex 15**

Likewise, the use of specific questions, such as asking for permission to go to the toilet, or asking for the meaning of words was useful in order to foster interaction in the classroom. For instance, one student asked in Spanish if she could go to the toilet, so the teacher demanded her to say it in English; but because she did not know how to ask, the teacher told her to ask their classmates. And many of them answer in a chorus: “May I go to the bathroom?”; then she was able to ask for the permission in English (see Annex 15).



*Figure 12: Basic common expressions used in the classroom*

Furthermore, it was evidenced that the use of images in the slides created for the explanations and activities helped to avoid the use of the mother tongue -Spanish- and interact in English with students more, as the images served as prior knowledge that allowed learners to infer word meanings, making the explanation of concepts and instructions with the target language easier.

#### **5.3.4.2. Turn allocation in different types of activities**

Tsui (2001) explains that the way the teacher allocates turns for participation inside the class and the way students take turns in activities has an impact in the development of their language skills, as the more language the students produce during their speech turn, the more they are able to internalize the input they produce, because they are able to test their own hypotheses about language (Seliger, 1987, cited by Tsui 2001).

In the present study, the way the teacher allocates turns for participation differed in the type of interaction in terms of number of participants during the activity, that is to say, whole class interaction, pair work, and group work. In the whole class interaction, when the teachers

were explaining a topic and asking students to try their own examples, many students spoke at the same time and the teacher needed to select the student who was going to give the example; nevertheless, it was needed to try not to assign the turn for participation to the same students, and to take advantage of the few times that students that rarely participate raised their hands to do so.

Furthermore, as Tsui (2001) and Johnson (2008) explain, tasks that include small amount of participants facilitates language learning; for instance, group work and pair work help to provide more occasions for learners to start and control interaction and to produce larger variety of speech. In the present study, pair work was used specially during activities that demanded that students ask and answer questions to each other, or to plan a conversation (see example in Annex 9). As for group work, there were a role play activities and some language contest where students had to participate by lines writing on the board their phrases and sometimes explaining them to their classmates, allowing this strategy to distribute the turn for participation more equally among the students as all had to participate. Some students manifested that these kind of activities helped them to learn and practice while they were having fun:

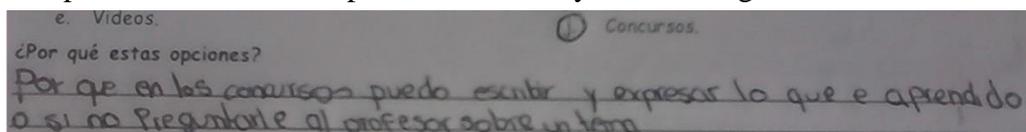
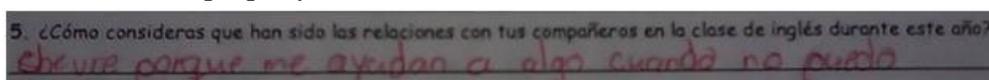


Figure 13: A student expresses that contests helps him learn and practice what he learns

Moreover, many students manifested that they liked to work in groups because they were able to get help from their classmates, which shows that they are able to learn easier with the help from others, as it is stated that a student without the capability to accomplish a task by himself is able to do it with the help of a more capable peer (Vygotsky, 1978, cited by McLeod, 2012). Nevertheless, some of the learners stated that they did not like to work with classmates who did not work properly in class:



*Figure 14: A student's opinion on teamwork with his classmates*

### 5.3.4.3. Teacher's feedback

Tsui (2001) explains that teacher's feedback has an important impact on the learners' production of language as it provides scaffolding for learners as they try out their recently known language.

During the investigation, the teachers provided feedback on the students' performance especially by pointing out to the students the right pronunciation of words and phrases during activities or signaling mistakes on the worksheets, evaluations, notebooks, as well as when they made mistakes during speaking.

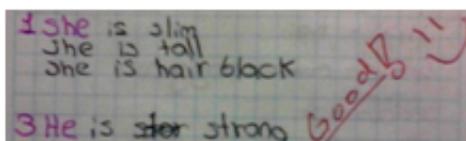
**T (pointing at the image and phrase): "Say: the forest was thick and dark"**

**Ss: "The forest was thick and dark"**

#### **Field Note 6, Annex 14**

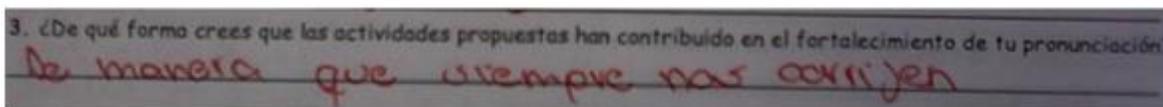
Besides, some students considered the teachers' correction during activities important for their learning and more specifically in the development of their speaking skills (pronunciation).

Furthermore, Tsui (2001) and Littlewood (1981) explain that the development of communicative skills requires a learning environment which gives the learners a sense of security and value as individuals, and that correction must not be used to the extent that goes against the student's self-esteem as a communicator. For their part, the researchers found that the teacher has an important role in the motivation of students when they encourage students or congratulate them, as they become motivated when their victories are highlighted.



*Figure 15: Teachers-researchers motivate students by giving positive feedback*

Tsui (2001) states, that by being supportive and appreciative of the learners' efforts, the teacher is able to foster the kind of classroom interaction that promotes meaningful and enjoyable learning.

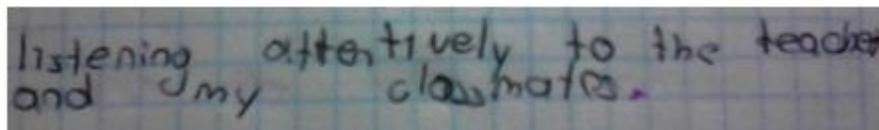


*Figure 16: A student highlights the importance of the teacher's corrections*

#### **5.3.4.4. Basic conditions for classroom interaction**

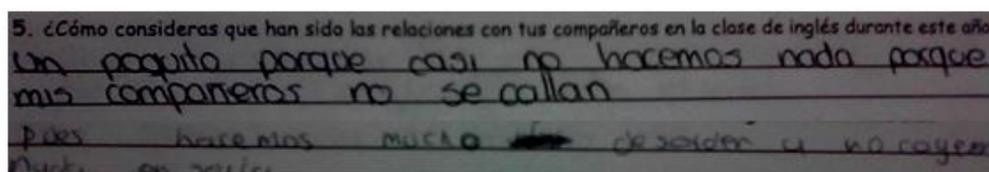
In order to develop communicative skills and specially to foster the development of listening and speaking skills, it is necessary that both teacher and students create a propitious learning environment where respect for the other is evidenced by a positive attitude and a disposition to listen to others attentively. Nunan and Lamb (1997) state that it is necessary to state clear to the students what is expected from them in terms of responsibilities and behavior, as well as the actions to deal with when those expectations are not met.

Taking into account that these groups of seven grade students had difficulties in terms of attention and discipline (as it was mentioned in the characterization of the population), the teachers intended to create a proper environment by dialoguing with the students about the importance of listening to others as a basic ability for learning another language, and negotiating with the students classroom rules such as listening to the teacher attentively when giving instructions, and to listen to their classmates when they were participating. Students themselves proposed the use of the students' chart for controlling their misbehavior. Besides, the teachers sometimes wrote on the board specific objectives for the class, as a way to help them focus their attention. There were specific objectives that stated the need to create a proper learning environment, which the teacher used to invite them to reflect upon the need of listening to each other; students were asked to write the objectives on their notebooks (see Annexes 14 and 15).



*Figure 17: A student's reflection on the importance of listening to each other*

The surveys revealed that many students (especially in one of the groups) considered that the group was difficult to work with; there were two types of students: first, the ones that considered their classmates were too noisy and did not allow them to advance with the activities and the ones that were aware that they were undisciplined and caused trouble for the class.



*Figure 18: A student's opinion on his and his classmates' behavior during English class*

All in all, from the beginning of the intervention to the end, the problems caused by the indiscipline were constant, and in many instances, it caused that not all the activities planned for one class were implemented, as the students sometimes did not pay attention to the instructions and did not start to work on the tasks assigned fast enough.

#### **5.4. Theorizing Findings**

Since the observation process for the current study started, it was evidenced that the seventh graders had difficulties with their listening skill, which consequently affected their speaking skill as well. Moreover, they did not fulfill the language level they should have according to the Standards and their ages. The English class was hindered, as it was necessary to translate almost everything into Spanish, interfering with the learning of English. In spite of this, the teachers-researchers achieved to some extent the proposed goal: improve students' listening and speaking skills in a meaningful learning environment supported by technological resources.

Firstly, the researchers applied a series of diagnostic tests to check students' communicative skills. This process gave way to the research question: What is the impact that communicative activities, in a meaningful environment supported by technological resources, has on an EFL group of seventh graders' listening and speaking skills at Prado Veraniego School? In order to answer this question, the researchers planned a series of pre-communicative and communicative activities that intended to work on listening and speaking in an integrated way, giving substantial relevance to the pragmatic use of the language rather than grammar.

Besides, it is relevant to say that students were given input in English all the time in order to get them used to the language use and to create a meaningful environment that involved students' use of the target language and their suggestions in relation to the subsequent activities that were planned. Very few students were able to communicate in English effectively, while the majority of them could not, mostly because they were not accustomed to use the language in classes, giving answers like "No entiendo, profe", or "¿Qué quiso decir?". However, as activities were applied, students felt engaged with English and, for instance, they were able to participate in role play activities and dialogues with some fluency and accurate pronunciation.

During the implementation phase, the teachers-researchers implemented another important component to achieve listening and speaking skills in seventh graders: technological resources. Students started to realize that the English class was not all about fill-in-the-blank activities, worksheets to learn a grammar topics or even working on the book they had; they found out that these resources (like videos, music videos, movies, listening exercises, PowerPoint presentations, etc.) were very engaging and eye-catching for their English learning process, since they felt familiar with them and felt part of the process by providing some ideas that were proposed verbally to the teachers-researchers and applied during this phase.

Furthermore, it is important to mention some ways from which meaningful learning was accomplished during the mentioned phases. Firstly, the cyclic way that activities are presented foster meaningful learning because students do not learn language in a theoretical way, but they are given the opportunity to practice the vocabulary and language structures learned throughout the pre-listening and pre-communicative stages during the communicative activities, helping them to internalize language easier and fostering the development of communicative skills.

Secondly, technological resources helped to promote meaningful learning because the visual information present concepts already known to the students, serving in this way as the base where new language forms are embedding. For instance, if a student watches an image, that image presents him with a meaning, that is linked to its corresponding aural form when heard simultaneously. Besides, visual information provides contextual information that helps the learner to comprehend easier the aural information displayed; thus, providing learners with constraints that speed up word recognition and comprehension.

Thirdly, taking into account that students' likes improved learning greatly, not only because they felt involved with the implemented activities, which ultimately motivated them to participate, but also because taking their likes into consideration makes activities to have topics already known to them, which facilitates the learning process, as those topics served as an anchor point for the language learnt during the process.

Finally, the researchers conclude that working within communicative contexts helped students to get accustomed to communicate meanings, ideas, likes and dislikes when making and answering questions, strengthening their communicative performance, as they gained automation of the mental processes of communication by direct interaction with the target language and others.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6. Conclusions

In this chapter, the teachers-researchers draw the conclusions that were found after the implementation phase that pretended to identify the impact that communicative activities, in a meaningful environment supported by technological resources, has on EFL seventh graders at Prado Veraniego School.

First of all, the implementation of communicative activities is an effective tool to work in EFL classrooms, since they help to strengthen students' listening and speaking skills, which is the focus of this study. Moreover, these activities serve as a meaningful tool for students by being immersed in a communicative environment and therefore improve their language skills.

It is considered that the communicative and pre-communicative activities implemented were appropriate for strengthening students' listening and speaking skills, firstly because they led students to be in contact with the target language, allowing them to internalize it at its different levels; learning vocabulary, structures, schemata, collocations, phonological features, among others. It was observed that at the end of the implementation, students were able to communicate their ideas in simple ways, making use of the vocabulary and language forms learned; they improved as well as their capacity to comprehend general ideas of short messages when listening to videos and songs; in the same way, their capacity to recognize words was strengthened, even though it is necessary to continue working these skills with them. Moreover, these findings were confirmed by the perceptions that students had about their own learning, as a great majority said in the surveys they had improved in their listening and speaking skills when comparing the beginning and the end of the implementation.

Furthermore, the use of technological resources catches students' attention easier, faster, and better regardless of the skills, due to the visual and audial impact that it has in their minds, which leads them to improve their listening skill and later their speaking one.

More specifically, it is considered that the use of technological resources helped to the creation of a meaningful environment for the development of the students' communicative skills, not only because they were chosen in accordance to the students likes but also, because the use of audiovisual aids served as prior knowledge that made easier for students to understand and learn the new language. Likewise, it is considered that the employment of not only one type of technological resource, but alternating different resources throughout the implementation resulted in more dynamic and more appealing classes due to the “newness” of the didactic materials. Besides, the use of technological resources facilitated the work of the different communicative skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) as a whole rather than working each one isolated.

Finally, the researchers conclude that working within communicative contexts helped students to become accustomed to communicate meanings, ideas, likes and dislikes when making and answering questions, strengthening their communicative performance, as they gained automation of the mental processes of communication by direct interaction with the target language and others.

## 6.1. Recommendations

Drawn the previous conclusions, some recommendations are also given for further research projects that involve communicative activities to improve listening and speaking skills, meaningful learning environments, and the use of technological resources.

First of all, teachers-researchers should consider working specifically listening and speaking skills, since those are the most neglected skills of all (and the priority goes to reading and writing), which is and can become a bigger problem for language education.

Besides, students' language level must be taken into consideration when it comes to planning communicative activities for them, as well as their needs and interests that also help researchers make more interesting tasks for students.

Likewise, the use of technological resources serves as a tool that supplements those activities so that students feel more engaged to them and feel that they are learning in a meaningful way, with interesting videos, recordings, pictures, etc., which at the end will not only help the students learn the target language, but will also improve the teachers' methodologies and provide with new material to use in different EFL classrooms. Moreover, technological resources should not be displayed without a proper exercise that help students to focus their minds on a specific task.

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## ANNEXES

### Annex 1: Characterization Survey

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGÓGICA NACIONAL  
FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES  
DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS  
LICENCIATURA EN EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA CON  
ÉNFASIS EN HUMANIDADES: ESPAÑOL E  
INGLÉS



#### ENCUESTA A ESTUDIANTES DEL GRADO 602 DE LA INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA DISTRITAL PRADO VERANIEGO, SEDE A, JORNADA MAÑANA

1. Marca con una X sobre las figuras: Soy niño  Soy niña 
2. ¿Qué edad tienes?
3. ¿Qué te gusta hacer en tus tiempos libres?
4. ¿Qué disfrutas hacer en el colegio (en las clases o durante el descanso)?
5. ¿En qué barrio de Bogotá vives?
6. ¿Con qué personas vives en tu casa?
7. Tu casa es de estrato... Marca con una X sobre el número y la casa:  
     
8. ¿Cuáles son las clases que más te gustan?
9. ¿Y cuáles son las que no te gustan mucho?
10. ¿Quién está a cargo de tus clases de inglés en el colegio?
11. ¿Cómo consideras tus clases de inglés en el colegio? Rellena la figura:  
 Buenas  Regulares  Malas

¿Por qué?

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---



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12. Haz memoria... ¿Qué temáticas recuerdas de la clase de inglés?
13. ¿Qué temas te parecen más sencillos o fáciles?
14. ¿Y cuáles te han parecido difíciles o complicados?
15. ¡Piensa! ¿Cómo podría ser la clase de inglés ideal para ti?
16. ¡Explota tu creatividad! Comenta qué actividades le propondrías a tu profesora para mejorar la

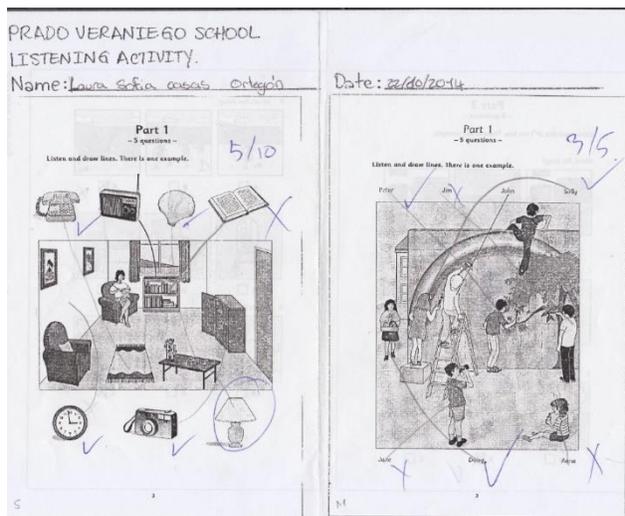
clase de inglés.

## Annex 2: Coordinator's Interview

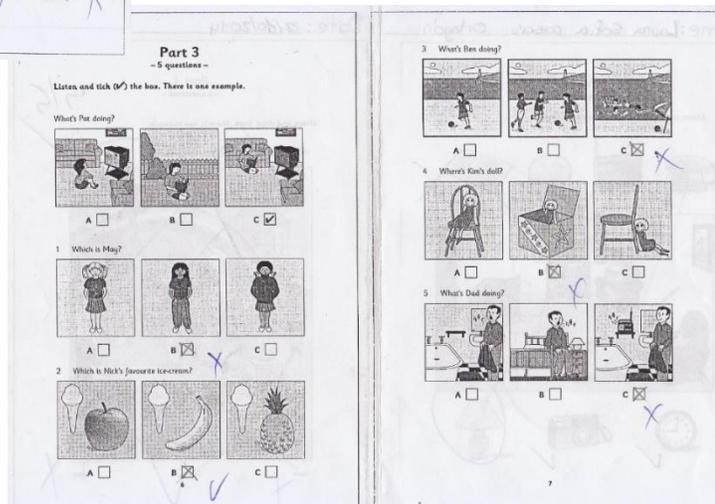
Extract of the Interview to Esmeralda Cortés, School Coordinator.

1. ¿Cuáles son las problemáticas más marcadas de los estudiantes?

**E. C.:** “Una, que me parece muy grave, es la ausencia de la familia. La ausencia del padre de familia como apoyo al muchacho, al trabajo escolar. Dada la situación de las familias que tienen que salir muy temprano a trabajar, dejan a los muchachos solos todo el día. La otra es el impacto que tienen los medios de comunicación en los muchachos: creen que todo lo que hay ahí es juego; entonces copian comportamientos que nada que ver con la formación de ellos. Me refiero por ejemplo al uso de las TICs, la agresión a través de los medios, bullying y cyberbullying, es un problema grave. De resto, sobre la violencia, ha disminuido; sobre la agresividad, ha disminuido. [...] Existen problemas de disciplina como en cualquier colegio, en su salón por ejemplo tuvimos que desescolarizar dos estudiantes la semana pasada...ese es un salón con problemas de disciplina”



## Annex 3: Diagnostic Tests taken from Cambridge University Press





## Annex 4: Field Note 1



Proyectos de Investigación en el Aula  
 Colegio Prado Veraniego I.E.D.  
 Curso 601  
 Field Notes

**Date:** 26th August 2014

**Topic:**

**Field note number:** 1

**Observer:** Juan Carlos Beltrán

Observation	Reflection
<p>When I arrived, at 6:30 the whole school was in “formation”, and the coordinator was announcing students, they were going to be evaluated in their dressing, manners and behavior.            She told them that those who failed the grade, their place in the school would not be granted. And they had to search for a new school.</p>	<p>When she mentioned the personal appearance, many students start to talk.            I think that this is the use of behaviorism. Menacing them so that they behave and improve academically            If the school resorts to deny the students a place in the school it may be because they're too undisciplined and they're trying to “treat” the school.</p>
<p>Raquel Gómez, the English teacher of 601 is still in a medical leave, and the teacher Fanny who is replacing her for the time being, allowed me to enter into the classroom to give the students a survey.</p> <p>After entering the classroom, I introduce myself in Spanish as well as in English as a student from the Pedagogical University who was there to help them to improve with their English language.            While the teacher was absent from the classroom I started to meet them, and ask them about their name and age.            They did not identify the questions, especially the one from the age.</p> <p>While I was asking them these questions, the other side of the classroom was very noisy and <b>they were not paying attention to the one that was speaking.</b></p> <p>It was necessary to translate the majority of the questions into Spanish, and it was done with their help as well.            Then I gave them the survey, students took a lot of time to answer it because they were not paying attention to the instructions at the beginning.</p>	<p>At the beginning I thought it was a mistake to have done the survey in English instead of Spanish, but had not I done it this way, I would not have been able to observe -at least a little- from their performance in the English language.</p> <p><b>I think they either do not have the listening skills to understand the questions, or they lack the vocabulary necessary, and the practice in common communicative situations such as getting to know other person and presenting oneself.</b></p> <p><b>I consider that Learning to Listen to the other is one of the most essential skills needed to have a accurate communicative competence and if this problem is not addressed, it would not be easy to set any research project at all.</b></p> <p>Even when the questions were translated into Spanish <b>students were not able to present themselves neither answer with proper sentences. Which make me think they need to strengthen their speaking skills as well.</b></p>

## Annex 5: Teachers' Interview

### Extracto de la entrevista realizada a las profesoras titulares de inglés en el Colegio Prado Veraniego

1. Teniendo en cuenta el tiempo que ha trabajado con el curso 601/602 a lo largo de este año, ¿cuáles cree usted que son las fortalezas que tiene el grupo a la hora de estudiar inglés?

**Raquel Gómez (Profesora de Inglés para el curso 601):** *“Ninguna, es complicado.”*

**Fanny Abella (Profesora de Inglés para el curso 602):** *“Yo pienso que por la edad, son niños que son... tienen mucha energía, son muy activos. Lo que sucede es que hay que encausar esa energía a propósitos de aprendizaje de la lengua. Como son muchos, cuesta trabajo, porque no tienen atención centrada, pero hay que trabajar mucho, mucha estrategia para lograr esa atención. Son de corta atención, o sea que por eso es que le toca a uno estar pasando de una actividad a otra... Y en la parte social, tratar de llevarlos a que sean conscientes de la escucha...”*

2. Por otro lado, ¿cuáles cree usted que son las debilidades que tienen los estudiantes a la hora de estudiar inglés como lengua extranjera?

**R. G.:** *“No hay disposición, no siguen normas, necesitan trabajar condicionados/por presión. No hubo creación de hábitos. Tienen debilidades en lengua materna y pues en inglés muchísimo más.”*

**F. A.:** *“No centran la atención; son niños que no centran la atención en algo específico. Algunas veces, logran la atención cuando son actividades que les llama la atención. Trabajan mucho mejor en el aula de inglés por el manejo de los recursos tecnológicos; eso les llama la atención...”*

3. Además de los anteriores aspectos mencionados, ¿cómo describiría usted a los estudiantes del grado 601/602 en cuanto a las habilidades lingüísticas (listening, speaking, reading, writing) en la enseñanza del inglés?

**R. G.:** *“Muy elementales, es complicado desarrollarles algo porque uno tiene que concentrarse en tenerlos quietos. [De las cuatro habilidades, ¿Cuál sería en la que están con mayor debilidad?] De las cuatro... todas. Empezando que no escuchan, si en español no escuchan y no atienden, menos en inglés. [...] Por ahí en lectura más o menos, entonces ya entienden oraciones cortas. En escribir menos, en escritura también están gravísimos. Y en el Speaking peor, es que no le digo que empezando porque ellos no escuchan.”*

**F. A.:** *“La escucha es lo más difícil para ellos. Por lo mismo, porque no logran enfocarse a llevar la escucha. [...] Las habilidades comunicativas están, por tanto, el manejo de vocabulario es muy regular; la gramática, como no hay manejo de listening, speaking, no escuchan, es muy difícil.”*

4. ¿Qué otras necesidades considera usted que deben suplirse para potencializar el aprendizaje del inglés con sus estudiantes?

**R. G.:** *“Ante todo, seguir normas. El respeto. La parte pedagógica y académica queda de lado, porque no siguen normas. Tienen que disponerse. Tienen que aprender a diferenciar los espacios, que no es lo mismo estar en el salón a estar en el patio de juego. También los papás como que poco colaboran, de parte de la familia no hay mucha colaboración.”*

**F. A.:** *“A ellos hay que trabajarles mucho la parte social y el manejo de valores. Hay que hablarles mucho, concientizarlos de que lo que es el respeto mutuo [...]”*

### Annex 6: Diagnostic Test 1

PRADO VERANIEGO SCHOOL LISTENING EXAM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Good evening, friends, and welcome to **WANTED!** Today, the police are looking for four dangerous suspects. If you see them, please call the police immediately.

1. Listen to the audio two times! Fill in the blanks in the following descriptions.

The first one is Billy Blue, AKA Big Foot. \_\_\_\_\_ is 34 years old blond man. His hair \_\_\_\_\_ short and curly. He is tall and stocky. His eyes are blue and he has big feet. He is \_\_\_\_\_ and very \_\_\_\_\_. He doesn't like to talk. He's very \_\_\_\_\_.



The next criminal is Lili Max, AKA Fire Head. \_\_\_\_\_ is 30 years old. She has \_\_\_\_\_ wavy red hair. She has green eyes. She's tall and slim. Her legs are long but her arms are short. She is \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. She's a nice and \_\_\_\_\_ person if you don't have money in your pocket!



2. Listen to the audio twice and answer the following questions:

Name: TIM.  
 Last Name: PALMA.  
 AKA: Whisper.  
 Age: 60 years old.

What does he look like? A. Tall and fat.  
 B. Short and stocky.  
 C. Short and thin.

What are his eyes color? A. Blue.  
 B. Black.  
 C. Brown.

**WANTED**  
**\$1,000,000 USD**



Name: APRIL.  
 Last Name: WONG.  
 AKA: THE WITCH.  
 Age: 65 years old.

What does she look like? A. Tall and ugly.  
 B. Short and chubby.  
 C. Slim and old.

What are her eyes color? A. Brown.  
 B. Black.  
 C. Violet.

**WANTED**  
**\$2,000 USD**



3. Listen CAREFULLY again three times and mark an **X** for each adjective that describes their personality.

	Shy	Brave	Serious	Quiet	Angry	Easygoing	Funny	Rude	Smart
Billy									
Lili									
Tim									
April									

### Annex 7: Diagnostic Test 2

PRADO VERANIEGO SCHOOL FIRST PERIOD EXAM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Look at the picture and answer the questions.



- Is Tina medium height? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does Angela have black curly hair? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is Ana chubby and tall? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is Oscar tall and muscular? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are Ronald and Helena stocky? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Complete the following conversations with the verb TO DO (remember that the forms of this verb are DO, DOES, DONT, DOESNT).

Maria: \_\_\_\_\_ your cousin have any children?  
 Pedro: Yes, she \_\_\_\_\_. She has a son and a daughter.  
 Maria: And \_\_\_\_\_ your grandparents live in Barranquilla?  
 Pedro: No, they \_\_\_\_\_. They live in Cali.



John: What \_\_\_\_\_ your sister \_\_\_\_\_?  
 Elizabeth: She \_\_\_\_\_ the housework for a Chinese family.  
 John: And when \_\_\_\_\_ you see her?  
 Elizabeth: I see her two times a year.



4. Imagine you have a friend in the United States. Write a short **letter** describing yourself.

- Describe your physical appearance and personality.
- Write to him or her questions about their physical appearance and personality.

Dear friend \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Yours \_\_\_\_\_

(Draw your face here)

5. Complete the chart:

TO BUY	HACER
TO DRIVE	LEER
TO SPEAK	PENSAR

2. Write the correct form of the verb TO BE.

Examples: I (be) am happy.  
 He / She / It (be) is happy.  
 You / We / They (be) are happy.

- Hadil (be) \_\_\_\_\_ excited.
- Joe, Alisa and I (be) \_\_\_\_\_ young.
- The hammer (be) \_\_\_\_\_ new.
- The cat (be) \_\_\_\_\_ friendly.
- This test (be) \_\_\_\_\_ easy!

**Annex 8: Surveys (Students' Insights)**

NOMBRE: \_\_\_\_\_

**ENCUESTA A ESTUDIANTES DEL GRADO 702 DEL COLEGIO PRADO VERANIEGO**

1. ¿Qué tipo de actividades trabajadas en clase crees que han servido para mejorar tu nivel de inglés? Escoge una o varias opciones (marcando con una X) y explica el porqué.

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| a. Sopa de letras. | f. Dictados.                             |
| b. Canciones.      | g. Presentaciones de PowerPoint.         |
| c. Lecturas.       | h. Uso del diccionario (español-inglés). |
| d. Guías.          | i. Preguntar al profesor en inglés.      |
| e. Videos.         | j. Concursos.                            |

¿Por qué estas opciones?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Señala qué habilidades en inglés has mejorado más. Selecciona una o varias.

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| a. Escuchar. | d. Escribir.  |
| b. Leer.     | e. Gramática. |
| c. Hablar.   |               |

3. ¿Sientes que has aprendido vocabulario nuevo? ¿Por qué?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. De 1 a 5, ¿qué tan motivado te has sentido con la clase de inglés? (siendo 1 muy poco motivado, 2 poco motivado, 3 un poco motivado, 4 motivado y 5 muy motivado). Marca con una X.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

¿Por qué?

\_\_\_\_\_

NOMBRE: \_\_\_\_\_

**ENCUESTA A ESTUDIANTES DEL GRADO SÉPTIMO DEL COLEGIO PRADO VERANIEGO**

1. En una escala de 1 a 3, donde 1 es un poco, 2 es suficientemente y 3 es mucho, ¿consideras que tu pronunciación de palabras y frases ha mejorado durante lo que llevas del año? Señala con una X:

1 un poco	2 suficientemente	3 mucho
-----------	-------------------	---------

2. ¿Qué nota te colocarías a tu mismo respecto a tu pronunciación de palabras y frases?
3. ¿De qué forma crees que las actividades propuestas han contribuido en el fortalecimiento de tu pronunciación?
4. ¿Consideras que las actividades propuestas te ayudaron a interactuar en inglés con tus compañeros? ¿De qué forma?
5. ¿Cómo consideras que han sido las relaciones con tus compañeros en la clase de inglés durante este año?
6. ¿Consideras que has mejorado en tu capacidad de comprender las ideas principales de canciones y videos en inglés?
7. ¿De qué forma crees que las actividades propuestas han contribuido en la comprensión de las ideas principales de canciones y videos en inglés?
8. En comparación con el inicio de año, ¿consideras que tu capacidad de escucha ha mejorado? Responde de acuerdo a las siguientes opciones:

- |                                     |           |                   |         |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------|
| a. Identificar pedazos de palabras. | 1 un poco | 2 suficientemente | 3 mucho |
| b. Identificar palabras completas.  | 1 un poco | 2 suficientemente | 3 mucho |
| c. Comprender frases.               | 1 un poco | 2 suficientemente | 3 mucho |

9. ¿Qué nota te pondrías en tu capacidad de escuchar en inglés, teniendo en cuenta las preguntas anteriores?

10. ¿De qué forma crees que las actividades propuestas han contribuido en el fortalecimiento de tu capacidad de escuchar?

## Annex 9: Students' Artifacts Examples: Listening, Pre-communicative and Communicative Activities

Name: Andrés Eduardo Pérez Date: September 16

**THE BEAR AND THE TWO TRAVELERS**

Number the rectangles in the right order

SHAAM:  1 Oh, Thanu.  5 run?  3 do now?  4 Shall we  2 what will we

NARRATOR:  4 Thanu was missing  1 When Shaam  3 he was shocked  2 turned back

SHAAM: Thanu! Thanu!

THANU:  2 Don't make  1 Shhhhh  4 I'm coming  3 noise.

NARRATOR:  3 on top of  1 Shaam  2 saw Thanu  4 a tree...

THANU: You run away.

NARRATOR:  2 the true colors  3 of Thanu.  1 Shaam realized

He had an idea

2 pretending to be dead  1 He held his breath  3 and lay on the ground

4 and  1 The bear  3 sniffed at him.  2 came near him

3 that Shaam  1 He thought  2 was dead

Well done!

Prado Veraniego School English Class  
 Name: Mateo Rico Date: 14 05 2015

Watch the video and answer the questions

1. Where is the conversation taking place?  
In a Grocery store and the kitchen.

2. Who is speaking?  
The son and the mom

3. What is the conversation about?  
Where are the food is

4. Where is the food?  
 Ex. The lettuce is not IN the fridge Apples: on the table  
 Carrots: in the refrigerator Bananas: on the table  
 Cucumber: in the refrigerator Tomatoes: on the table

5. How many bananas and apples are there?  
 Ex: There are 3 carrots in the fridge  
there are 3 apples in the table

Well done!

Name: Valentina Castro Medina Date: 28/08/15  
 Place: in the bank Participants: the bank manager customer  
 Situation: opening a bank account

BM: Good morning / Good afternoon / Good night  
 May I help you?

C: Good morning / Good afternoon / Good night  
 Yes, thank you. I need to open a bank account

BM: Sit down please, I will ask you some questions.

What's your name? I am Valentina Castro Medina

How old are you? I am twelve

Where do you live? I live at Prado Veraniego neighborhood.

What is your address? My address 131 Avenida 46 Street

What do you do? I am a student.

Where do you work? I at school

What's your phone number? my phone number is (3002302060) 5209121

What's your mobile phone number? My phone number mobile is 3002302060.

BM: Your bank account is now opened. Please sign up here Valentina C. M

C: Thank you so much



## Annex 10: Consent Form



### Consentimiento informado

***Respetado padre de familia/acudiente:***

Reciba un cordial saludo.

La presente comunicación tiene como finalidad solicitar su autorización para que su hijo(a) participe en la implementación del proyecto de investigación *Impacto de actividades comunicativas apoyadas en recursos tecnológicos en los procesos escucha y habla de estudiantes de séptimo grado* a cargo de los docentes en formación Juan Carlos Beltrán Fonseca y Cristian Camilo Palomino Herrera, estudiantes de las Licenciaturas en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Español y Lenguas Extranjeras y Español e Inglés, respectivamente, de la Universidad Pedagógica Nacional.

El propósito de esta investigación es potencializar las habilidades y conocimientos de los estudiantes en el idioma inglés, específicamente en sus procesos de escucha y habla dentro del aula. Los alumnos participarán del proyecto durante la realización de sus actividades a través de charlas, realización de talleres, lectura de textos, observación de videos, etc. La participación en el estudio se hará a lo largo del año 2015 y obtendrá como beneficio la participación en el programa de mejoramiento de competencias en el idioma inglés. El proyecto se realizará a partir de las actividades académicas y su aplicación no generará costos para el estudiante.

Es posible que su hijo(a) sea video grabado(a); sin embargo, las grabaciones que se hagan serán única y exclusivamente usadas con propósitos investigativos. Adicionalmente, la información obtenida no revelará la identidad de los estudiantes. Para mantener la confidencialidad de sus datos, los estudiantes estarán referenciados por un número. Finalmente, usted debe saber que su hijo podrá dejar de ser parte del estudio cuando usted así lo desee, por lo cual no habrá ningún tipo de sanción disciplinaria o académica. Así mismo, es importante reafirmar que, al ser participante en la investigación, su estatus como estudiante, sus derechos y obligaciones con el curso y la institución, sus notas y en general todo aspecto relacionado con la clase, jamás se verán afectados por ningún motivo. Una vez el estudio haya sido satisfactoriamente terminado, el investigador compartirá públicamente los resultados encontrados de los cuales usted puede ser partícipe.

Si tiene alguna pregunta o desea más información sobre esta investigación, por favor comuníquese con los docentes a través de los correos electrónicos [beltranjuan@hotmail.com](mailto:beltranjuan@hotmail.com) o [cristian\\_blue93@outlook.com](mailto:cristian_blue93@outlook.com).

Yo, \_\_\_\_\_ como padre, madre o acudiente del niño \_\_\_\_\_, manifiesto haber recibido la información relativa al proyecto de investigación a desarrollar y SÍ \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ estoy de acuerdo en que mi hijo participe.  
 Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_ En constancia, firmo: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Firma de los Investigadores

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Firma del padre

## Annex 11: Examples of Technological Resources

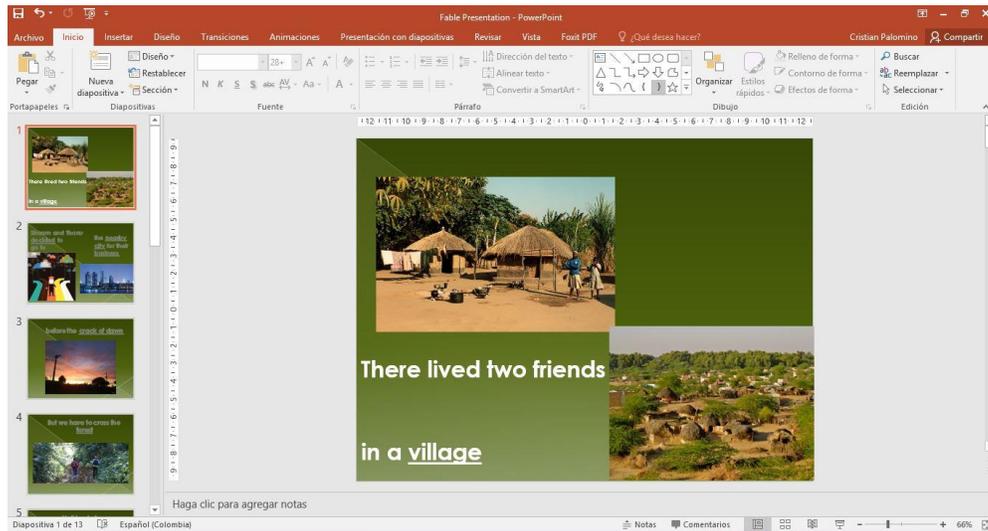
### With or Without You Lyric Video



The Bear and Two Travellers (a fable taken from YouTube for a role play):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLjR1ra0Nb4>



PowerPoint presentation that helped students understand the main ideas and vocabulary from the fable.



## Annex 12: Examples of Lesson Plans

### PRADO VERANIEGO SCHOOL LESSON PLAN No. 15 MORNING SHIFT

TEACHER'S NAME: Juan Carlos Beltrán

DATE: June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

GRADE: 701

TOPIC: Moonshadow song

TIME: 11:00 – 12:20

GOAL: Understanding and singing the song "Moonshadow".

#### ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

1. Recognizes some words and specific ideas of the song
2. Sing out loud the song.
3. Engages in the process of interpretation and sings with their classmates.

GRAMMAR: First conditional [If I ever .... I will/ won't ...]

#### KEY VOCABULARY

Moonshadow, lose, hands, land, work, eyes, legs, walk, light, night

#### MATERIALS

Video Beam, Worksheet and lyrics.

#### WARM UP

TIME: 10 Min.

Students listen to the song once and write in their notebooks all words, group of words and phrases according to their capacity.

#### CONTROLLED PRACTICE

TIME: 30 Min.

Students must underline the verbs in the song and with the help of the dictionary and the teacher try to understand the meaning of the stanzas. The encircle the parts of the body presented in the song and make a link with the corresponding verbs, ex: legs - walk; eyes – cry, hands - work, and so on.

#### LISTENING ACTIVITY:

The teacher plays the song and stops it in order to allow them to listen line by line. Students listen to the song and sing it out loud several times.

#### OBSERVATIONS

---



---

TRAINING TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

SCHOOL TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

#### REFERENCES:

Moonshadow by Cat Stevens retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPazGVuBXm>

**PRADO VERANIEGO SCHOOL**  
**LESSON PLAN No. 28**  
**MORNING SHIFT**

TEACHER'S NAME: Cristian Palomino

DATE: October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

GRADE: 702

TOPIC: Performing the role play

TIME: 11:00 – 12:00

GOAL: Developing the links between the vocabulary, structures, and phrases and the intended meanings they convey in the context of a moral story.

**ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS**

1. Recognizes the pronunciation of some words and phrases and links them to the intended meaning they convey.
2. Expresses complete sentences through a role play performance.
3. Collaborates with some team members to perform a role play.

GRAMMAR: Simple Past and Simple Present Tenses

KEY VOCABULARY: Village, city, forest, decide, to cross, fear, someone true colours, bear, among others.

MATERIALS: Script.

WARM UP: Each student has his/her script and reads it for him/herself to check his/her pronunciation and fluency for the performance.

CONTROLLED PRACTICE: Students come together by groups and rehearse their scripts. In case they do not know how to pronounce some words, the teacher will help them with that.

LISTENING ACTIVITY: The teacher plays the video of the story and helps all students with the pronunciation of some words.

FREE PRACTICE: They come again to their groups and practice together the script, they read out loud. Practicing not only the pronunciation they have acquired but they will also practice their turn in the story, as well as their movements for it.

OBSERVATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 TRAINING TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SCHOOL TEACHER'S SIGNATURE

REFERENCES: The bear and the two travellers retrieved from:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLjR1ra0Nb4>

## Annex 13: Field Note 8

FIELD LOGBOOK No. 8

Practice teacher: Juan Carlos Beltrán

SCHOOL: IED Prado Veraniego

DATE: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015

TIME: 11:00 –12:15 p.m. GRADE: 701

ACTIVITY	TEXTUAL MARKER	ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION	COMMENTS/PROPOSAL
Role Play practice: Students are asked to watch the video (the bear and the two travellers) paying attention to the turns of speech and their specific character's movement. Then, they are divided in their respective role play groups. First the homework about looking for pronunciation and meanings of unknown words is demanded from them. Then, they practice by themselves while the teacher goes around from group to group listening to them, and making some corrections when needed.	Teacher was acting more as an observer rather than correcting them, so that students were able to rehearse their lines without being corrected all the time.	Acting as an observer helps the students to feel more comfortable when rehearsing.	In communicative activities like role playing correction can be counterproductive as students need to develop confidence in their performance.	
	Just some of the students actually did the homework. Some students read words by word, and some rehearse by heart, but with the help of the script from time to time. Some rehearse fluently and some gained fluency with the practice. The majority pronounce with the correct pronunciation. Many of them take into account teacher's correction. Some of them Write down the correct pronunciation of words. Three Ss. Correct his classmate's pronunciation. And two correct their own pronunciation when they realize he has made a mistake. – speaking strategy – Two of them pronounce some of his lines with the Indian accent of the video and with the correct intonation. One student explains his classmate how to pronounce and how to act. The majority act their character well. One is able to recognize by listening to others speech his moment of acting.	Practicing and repeating their lines was a great exercise for them; they were able to improve a lot: pronunciation, fluency, acting, rehearsing by heart. It can be seen that the great majority improved their pronunciation and many rehearsed fluently. I think that having practice reading with collocations helped them to do it fluently. Some of them were able to rehearse with a suitable intonation. The teacher played a major role in the improvements mentioned as he corrected them from time to time and modelled the pronunciation for them. I think that the way the organisation of activities (listening, pre-communicative and communicative) helped as well in their improvement. Students developed their own strategies for correcting: writing down the corrections of the teacher, repeating the correct pronunciation of a word, correcting to others in his group, rehearsing by themselves and listening to the video at home. Students became aware of their own mistakes and some of them even corrected their own pronunciation when they got aware of the mistake.	Role playing creates a positive environment to improve the speaking skills as they permit students to repeat many times the same words and phrases, students improve a lot in their pronunciation and fluency. Acting seems to be a very encouraging activity for them, as it is a different activity that takes them out of the regular activities. Having read the scripts making pauses between collocations and asking students to repeat the lines with the help of the pauses of the collocations help in the improvement of the pronunciation, and fluency. The teacher provides an environment by creating the activities, serves as a model for the students, corrects, plans the sequence of the classes, allowing them to learn and train partial skills to be used during communicative activities as a whole skill practice. Students have their own important role: the attitude they have towards the activities proposed, the time they dedicate for practicing, and homework; They must pay attention to the teachers' comments and corrections, the corrections only have a good effect if they are taken into account. Self-correcting with time becomes an oral strategy for monitoring the speech.	Students can be encouraged and trained to correct others mistakes, allowing them to increase classroom interaction (ZDP) Further investigation taking into account the role of using collocations and pauses among the phrases should be done, as it seems to be useful for the development of both listening and speaking skills. Metacognition abilities should be developed among students so that they become more aware of their role as students in the development of their communicative skills.
	Students smiled to each other when the teacher congratulates them. ... Got motivated. Encouraged with words like "¡bien!"	Encouraging students and congratulating them helps to motivate them to practice more.	Teacher plays an important role in the motivation of the students, not only when choosing interesting topics, didactic materials and adjusting language challenges, but also when encouraging students or congratulating them, as they become motivated when victories are highlighted.	

## Annex 14: Field Note 6

FIELD LOGBOOK No. 6

Practice teacher: Juan Carlos Beltrán

SCHOOL: IED Prado Veraniego

DATE: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015

TIME: 11:00 – 12:20 p.m. GRADE: 701

ACTIVITY	TEXTUAL MARKER	ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION	COMMENTS/PROPOSAL
<p>Warming Up: (Pre-listening &amp; pre-communicative activities)</p> <p>A Ppt. presentation displayed sentences from the main task video to prepare students with vocabulary. Slides presented sentences with explanatory images for asking Ss about meanings. The sentences were selected from key ideas for understanding the story. Ss were asked to repeat phrases and words. Finally, asked them what the video would be about, to allow them to create hypotheses based on the vocabulary and phrases seen. While reading the phrases the simple past tense was explained, specially the pronunciation of some verbs (regular ending -ed)</p>	<p>Students were paying more attention than in other classes due to the images, and because they had to repeat the phrases. Students guessed the meaning of words and phrases with the help of the images and the teacher's non-verbal "performance". Students repeated words, collocations, and phrases read by the teacher; some with a suitable pronunciation trying to imitate the teacher. They repeated verb pronunciation both in present and in past. E.g. live-lived, come – came...</p> <p>T: (Pointing at the image and phrase) "Say: the forest was thick and dark"</p> <p>Students: "the forest was thick and dark"</p> <p>S13: "el bosque era oscuro y ¿qué?"</p> <p>T: "Thick, What is the meaning of thick? [...]" Showing that the student not only repeated the words but he was using the meaning of the words <i>forest</i> and <i>dark</i> which had just been explained with a previous slide. Students inferred the content of the moral-story. Many wrote phrases on their notebooks.</p>	<p>Reading to them the phrases while they read the sentences along with the images, motivates them, helping them to be attentive to audio-visual material. Image improved interaction with the students by asking them for meanings without translating into Spanish. Teachers' input help Ss. learning and practicing pronunciation, words and collocations.</p> <p>Listening it's easier when the teacher reads making small pauses among collocations, and then reads the whole phrase all together. Taking notes seems to motivates them.</p>	<p><u>Using phrases in conjunction with images in the slides, increase attention and motivation, as they feel motivated when understanding due to the images. Repeating what they listen helps them to stay focused as well. Images foster English classroom interaction as they allow to bypass the use of the mother tongue. Images help to improve semantic competence by learning vocabulary in context. Nonverbal communication allows them to understand meanings. The way the teacher reads impacts Ss listening: small pauses among collocations allow them to find boundaries among lexical units, understand words, and store collocations in memory, which will eventually help them for word recognition. Even more if students are asked to repeat the same collocations and phrases.</u> [Small pauses when reading is valid for a basic level, this can be withdrawn according the Ss level increase.]</p>	<p><u>Images must be selected in a way that they hold the meaning of the whole phrase in just one image, rather than having many images on one phrase. This strengthens understanding significantly.</u></p> <p><u>When designing tech resources teacher's can also use visual autonomy in order help students understanding meanings easier.</u></p> <p>Teacher must adjust his speech to the level of his students, taking into account their vocabulary level, and their listening capability in terms of speech rate.</p>

<p>Listening Activity: Animated video with the short moral story "the bear and the two travellers. This story has an Indian accent. Students saw the whole video, and were asked for the moral of the story. Word recognition Ex: Ss organise phrases in the correct order according to the video. Phrases were divided into collocations that were displayed in rectangles. The video sounded 3 times and was paused between phrases.</p>	<p>Ss watched the video silently, seemed interested in the video as they spoke less than in other classes. Ss were attentive to the listening to complete the task. When checking students' answers it was seen that the majority was able to organise phrases. Some more phrases than others. The majority was able to understand first words from sentences even if they could not understand the whole phrase.</p>	<p>When they organise collocations into a phrase they: organize, become aware of collocations, recognize more words than in a fill in the blank exercise. Understanding first words from phrases shows that the pauses help them to understand easier.</p>	<p>Pausing a video or song among phrases or parts allow them to understand easier the words, as it helps them to divide the continuum in speech, into understandable or processable chunks of information. As word recognition is directly related to identifying borders among the lexical units. And identifying the beginning of a sentence makes it easier for the listener to perceive and comprehend of the rest of the sentence. [Again this shall be done according to the students' level, because pausing can also impair understanding if it is done continuously.]</p>	<p><u>It is always necessary to give an example of the way to solve a task in the worksheets, and it's advisable to explain the instructions of the exercise out of the example.</u></p>
<p>Closure: The teacher invited students to listen to other English accents different from the standard (American and British), so that they would be able to understand different dialects as it was the Indian accent.</p> <p>The students were divided into 2 main groups in order to make discipline easier to control when making a role play. Subgroups of 4 or 5 students were created. Each member of the group had a different character in the story.</p> <p>As homework, Students had to search in the webpage <a href="http://www.howjsay.com">www.howjsay.com</a> the way words of their lines were pronounced; They were asked to write down the word they want to listen in the word-box, and write the pronunciation they hear in their notebooks.</p>	<p>Students listened and identified words and phrases when listening to an Indian accent, and listen to the reflection on different accents.</p> <p>Dividing the group into two main groups, helped to depressurise the classroom atmosphere, as undisciplined students got separated.</p> <p>At the end of the class S 19 asked in Spanish if she could go to the toilet, So the teacher asked her to say it in English, because she didn't know the teacher asked her to ask their classmates. And many of them answer in a chorus: "May I go to the bathroom"; then she was able to ask for the permission in English.</p>	<p>Exposing students to other types of accents different than the standards help them to be prepared to understand other accents, increasing their listening skill. Social communicative activities like role playing demand having a good class environment where students work instead of being undisciplined (talking, playing and so on.) Students learnt to ask permission to go to the bathroom by interacting with their classmates, as this situation happened many times along the classes. Students practice and use language communicatively with this interactions, as they had a real communicative intention and not an exercise inside the class.</p>	<p>Listening skill can be improved as well when giving Ss. the opportunity to listen to different accents; giving them the opportunity of becoming more interculturally competent. Development of speaking activities must be based upon respecting one another by listening to the classmates and a compromise to be engaged in the activity, as well as interacting using the foreign language as much as possible. The teacher plays a major role in the creation of a proper environment for the communicative activities when creating the groups, it was necessary to divide the class (40 Ss) into 2 groups of 20, this first division allow the teacher to separate undisciplined students and groups, which at the same time allowed the students to select the group members by themselves. <a href="http://www.howjsay.com">www.howjsay.com</a> is a technological resource useful to help students to develop their listening skill and pronunciation depending. it served as a pre-communicative activity that allow Ss. to learn the pronunciation of words they would use during the role play activity in the subsequent classes. Classroom interaction is present among the students when they interact among themselves, like asking how to ask permission to go to the toilet. Even if they ask their partners in Spanish, the answer is received in English. Thus, the classroom becomes a real context of conversation, as the communicative act is not an exercise, but a real need, with a real communicative intention.</p>	

## Annex 15: Field Note 5

Initial Field Notes: Diagnosis lesson plan –year 2015-

FIELD LOGBOOK No. 5

Practice teacher: Juan Carlos Beltrán

SCHOOL: IED Prado Veraniego

DATE: 15 May 2015

TIME: 11:00 12:20

GRADE: Seventh 701

ACTIVITY	TEXTUAL MARKER	ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION	COMMENTS/PROPOSAL
<p>Warming Up: Teacher asks students for their previous knowledge about the prepositions of place using a digital image. So that they could use them in a conversation during the class. Teacher uses Total Physical Response to help students interiorize the vocabulary (Prepositions of place). He asks them to place their hand on their head, under their chin, and so on...</p>	<p>T: "Repeat after me: hands in my pockets" (Placing them inside the pocket) Ss: "Hands inside my pocket" (placing theirs inside their pockets) T: "Hands behind" (placing them behind his back) Ss: "Hands behind" (putting theirs accordingly) T: "Hands in my pockets" (without moving his body). Ss repeated and placed their hands in their pockets. (Without the need of observing the teacher's movement). The teacher used the same procedure with different prepositions.</p>	<p>Students are engaged with the activity, even if some of them don't know the vocabulary. Some students learnt vocabulary with the help of TPR.</p>	<p><u>The nonverbal communication and movement allows them to understand and learn the meaning of words.</u></p>	<p>Their attention when repeating the pronunciation of the words was focused better when repeating in a continuous, and not word by word. Being standing might be helpful for them to focus their attention when learning the vocabulary, since more students participated than in previous sessions.</p>
<p>Then, by pairs, Ss prepare a conversation to be presented during the following week. Ss should use questions to guide the conversation: "Where is the conversation taking place? Who is speaking?" Ss search in the dictionary the vocabulary they would use in their role play. Ss should use prepositions of time and there is and there are structures to locate objects in spaceplace. Each of them must use 2 affirmative sentences, 2 negative, and 2 interrogative sentences in their conversation. The teacher explained them that the intention of the conversation was to locate an object somewhere.</p>	<p>It was necessary to repeat the instruction several times. Even for the ones who were silent. Some Ss. said: "osea que ¿tenemos que colocar cosas en algun lugar?" The teacher answered: "yes! That's right" Some of them were able to answer the first questions, regarding the context of the conversation, and decide the vocabulary they would use in it. A couple for instance, was using Spanish to create their conversation; they said they would translate afterwards. No one was able to finish the conversation during the first part, so they were supposed to finish it as homework.</p>	<p>Creating a conversation took them a lot of time, because they were not used to this kind of exercises, lacked vocabulary and attention during instructions and exercises. The questions and explanation of intention (functional meaning) of the conversation were accurate to guide the creation of the conversation. Using the mother tongue can help students to plan their discourse, taking into account that their current level of English does not allow them to plan it directly in English.</p>	<p><u>Speaking is developed with time and practice.</u> It involves learning vocabulary, structures, and pronunciation (pre-communicative), and <u>planning speech.</u> <u>Contextual questions help Ss. imagine social situations to use the language in a non-linguistic reality, to plan conversations, and to become aware of communicative contexts.</u> <b>Providing a model for the conversation is a good tool; listening gives input to develop their spoken language.</b> <u>Using vocabulary and structures learnt during the listening and pre-communicative stages in conversations, help Ss. to internalise the language -in its different levels.</u> Using the <u>Mother tongue when planning a conversation in their current level allows them to link what they are learning with what they already know –Spanish.</u></p>	<p>All of this processes take a lot of time to develop, and helping the students to create dialogs, will demand a lot classes to help them develop the skills required to create their own conversations and discourse.</p>

## Annex 16: Field Note 7

**FIELD LOGBOOK No.**

**Practice teacher:** Cristian Palomino

**SCHOOL:** IED Prado Veraniego

**DATE:** 29 September 2015

**TIME:** 11:00 – 12:20 p.m. **GRADE:** 702

ACTIVITY	TEXTUAL MARKER	ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION	COMMENTS/PROPOSAL
<p>Role Play practice: Students are divided in groups for the role play (the bear and the two travellers. The students gathered according to the characters they have, for instance, the 4 "Thanus" get together apart from the 4 "Shams". The teacher goes to each group per time a reads the lines for each character, to model the pronunciation; the teacher reads line by line making small pauses between the collocations to make the exercise easier for them, for instance, "The next day, -- Thanu and Sham -- left -- in the early -- hours of the day" . Students must repeat the pronunciation.</p>	<p>Students listened to the teacher reading the lines, and repeated them. Some of them repeated with accurate pronunciation; it was necessary to correct their pronunciation as well. T: "Repeat after me: &lt;He held his breath and laid on the ground, pretending to be dead.&gt;" (in low speech rate) Ss: "He held his breath and laid on the ground, pretending to be dead." T: (Points at the word "breath") "No, guys. You say breath – emphasizing on the /th/ sound" SS: "Breath" (with accurate pronunciation). T: "Excellent, guys!"</p>	<p>Making groups of the same character made easier work with them the pronunciation.</p> <p>Even though this is a communicative activity, they are practicing the listening skill, as it is not only the video but also the teacher's speech that serves as a model for the oral production.</p> <p>Correction of mistakes played a major role in the improvement of their pronunciation.</p>	<p>The way the teacher creates the groups for the communicative activities plays a major role for the development of a proper environment for communication. Role playing needs preparation, and having all the students practice at the same time makes difficult to help all groups at the same time in the initial phases of the practice, so dividing them into groups of the same characters when working partial skills like pronunciation allows to control time better, and helps the students to practice their role at the same time and not only to listen the corrections made to one but to the ones made to the others.</p> <p>Input is given to the students not only through videos, but the teacher's interaction is a source of input as well. Having the students repeat what the teacher says helps them to develop simultaneously their listening and speaking skills.</p> <p>The teacher's role as a corrector makes a major impact in their learning, in this phase specifically their pronunciation.</p>	<p>When creating a role play activity, the teacher must be aware of the use of time, the need of creating a proper environment by the selection of the groups, his role as a model for students' speech, and his role when correcting the students' pronunciation (only when developing partial skills, in the full rehearsal it is better to allow them to speak fluently, and if necessary correct them at the end.).</p>

## Annex 17: Field Note 9

FIELD LOGBOOK No. 9 Practice teacher: Cristian Camilo Palomino Herrera

SCHOOL: IED Prado Veraniego DATE: April 9th, 2015 TIME: 9:45 – 11:00 a.m. GRADE: 702

ACTIVITY	TEXTUAL MARKER	ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION	COMMENTS/PROPOSAL
<p>Warming Up: Teacher shows the PowerPoint presentation (for the digital flashcards) about <i>there is</i> and <i>there are</i>. Students see the flashcards and use the dictionary to look for the unknown vocabulary.</p>	<p>Students give short answers when being asked. Some Ss are able to make short sentences using <i>there is</i> and <i>there are</i>. The PP presentation helps them understand the concepts easier and their attention is present.</p> <p><b>T: Now, we're going to see a PowerPoint presentation about countables with <i>there is</i> and <i>there are</i>.</b></p> <p><b>S1: Uy, sí, profe, más chévere que las guías que hacemos en la clase.</b></p> <p><b>T: Why?</b></p> <p><b>S1: ¿Por qué? Pues profe, porque es más llamativo ver colores y dibujos que un poco de letras ahí en una hoja.</b></p> <p>Sometimes they lack of pronunciation.</p>	<p>Despite the students do not give complete answers, they remember previous vocabulary learned in the last session and are engaged with the activity.</p>	<p>Use of <b>technological resources</b> as a way of interaction between the students and the knowledge they are learning, since it helps them to feel engaged with the activity and the topics.</p> <p>Students' ability for discriminating words and phrases in a context as their vocabulary learning improves as well.</p>	<p>Exercises in which there are ICTs are very helpful for the development of topics in EFL. It is not that technological resources serve as a tool to provide students with all the information, but a "mediator" between the students and their knowledge.</p>
<p>Topic: Vocabulary review. Students make pairs to make the previous activity. Later, the teacher is in charge of reading the sentences in order to make them conscious of the pronunciation of the phrases, as well as repeat them.</p>	<p>Teacher asks one S to help him make an example of what they must do. After that, the teacher goes around the classroom to check the activity.</p> <p>Some students don't feel confident to ask their classmates and make some mistakes regarding pronunciation, which the teacher helps to correct. Students use their notebooks to check the structure of the verb to be and the present simple tense and try to use that to make questions.</p>	<p>Through the representation that the T and S make, students can either imitate that or use features to make the activity by themselves.</p> <p>Correction is made in order to start improving their listening and speaking skill (with words, a basic form).</p>	<p><b>Teacher's role</b> as a guide for helping students with pronunciation. By "imitating" or "repeating" patterns, students may feel more comfortable with the activity, as well as can gain confidence by having structure written in the notebook.</p>	