

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES TO DEVELOP SPEAKING SKILLS WITH MIXED-LEVEL
COLLEGE STUDENTS IN AN ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLUB

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To my mom. Words are not enough to thank you for your unconditional support.

To my beloved grandma. I can only picture how proud you would be. Although no longer with me, all sweet memories remain. Love never dies.

To my boyfriend for reading each chapter countless times, for your encouragement and support during each stage of this process.

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ABSTRACT

With the aim of improving undergraduate students' communicative competence in English as a foreign language, the English for General and Academic Purposes courses at Universidad del Valle developed a number of outreach activities to promote the autonomous practice of the language. Included among these activities are the conversation clubs offered to students of all majors and levels. These clubs are led by students of the foreign language teaching BA as part of their practicum. The present study reports on the experience of leading one of these clubs during the second semester of 2018. Based on it, I suggest guidelines on the activities, topics, materials and strategies used that might be effective for future conversation club leaders. This is a case study design with a mixed-methods approach. Data were collected through a field observation journal, a focus group interview, and a survey. The results show a list of activities and teaching strategies implemented to achieve two goals: develop students' speaking skills and help members cope with their limited linguistic resources. Furthermore, results display evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention proposal.

Keywords: conversation clubs, mixed-ability groups, speaking skills, communication strategies.

RESUMEN

Con el objetivo de mejorar las competencias comunicativas en inglés como lengua extranjera de los estudiantes de pregrado de los cursos de Inglés con Fines Generales y Académicos de la Universidad del Valle, la reforma curricular de esta área incluyó una serie de actividades extracurriculares para promover la práctica autónoma de esta lengua. Entre estas se encuentran los clubes de conversación ofrecidos a estudiantes de todas las carreras y niveles. Estos clubes son dirigidos por estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Inglés-Francés como parte de su práctica docente. El presente estudio versa sobre la experiencia de dirigir uno de estos clubes durante el segundo semestre del año 2018. Con base en ello, recomiendo actividades y directrices acerca de los temas, materiales y estrategias utilizadas que podrían ser efectivas en las planeaciones de futuros facilitadores de clubes de conversación. En términos metodológicos, este trabajo se enmarca en el modelo de estudio de

caso, añadiendo algunos de los instrumentos propios de la investigación cuantitativa como la encuesta, considerándose así un estudio de diseño mixto. Los datos fueron reunidos también a través de diarios de campo y una entrevista a un grupo focal. Los resultados muestran una lista de actividades y estrategias de enseñanza implementadas para alcanzar dos objetivos: desarrollar las habilidades del habla de los estudiantes y ayudarlos a hacer frente a sus limitados recursos lingüísticos con evidencia adjunta de su efectividad.

Palabras clave: clubes de conversación, grupos de habilidades mixtas, habilidades del habla, estrategias de comunicación.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In many countries around the world, English is a mandatory foreign language in the curriculum at all educational levels. This is due to the fact that English is recognized as an international language for science, technology, business and diplomacy. At college level, English has traditionally been taught from a Language for Specific Purposes (LSP henceforth) approach, meaning that the skills to be emphasized, the contents to be included and the sequencing criteria were based on students' academic and professional needs. In turn, this meant that most college level English courses focused on reading skills for understanding academic and technical texts (Mayora, 2013). However, with the increase in international mobility and the advancement of information and communication technologies, many universities have realized that future professionals need to be fluent not only at reading, but at a larger variety of linguistic and communicative skills.

This was the case of Universidad del Valle, one of the largest state-funded universities in Colombia. This university has among its main goals educating students of high academic competence able to create, transform and spread knowledge. Acknowledging the pivotal role the command of a foreign language plays in achieving this goal, the university has engaged in a transformation of its traditional ESP courses to develop not only reading, but all skills, and include a more communicative-oriented perspective. In addition, the university seeks to comply with official linguistic and educational regulations from the government, which has decreed that all professional should reach at least a B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001) by the time they complete undergraduate studies.

Hence, the language courses offered have evolved throughout the years in order to meet constantly changing students' expectations and job market demands. Around three decades ago, they were solely based on the LSP modality focusing on the comprehension of written academic texts. Time after, listening comprehension of academic material was also included to a lesser extent. Recently, in 2016, a new curricular restructuring proposal was designed to approach language learning and teaching from a communicative perspective, targeting the development of the four skills for academic as well as general purposes.

In this new proposal, it was clear that the amount of in-class-work time was insufficient for the full development of communicative competence. Therefore, the proposal includes a set of out-of-class activities to provide students with opportunities for additional exposure and practice in using the language. These include autonomous work in a computer software, team teaching, tutoring sessions, cinema forum, song, reading and conversation clubs. The latter is the focus of this study.

The conversation clubs aim at developing students' oral production in an informal setting where they can be exposed to meaningful interaction in the target language under appropriate guidance throughout their learning process. The clubs, paralleling the structure of the four mandatory English courses, comprise four levels (A1-B1). The purpose of this arrangement is to plan each session so that it meets students' needs and aligns with the contents they work on in class.

In the year 2018, I was assigned to lead one of the conversation clubs as part of my practicum as a student in the B.Ed. in the foreign language teaching program of the university. Faced with this task, I encountered a number of challenges: a received little guidance on how to plan and arrange a conversation club of this sort; attendance was low at the beginning; and above all, students' level differed substantially.

The conversation club of this study targeted students enrolled in the English course level I (A1). However, according to a placement test administered to first-year students during the first period of 2018, the attendees' level ranged from A0 to A2. Furthermore, the club also welcomed students from advanced levels (B1-B2) who attended out of will or who were placed in the basic levels due to administrative issues, and thus, were required to attend the club meetings.

Given this scenario, this study adopts a case study approach to document the designing, implementing and evaluating of activities and teaching strategies to foster the oral production in a mixed-level group of participants attending the conversation club sessions.

OBJECTIVES

Goal: To design and evaluate activities and guidelines to be implemented in a conversation club for mixed-level college students learning English as a Foreign Language in a university context.

Aims:

- To design different activities and materials for a conversation club for mixed-level students.
- To implement and evaluate the designed activities.
- To draw guidelines for the implementation of conversation clubs for future facilitators.

RATIONALE

Conversation clubs constitute a valuable strategy academic settings can integrate into their curriculum in order to encourage the development of communicative skills in the target language. The literature review revealed there is a lack of research on academic clubs to promote language practice. At Universidad del Valle these co-curricular activities are still a recent alternative that pose some challenges to facilitators such as attendees' differential level or limited training on how to run these clubs. Revelo (2017) contributed to the research of Red CAAL conversation clubs by proposing a set of activities to develop oral skills. Likewise, other studies regarding conversation clubs have focused on activity planning and strategy use (Geliş & Kabul, 2016; Urrea & Dimaté, 2014; Fernández, 2008). In spite of their practicality, neither has delved into the mixed-ability variable in their pedagogical proposals.

Considering the above, the present study contributes to the field of English Language Teaching by addressing the mixed-ability factor into club lesson planning. Homogeneous groups in language learning settings are rare. This difference becomes more noticeable while practicing speaking given that its high demand on automaticity requires learners to quickly resort to the language they already know. In a scenario where basic and advanced members practice together, the planning requires to carefully balance the type of activities and materials, providing supports for debutant learners, and freer practice for more advanced students. This study attempted to provide guidelines on how to profit from members' different abilities in English academic clubs.

In regard to practical application, the conversation club gave undergraduate students the opportunity to practice their speaking skills through engaging activities, and authentic material. In contrast to the English classroom, the club made it possible to address students' doubts and concerns individually within a supportive environment. Moreover, it provided learners with some strategies to overcome communication shortcomings and improve their oral production and language learning skills overall. Another contribution was using authentic materials and tasks to portray the English language not only as a means to expand on academic knowledge and improve employment opportunities, but also as a tool to enjoy other types of content and live new experiences. The former contributions aligned with the main purpose of the ESP program which attempts to help undergraduate students achieve a holistic language competence in order to comply with current language demands in academic and professional settings.

PREVIOUS WORK

Considering the aim of this study, the search for background studies focused on those that addressed the development of oral skills of learners of English as a Foreign Language from different levels of competence and from different educational contexts. First, studies conducted abroad are reviewed to later progress to studies in the Colombian context.

Benefits of out-of-class speaking activities for EFL students

The following work carried out by Geliş & Kabul (2016) constitutes an action research proposal that inquired about the benefits of out-of class speaking activities to enhance the oral skills of advanced EFL students (B2 level) at the Department of English Translation and Interpretation in a state-funded University in Turkey. The twenty one participants of the study were first-year students who joined the six-week program voluntarily. Each of them was required to choose one activity among the following: *fantasy-role playing, continuous story, debate, radio program, broadcasting on periscope*.

In order to register the effectiveness of the activities, the researcher administered an open-ended survey at the end of every meeting that asked students about the activity they chose, the reason why they joined it and the perceived benefits of each in the development of their oral production. The main findings are summarized below.

Table 1. Summary of results from the Geliş & Kabul (2016) study

Activity	Description	Perceived advantages/gains	Perceived disadvantages
<i>Fantasy role-playing</i>	Participants took the role of a fictional character. Together they set the context and established the rules.	It allowed them to speak spontaneously, solve problems cooperatively, foster critical thinking, and expand their vocabulary due to the different situations they were exposed to.	None
<i>Continuous</i>	To create a story together by adding on	It compelled them to think and speak fast in the target language.	None

<i>storytelling</i>	each member's former utterance	It helped them boost their creativity and their listening skills given that they had to anticipate their partners' possible contributions to come out with their own sentences swiftly.	
<i>Debate</i>	Members discussed current issues in the fields of technology, culture and health	They could expand not only on their knowledge of English, but also on their knowledge of other subjects, and even of other cultures. The research done before every meeting helped them to get in contact with authentic sources in the target language. Improvement in their vocabulary as well as in their ability to use it appropriately depending on the context was also noticed.	None
<i>Radio program</i>	Students took on different roles (host, guess, etc). In addition they were also in charge of selecting the program's topics.	The activity helped them reduce the anxiety of speaking in English; made them take part in real-life conversations; pushed them to carefully choose the vocabulary to be used according to the situation; improved their accent; and reduced the frequency with which they translated in their heads from Turkish to English before speaking.	None
<i>Broadcasting on Periscope</i>	Students broadcasted videos on periscope, a social media platform for live video streaming	The possibility to engage in authentic interaction with other English speakers. Learning informal speech, creating a friend network to continue practicing on their own.	Sometimes they felt discouraged because only few people watched their streamings.

Given these results, the author suggests including quantitative research methodology in further studies so as not to rely only on subjective data. Moreover, emphasis was made on the implementation of assessment and evaluation instruments to keep track of the participants' progress. To conclude, the author advises carrying out future research in this area for a longer period of time, with a larger sample, and with participants from all levels.

Improving oral production in adult EFL students at the language center of Tijuana

In this action research project, Fernández (2008) aimed at improving the oral production of adult English learners at the language center of Universidad Autónoma de Baja California by explicitly training them in the use of learning strategies. The participants were 13 females and 5 males with ages ranging from 18 to 40. Only four of them were exclusively attending the English sessions. To help them improve their performance, the author designed an intervention program comprising a set of interactive speaking activities that fostered the use of learning strategies.

The intervention plan was carried out in ten *reflective mini-cycles*. Each of them started by introducing the learning strategies that were supposed to be used right after in the speaking activity stage. The course of these topic-based and task-based activities was registered in the author's field notes. Then, participants self-assessed their performance with a questionnaire designed by the author. Lastly, the researcher used the feedback from each source to adapt the following interventions according to the students' response. Other data collection instruments included a questionnaire for English teachers that inquired about the most suitable activities to improve oral production in adult learners, and a students' questionnaire that collected personal information of the subjects of the study.

After the data analysis the author concluded that the implementation of interactive speaking activities that included the explicit teaching of learning strategies was useful to improve the students' speaking skills. The following changes support this claim: students were not afraid of speaking, they were eager to participate in the majority of the activities; the lack of vocabulary did not hinder their speaking performance due to the use of learning strategies (such as use of synonyms and mimicry); students could express themselves without relying on their mother tongue; after improving their fluency during the speaking activities, the participants gained confidence in their ability to learn a language as adults, a common concern they shared during the sessions.

To conclude the author suggests creating a stress-free classroom environment; acknowledging the learners' different learning styles and pace; helping them set learning goals and walking them through them; working with task-based rather than discussion-based activities considering the former promotes cooperative work and reduces the anxiety of

individual exposure to public speaking; designing activities that promote the development of speaking along with other skills; and encouraging students to learn and practice the target language autonomously by selecting and using other resources apart from classroom material.

Communication strategies used by different level L2 English learners in oral interaction

In this mixed-method approach, Rosas (2016) describes the communication strategies used by EFL learners from different proficiency levels during authentic spoken interaction in college level classes in Chile. This research was carried out with a group of 9 undergraduate students, 3 males and 6 females whose ages ranged from 18 to 23, and an English assistant who served as an interlocutor. Three participants were randomly selected from each level of the English courses (*Lengua Inglesa I, II & III*). According to the tutors in charge, the courses corresponded to beginner, pre-intermediate, and intermediate levels.

To guarantee the accuracy of the results, the author included a brief questionnaire addressing the students' language learning background in the target language before entering the University, and informal interviews with the tutors of the English courses to corroborate the correspondence between the students' course placement and their language proficiency. The recordings of the free-conversation activity constituted the main instrument to gather data. Afterward, a post interview was conducted to bring forth the students' perceptions on their use of communication strategies during the spontaneous conversation.

The conducted analysis reported a link between the students' proficiency level and the frequency with which they resorted to certain communication strategies. Side with previous literature, there was a tendency for beginner learners to use CSs more frequently due to their lack of linguistic resources. Nonetheless, the data also revealed there was not an inversely proportional relation between the participants' proficiency level and the frequency with which they resorted to CSs. In this case, intermediate students used CSs more often compared to pre-intermediate participants. The difference lied in the complexity of the strategies students from each level decided to choose. A summary of the main findings is displayed below.

Table 2. Type of strategies students use according to their level (Adapted from Rosas, 2016).

Level	PMS 1 related to L2 resource deficit	PMS 2 related to processing time pressure	PMS 3 related to own-output problems
Beginner	-Message abandonment -Code switching -Literal translation -Direct appeal for help	-Unfulfilled pauses -Self repetition	None
Pre-intermediate	-Foreignizing -Circumlocution	None	None
Intermediate	None	-Sound lengthening -Fillers	-Error repair

To conclude, the author remarked the natural setting under which the study was carried contributed to the learners' communication, and consequently, the use of the strategies. Therefore, she suggests future researchers in the field of CSs to use a free conversation activity in order to successfully elicit their use. Finally, the author advises educators to observe students' use of strategic communication as it can provide a glimpse into students' interlanguage development, and inform how to help students deal with communication breakdowns.

Estrategias de enseñanza y aprendizaje en el club de conversación de inglés de la licenciatura en lengua castellana, inglés y francés.

In this qualitative study with a case-study design, Urrea & Dimaté (2014) categorized learning and teaching strategies to promote the development of oral skills used by two English native assistants in a conversation club that targeted B.Ed students in English and French languages from Universidad de la Salle, Bogotá, Colombia. Attendance to the conversation club was voluntary. The authors observed and kept notes of a total of ten sessions ranging from 45 to 50 minutes in length. Data collection included class observation forms and teaching journals. These 10 observation focused sessions led to the identification of teaching strategies, learning strategies, and micro and macro skills of oral communication developed and implemented along the observation period.

From the data analysis, the authors concluded that:

-Most of the teaching strategies were directed towards activating students' prior knowledge from their regular English courses. In addition, another recurrent strategy corresponded to pre-instructional strategies focused on enhancing students' span of attention to improve their ability to process new information.

-In the direct learning strategies category the authors identified the use of memory strategies such as *creating mental linkages* and *associating images with words and sounds*. For indirect strategies, they registered metacognitive strategies like *centering the learning* and *lowering anxiety levels* in the category of affective strategies. They also remarked that *overcoming limitations in speaking and writing*, a group of strategies belonging to compensatory strategies, were the trendiest among students. These included using the mother tongue, asking for help, conveying their ideas through gestures, or avoidance when they did not feel ready to engage in the conversation.

-The most frequently micro skill elicited was *producing differences among English phonemes and allophonic variants*. Regarding macro skills, the researchers identified the fostering of communicative competence and the introduction of speaking strategies such as using keywords and guessing the meaning of words based on its context.

-There was also a tendency to promote students' ability to form and link simple structured sentences in order to express their thoughts and feelings. Furthermore, the English assistants aimed at developing students' critical thinking through debates on everyday issues where students could share prior knowledge and personal anecdotes.

In sum, the authors suggest delving deeper into affective and social strategies due to the fact that they focused on other types of strategies. Nonetheless, during the observation period, they could acknowledge their relevance in helping students cope with anxiety, insecurity and other behaviors and beliefs that prevented them from participating and interacting with others,—a key asset considering the intrinsic interactive nature of the spoken language—. Moreover, the researchers encourage other institutions to include conversation clubs as part of their language curricula not only to develop oral skills, but also to foster autonomous work. Lastly, after dealing with low attendance, Urrea & Dimaté highlight the importance of advertising the club's activities to increase students' participation.

Encouraging teenagers to improve speaking skills through games in a Colombian public school

Urrutia and Vega (2010) conducted an action research project to help students develop oral skills through games. The participants were tenth graders of a public school in Colombia. The sample included 20 males and 20 females with ages ranging from 14 to 18 years old. The implementation of the project started with a questionnaire to explore the students' attitudes and perceptions toward the speaking skill. Afterward, another questionnaire was administered to inquire about the activities students preferred during the English lessons. Based on the former data, the authors selected three types of games to be developed throughout three lessons: *story games*, *caring-sharing*, and *guessing and speculation games*. In addition to the aforementioned tools, the researchers used teaching journals, video recordings, and post-activity questionnaires to triangulate the information.

Before the implementation of the project, students described speaking as the most complex skill to learn. Variables that hindered their performance included lack of vocabulary, fear of humiliation, shyness, and insufficient opportunities to speak. In contrast, once the activities were carried out, students were enthusiastic about participating in the target language. According to them, game-based lessons helped them overcome their fear and reluctance toward speaking in English as they allowed them to work cooperatively with their peers, and to participate in a stress-free environment. As a result, students perceived a boost in their confidence during speaking activities, and an improvement in their listening skills as well as in their pronunciation, and vocabulary.

To conclude, the authors advice future researchers in the field to focus not only on entertaining students, but also on achieving goals regarding spoken language features such as fluency, pronunciation, and intonation. Lastly, the author suggests including more lessons, and grouping students by level in order to track their progress according to this variable.

Planning and implementation of activities for an English Conversation Club intended for students of the Foreign Language Pilot Program at Universidad del Valle.

Revelo (2017) implemented and planned a set of activities to promote the development of oral production in the English conversation club for foreign language students of the reformed English for General and Academic Purposes program (also called “experimental phase”) at Universidad del Valle, the same context the current study is set in. To achieve this goal, the author implemented a two-staged action-research study. In the first stage, the author observed sessions of a EGAP level IV course at the University and other conversation clubs in English in different institutions and contexts (Colombo American Binational Center and the conversation club at the State Library). In the second stage, the author started leading her own English conversation club in cooperation with English native assistants and her peer. The 2-hour meetings were held for 25 weeks total. To collect data from the club sessions, an observation column was included in each planning format. The feedback from this source was used to plan future club meetings according to the students’ response. From the two-stage process of the study the author concluded that:

- There is a tendency to lead conversation clubs in couples, and to adopt a task-based approach for the planning of the sessions.
- Due to the non-constraining nature of the clubs it is advisable for future facilitators who want to register the course of their sessions to include a column for the planning and another one for the execution.
- Board games and cultural activities such as celebrating special dates (Halloween) were useful to catch students’ attention.
- Clustering students in different groups throughout the activities served to integrate participants from different proficiency levels.
- Other suggested strategies included providing input, integrating other skills, and assigning preparation time before each task.

-Plannings of conversation clubs intended for college students need to integrate content aligned with the English course syllabus, engaging topics, and the practice of the speaking skill in order to meet the students' needs.

In her final remarks, Revelo (2017) advises future researchers to implement tools to assess the effectiveness of the activities in fostering the students' oral production. Lastly, the club plannings, end result of a cooperatively and constantly improved work based on the facilitators and students' feedback, were attached as a baseline for future club leaders in her research proposal.

From the collective review of these studies, some common trends emerge despite their differences. First, the teaching of the oral skills, either in informal context such as extracurricular conversation clubs or in class, is usually linked with the teaching of communication strategies and language learning strategies. The former are included with the intention of helping student repair and compensate for their linguistic limitations in the flow of oral interaction. It is also recurrent the use of a task based approach and the integration of different skills in these speaking sessions, a depart from the traditional idea that a conversation club implies just a group of people sitting together and speaking or the discussion-based framework. A conversation club, however informal and extracurricular, does require systematic planning. Different interactive and dynamic activities have been implemented leading to different results. Yet, the reduction of anxiety, shyness, the boost of self-confidence and non-linguistic gains are common in most of the studies reviewed.

From a research point of view, the mixed-methods approach is the most prevalent. Qualitative and quantitative data are combined to keep record of students' progress and gain in these studies. Action-research is the second commonest research approach to the study of teaching oral skills.

These key points were taken into consideration in the design of the current study. The design will be explained in the methods section, but before that, it is important to consider the theoretical foundations that informed the study.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present chapter deals with the theoretical background that guided this study. It comprises the following models and concepts: the speaking skill, models of speaking and communicative competence, communication strategies, activities to foster oral production, mixed-level courses, and conversation clubs.

The Speaking Skill

The definition of speaking has evolved along with the emergence of language teaching methods. Traditional methods such as the audiolingual method regarded speaking in terms of form. Consequently, particular emphasis was placed on mastering language features and achieving native-like pronunciation by means of mimicry and memorization of fixed dialogues (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Conversely, with the development of communicative approaches, the teaching of authentic speech became paramount. In response to the constraining structural view of the language that prevailed in most language teaching settings, Hymes (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 69) coined the term communicative competence to refer to the users' knowledge of the language and their ability to use that knowledge appropriately in different social contexts.

Speaking within this new frame, which aims at reaching the same communicative nature speaking has in L1, is a complex task for students to perform. It is cognitively challenging given that the language user performs many demanding decisions and operations to construct an utterance in a fraction of a second (Dakowska, 2005). This includes choosing what to say, how to say it depending on the situation and saying it correctly according to the language rules. In other words, to become proficient speakers, learners need to integrate all components of authentic speech, namely, linguistic, discourse, formulaic, sociocultural, interactional, and strategic, in order to communicate effectively (Celce-Murcia, 2007).

In the light of the assumptions above, speaking can be defined as the ability in which overlapping mental processes interact with one another to assemble linguistic features into larger units coherently in order to convey meaningful messages to achieve a communicative purpose. In order to succeed, speakers need to know the conventions of the speech events in which they participate (small talk, presentations, debates), and the sociocultural rules of the

context in which the interaction takes place.

Models of Speaking and Communicative Competence

With the new position of speaking in the skills' hierarchy, and the advances in science and technology that contributed to the analysis of the spoken language, scholars across different disciplines proposed several models to better understand speaking in its cognitive and interactional dimension. In the following lines a summary of speaking and communicative models will be provided.

Levelt's speaking model (1995)

According to Levelt (1995) speaking is one of the biggest achievements of human evolution. The author remarks people spend most of their time talking to themselves and to others. Thanks to this asset that allows for cooperative work, humans have assured their survival. Despite its pivotal role, the study of the process behind our ability to speak was rather ignored. The first contributions to the analysis of oral speech came from the fields of linguistics and neurology. These disciplines set the baseline for research on the process of speaking from a psychological perspective, that is, explaining how we get from the intention of conveying a message to its actual articulation. In this sense, Levelt (1995) proposes a three-stage model of the mental mechanisms behind the generation of speech.

In the first stage, called *conceptual preparation*, speakers decide on what they are going to say and how they will say it according to their intention. After this decision has been made, speakers need to decide in which order they are going to convey the content they have selected. This is called the *linearization process*. Another aspect the author remarks is *perspective taking*. Once the content is selected, speakers also choose a perspective on it. This goes from how they decide to convey spatial instructions, for instance, to the stand they take regarding a topic.

In the next stage, called *formulation process*, speakers codify the message they have chosen into linguistic form. Here the speaker performs two operations: *grammatical encoding* and *phonological encoding*. *Grammatical encoding* refers to the process of retrieving words from the mental lexicon and arrange them according to the syntactic rules of the language to

form coherent units of speech. After that, during the *phonological encoding process*, the speaker retrieves the phonological information of each word and the larger units they form as a whole. The final result of this stage is an *articulatory plan* which manifests itself in the form of internal speech.

The previous *articulatory or phonetic plan* is now executed in the final stage called *articulation*. In it, the articulatory system defined as “the muscular machinery that controls lungs, larynx, and vocal tract” (Levelt, Roelofs, Meyer, 1999, pp. 5-6) along with the neural system that commands their synchronized functioning work together to create overt speech.

Lastly, speakers *self-monitor* their performance to detect errors throughout the course of the three stages. According to the author, *self-monitoring* encompasses three phases: *halting*, in which the speaker pauses while delivering their speech because there was a problem in choosing the right word, or because s/he feels further clarification is necessary. Subsequently, in *the editing phase* speakers fix their mistakes using sounds, words or expressions to signal their interlocutor they will correct themselves. To conclude, speakers *re-start to repair* their errors always maintaining syntax integrity

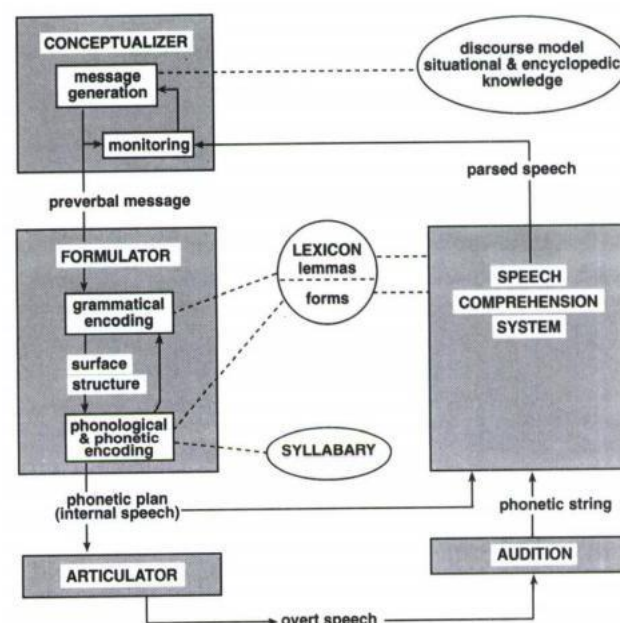


Figure 1. A diagram of the processing components involved in the generation of speech.
(Levelt, 1995, p.1)

Models of Communicative Competence

One of the landmarks in the development of communicative instruction in the field of language teaching is the emergence of the concept of communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972 cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 69). This term refers to language use from a more holistic perspective that acknowledged not only the need to know the language rules, but also the importance of knowing how to use the language appropriately in different social scenarios to communicate effectively. The author set the ground for professionals in the field of foreign or second language teaching to proposed alternative models of communicative competence that attempted to characterize all components of authentic communication in order to set the goals of teaching and device valid assessment procedures from a Communicative Language Teaching Approach.

Canale & Swain (1980) were pioneers in the proposal of a model of communicative competence for learners of an additional language. In their work, they adopted Hymes' components, namely pragmatic, linguistic and sociolinguistic competences, and added a

fourth component they called strategic competence to refer to speakers' ability to solve communication breakdowns, and take action to enhance their communicative performance. Time after, Canale (1983 cited in Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, Thurrell, 1993, p.15) revised the former model by adding the discourse component, that is, the ability to produce and understand different types of oral and written texts by articulating words into larger units (i.e. conversations, plays, essays).

Based on these models Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, Thurrell, (1995) proposed a new construct of communicative competence with the discourse component at its core. In addition, some modifications included the integration of the actional component, defined as "the ability to comprehend and produce all significant speech acts and speech act sets" (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p.42), and replacing the term grammatical competence for the concept of linguistic competence to include phonological features and the lexicon. According to the authors, one of the main differences in comparison to the previous models was the description of each component and the explicitation of how they interact with one another in order to provide a multidimensional view of the communicative competence. Years later, Celce-Murcia (2007) expanded it on the former model so that it fit educational purposes. Therefore, the present study will adopt this proposal.

With a new insight on the role discourse and context take in the teaching of authentic language, Celce-Murcia (2007) proposed the following model:

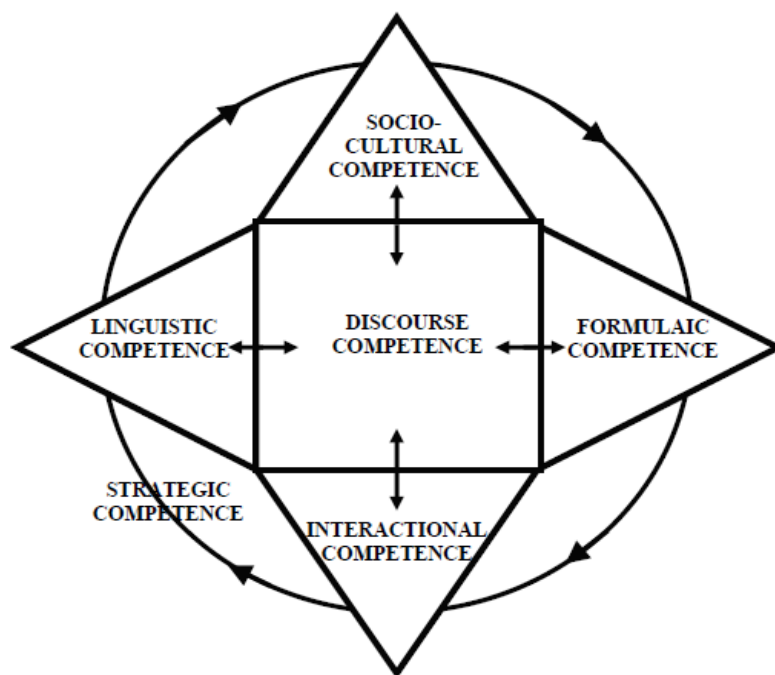


Figure 2. “Revised schematic representation of ‘communicative competence’” (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 44).

It is important to notice that this model does not restrict communication to oral language (speaking and listening) but covers all skills. However, for the purpose of the present study we will focus on oral production. The present chart provides further explanation on each component from the perspective of oral communication.

Table 3. Description of the components of communicative competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007, pp.46-50).

Competence	Definition	Components
Sociocultural	Speakers' knowledge of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic rules that allow them to communicate effectively in different contexts.	- <i>social contextual factors</i>: the participants' age, gender, status, social distance and their relations to each other re: power and affect. - <i>stylistic appropriateness</i>: politeness strategies, a sense of genres and registers. - <i>cultural factors</i>: background knowledge of the target language group, major dialects/regional differences, and cross cultural awareness.
Discourse	Speakers' ability to produce and understand oral and written texts by articulating words into larger units.	- <i>cohesion</i>: conventions regarding use of reference (anaphora/cataphora), substitution/ ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical chains. - <i>deixis</i>: situational grounding achieved through use of personal pronouns, spatial terms (here/there; this/that), temporal terms (now/then; before/after), and textual reference (e.g. the following table, the figure above). - <i>coherence</i>: expressing purpose/intent through appropriate content schemata, managing old and new information, maintaining temporal continuity and other organizational schemata through conventionally recognized means. - <i>generic structure</i>: formal schemata that allow the user to identify an oral discourse segment as a conversation, narrative, interview, service encounter, report, lecture, sermon, etc.
Linguistic	Speakers' knowledge of the language system.	- <i>phonological</i>: includes both segmentals (vowels, consonants, syllable types) and suprasegmentals (prominence/stress, intonation, and rhythm). - <i>lexical</i>: knowledge of both content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives)

		and function words (pronouns, determiners, prepositions, verbal auxiliaries, etc.). - <i>morphological</i>: parts of speech, grammatical inflections, productive derivational processes. - <i>syntactic</i>: constituent/phrase structure, word order (both canonical and marked), basic sentence types, modification, coordination, subordination, embedding.
Formulaic	In contrast to language competence, the formulaic competence refers to the speakers' use of fixed expressions that are recognized by the speaking community as natural formulae.	- <i>routines</i>: fixed phrases like "of course, all of a sudden" and formulaic chunks like "How do you do? I'm fine, thanks; how are you?" - <i>collocations</i>: verb-object: spend money, play the piano adverb adjective: statistically significant, mutually intelligible adjective-noun: tall building, legible handwriting - <i>idioms</i>: e.g., to kick the bucket = to die; to get the ax = to be fired/terminated - <i>lexical frames</i>: e.g., I'm looking for _____. See you _____ (later/tomorrow/ next week, etc)"
Interactional	Speakers' ability to interact appropriately according to the verbal and non-verbal conventions of the different types of exchanges that can take place in the target language.	- <i>actional competence</i>: knowledge of how to perform common speech acts and speech act sets in the target language involving interactions such as information exchanges, interpersonal exchanges, expression of opinions and feelings, problems (complaining, blaming, regretting, apologizing, etc.), future scenarios (hopes, goals, promises, predictions, etc.) - <i>conversational competence</i>: inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation, may be extendable to other dialogic genres: ❖ how to open and close conversations ❖ how to establish and change topics ❖ how to get, hold, and relinquish the floor ❖ how to interrupt ❖ how to collaborate and backchannel, etc. - <i>non-verbal/paralinguistic competence</i> includes:

		❖ kinesics (body language), non-verbal turn-taking signals, backchannel behaviors, gestures, affect markers, eye contact. ❖ proxemics (use of space by interlocutors) ❖ haptic behavior (touching) ❖ non-linguistic utterances with interactional import (e.g. ahhh! Uh-oh. Huh?) the role of silence and pauses.
Strategic	Speakers' ability to solve communication breakdowns, and take action to enhance their learning process as well as to monitor it.	- <i>cognitive</i>: these are strategies making use of logic and analysis to help oneself learn a new language through outlining, summarizing, note taking, organizing and reviewing material, etc. - <i>metacognitive</i>: these strategies involve planning one's learning by making time for homework or for preparation, and engaging in self evaluation of one's success on a given task or on one's overall progress. This is achieved in part by monitoring and noting one's errors, learning from teacher and peer feedback, etc. Compensating for missing or partial knowledge by guessing the meanings of words from context or the grammatical function of words from formal clues are also aspect of metacognition. - <i>memory-related</i>: these are strategies that help learners recall or retrieve words through the use of acronyms, images, sounds (rhymes), or other clues.

Components of second language speaking competence, Goh & Burns (2012).

In the same spirit of providing teachers with a holistic perspective of spoken communication by drawing attention on the processes, components and variables involved in articulating proper speech to engage in authentic interaction, Gohn & Burns (2012) proposed a new model of speaking competence. It encompasses three dimensions: Knowledge of the

language and discourse, core speaking skills, and communication and discourse strategies.

Figure 3.

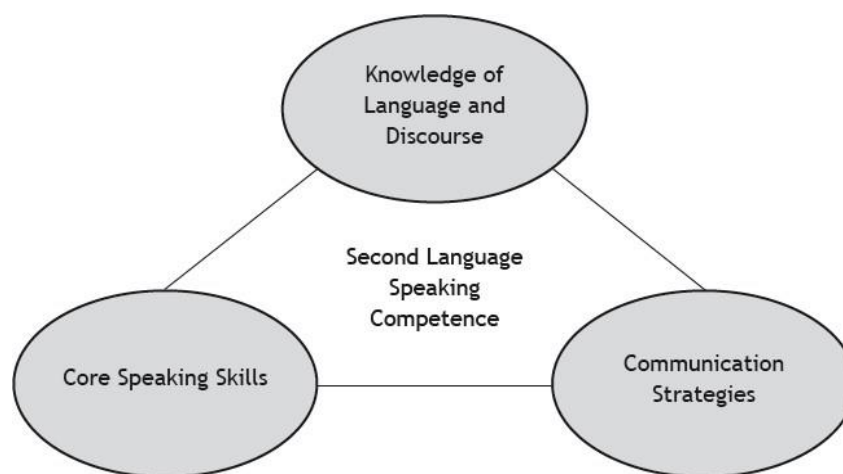


Figure 3. “Components of second language speaking competence.” (Goh & Burns, 2012, p.167).

The first component *knowledge of language and discourse* comprises lexical, grammatical, phonological and discourse knowledge as defined by Celce-Murcia et al., (1995). *Core speaking skills* refer to:

the ability to process speech quickly to increase fluency (e.g. speech rate, chunking, pausing, formulaic language, discourse markers). It also involves being able to negotiate speech (e.g. building on previous utterances, monitoring understanding, repairing communication breakdowns, giving feedback), as well as managing the flow of speech as it unfolds (e.g. initiating topics, turn-taking, signaling intentions, opening/closing conversations). (Burns, 2012, p.167).

Lastly *communication strategies* are defined by the author as the *cognitive, metacognitive, and interaction* strategies learners use to assure the flow of spoken interaction. Further explanation on these strategies will be provided later.

The former models demonstrate speaking lessons cannot be restricted to let learners “speak”. They must be structured and sequenced according to the multiple sub skills and knowledge learners will need to integrate to communicate effectively in the target language.

Such models also draw attention on the importance of explicitly teaching linguistic features as well as learning and communication strategies instead of hoping for students to incorporate them incidentally in the course of practice.

Communication strategies

One of the ultimate goals of language learners is to convey their ideas with ease. During their learning process, learners will struggle to attain this purpose due to difficulties of many sorts such as lack of linguistic resources and sociocultural knowledge, time pressure, and comprehension breakdowns, among others. The mechanisms learners resort to in order to overcome communication problems and enhance their performance are known as communication strategies (hereafter CSs). Recognizing the importance of strategic behavior in language learning, researchers have devoted effort into further understanding and categorizing these procedures. As a result, several taxonomies and approaches to the conceptualization of CSs have been proposed (see Cook, 2008 and Dörnyei & Scott, 1997 for reviews) .

The traditional conceptualization of CSs stressed the idea they were solely used to overcome problems in communication due to insufficient knowledge of the target language. This perspective on CSs was problematic because it restricted the use of strategies to solve problems always attributed to the learners' performance (Mariani, 2010). In contrast, *Tarone's interactional perspective* brought light into the cooperative dimension of CSs. According to the author "CSs relate to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared" (Tarone 1980, as cited in Dörnyei & Scott, 1997, p.178). Another contribution to the categorization of CSs was proposed by Dörnyei (1995) who drew attention on the strategies that help learners cope with time pressure during communication like use of fillers and hesitation devices.

A different approach to conceptualizing CSs was the psychological approach which, in contrast to the former models that were devoted to analyze and categorize the *language products* that resulted from the learners' effort to solve communication shortcomings (i.e. providing descriptions for unknown words or asking the interlocutor for clarification), it focused on the *mental processes* behind the use of CSs. This shift was necessary to expand

the understanding of CSs beyond the use of language devices, setting the ground for more accurate taxonomies (Bialystok, 1990; Kellerman 1991, as cited in Dörnyei & Scott, 1997).

As mentioned above, there are many proposed taxonomies. For this researcher Mariani's (2010) taxonomy will be used as it targets pedagogical purposes. The author proposes the following categories:

Meaning-expression strategies: the learners' effort to make up for communication difficulties by using language-based strategies.

Meaning-negotiation strategies: the interlocutors' cooperative work to overcome shortcomings in the course of the interaction to maintain communication.

Conversation-management strategies: the learners' knowledge of the conventions and procedures in conversation to communicate effectively in the target language (i.e. opening and closing conversations, trying to keep a conversation open, turn-taking, managing topics and 'gaining time').

Para-and extra-linguistic strategies: the non-verbal strategies learners resort to simultaneously along with other strategies when there is a gap in L2 knowledge.

(Intercultural) interaction-monitoring strategies: learners' awareness of their performance that aid them to adjust and customize their learning according to their needs and goals. In addition, this category also comprises intercultural awareness so as to communicate appropriately in different contexts and repair misunderstandings that relate to the lack of shared cultural knowledge rather than linguistic knowledge. Table 4, below, summarizes Mariani's taxonomy of CS and provides examples.

Table 4. Taxonomy of Communication Strategies (Mariani, 2010, pp. 38-44).

A. MEANING-EXPRESSION STRATEGIES	
<i>Description</i>	<i>Examples of verbal strategy markers</i>
1. Using an all-purpose word	<i>thing, stuff, object, machine</i>
2. Using a more general word (hyperonym/superordinate) instead of the specific one (hyponym)	<i>flower instead of geranium animal instead of pet</i>
3. Using a synonym or an antonym (opposite) of a word	<i>very small instead of tidy not deep instead of shallow worried, anxious instead of concerned</i>
4. Using examples instead of the general category	<i>shirts, jeans, skirts , jackets ... instead of clothing</i>
5. Using definitions or descriptions:	
general words + relative clause	<i>it's the person who cuts your hair instead of hairdresser it's a thing which ... it's a machine that ... it's when ... / it's where ...</i>
phrases instead of specific adjectives describing qualities, e.g. shape, size, colour, texture, material	<i>in the shape of ... the size of ... the colour of ... made of ...</i>
structure	<i>it has ... it consists of ... (the) part of ...</i>
purpose or function	<i>used for ..., used to ... it opens a door ...; a doctor uses it ...; you can ... with it</i>
context or situation	<i>you use it if ... in a place where ... at the time when ...</i>
6. using approximation	<i>it's like / similar to a very tall building instead of skyscraper</i>

	<i>a kind of ..., a sort of ...</i>
7. paraphrasing	<i>I didn't expect her call. I was so surprised instead of She phoned out of the blue.</i>
8. self-correcting, rephrasing, rephrasing, repairing incorrect or inappropriate utterance or when spotting a misunderstanding	<i>It's at the front ... no, at the back, at the back of the room.</i> <i>Sorry, I'll try to say that again ...</i>

B. MEANING-NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES	
9. asking for help:	
telling one's interlocutor that one cannot say or understand something:	
directly	A: Put it in the oven. B: <i>Put it in the ...? / Put it where? / Sorry, I don't understand that / Sorry,</i>
indirectly	using a rising intonation, using eye contact or facial expressions, pausing ...
asking one's interlocutor to:	
repeat	<i>Can you say that again, please?</i> <i>Pardon?</i>
slow down, spell or write something	<i>Can you speak slowly/spell that/write that down for me, please?</i>
explain, clarify, give an example	<i>What exactly do you mean by ...?</i>
say something in the L2	<i>What's the word for ...?</i> <i>I don't know the English word.</i> <i>In (German) we say ...</i> <i>How do you pronounce ...?</i> <i>What do you call it when ...?</i>
confirm that one has used the	<i>Is this correct?</i>

correct or appropriate language	<i>I want to replicate the experiment ...replicate, yes?</i>
confirm that one has been understood	<i>Did you get that?</i>
repeating, summarizing, paraphrasing what one has heard and asking one's interlocutor to confirm	<i>Did you say ...? So you're saying that ... is that right?</i>
guessing meaning and asking for confirmation	<i>Is it a dishwasher? Yes?</i>
10. giving help, by doing what the "helping" interlocutor does in 9., e.g. trying to "adjust" to one's partner language level by speaking slowly, repeating, giving examples, asking if she/he has understood ...	

C. CONVERSATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES	
11. opening and closing a conversation	<i>Lovely day, isn't it? Just look at the time! I must be off now!</i>
12. trying to keep the conversation open by showing interest and encouraging one's interlocutor to talk by, e.g.	
asking questions: Yes/No type; "open" questions; "questions tags"	<i>Oh, dear. Were you scared? So what did you do then? Did you?</i>
"reversing a question"	<i>But what about you? What do you think of ...?</i>
adding comments and exclamations	<i>That's interesting ... Really? Gosh, yes! You must be joking! That's really good news!</i>
sympathising	<i>Oh, what a pity! That's too bad! How awful! I'm ever so sorry!</i>

	<i>What a nuisance!</i>
repeating or rephrasing what the interlocutor has just said	A: <i>So I came back immediately.</i> B: <i>Immediately? You mean you didn't wait for Charlie?</i>
“feigning” to understand	A: <i>So I pulled up at the kerb.</i> B: <i>Mmm ... yes ...</i> A: <i>and pulled out the ignition key ...</i>
13. managing turn-taking:	
spotting the appropriate moment for signaling one wants to speak	<i>Er ... if I just can add something there ...</i>
getting attention, interrupting	<i>Sorry (to interrupt), but ...</i> <i>Just a minute ...</i> <i>Excuse me, could you explain ...</i> <i>Can/May I ask you something?</i>
holding one's turn, e.g. by talking to oneself, repeating key words in one's interlocutor's utterance (see also 15.)	A: <i>What your hobby?</i> B: <i>What's my hobby? Well, ... let's see ..</i>
14. avoiding or changing a topic, going back to the original topic	<i>By the way, ...</i> <i>Incidentally, before I forget ...</i> <i>That reminds me of ...</i> <i>Going back to ...</i> <i>As I was saying before ...</i> <i>Yes, well, anyway ...</i>
15. using tactics to “gain time” and keep the conversation channel open:	
using pauses, remaining silent	
“umming”, “erring”, mumbling	<i>Mmm ... Er ... Aha ...</i>
using “fillers”, “chunks”, hesitations devices, conversational gambits	<i>Well ... I see ... If you know what I mean ... and things like that ... that sort of things ... as a matter of fact ... well, actually, that's a very</i>

	<i>interesting question</i>
“waffling” (using more words than what would be considered normal in the context)	
repeating oneself	<i>So I stopped at the gate ... stopped at the gate and ...</i>
repeating one’s interlocutor’s words	<i>A: Have you got a fitted carpet at home? B: Fitted carpet ... fitted carpet ..</i>

D. PARA-AND EXTRA-LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES	
16. using intonation patterns, as in 9; using sounds, as in 15.	
17. using non-verbal language:	
mime, gestures, body movements, e.g. pointing at things	<i>One like that. I’d like this, please.</i>
facial expressions, eye contact smiling, laughing	
use of objects, drawings, etc.	

E. (INTERCULTURAL) INTERACTION-MONITORING STRATEGIES	
18. asking one’s interlocutor to correct one if necessary or to comment on what one has said	<i>Would you say that in this case? Did I use the right word?</i>
19. noticing the words that others use and remember to use them	
20. checking the reactions of other people when deciding to use new words and expressions	
21. checking if one’s interpretation is correct	<i>Does that mean that ...? So this means that ... Am I right? I understand ... Is it so?</i>
22. apologizing if one has said or done something inappropriate and	<i>I’m sorry I didn’t know ... I hope you don’t mind if I</i>

trying to correct (cultural) misunderstandings	<i>have ... I'm sorry if I asked you a personal question. I think there's been a misunderstanding. Can you tell me ...? I think I upset you, but I'm not sure why.</i>
23. dealing with uncertainty as to the acceptable behaviour, e.g. by:	
asking one's interlocutor to clarify or explain her/his culture	<i>How is this done in your country? Is that what you usually do? I'd like to ask you a question, but I'm not sure if it's too personal. What does it mean when ...?</i>
referring to what is customary in one's own country	<i>In my country we ...</i>
asking one's interlocutor what one should say/do or should have said/done	<i>Is it alright if I ...? How should I do this? At what time should I be there? What would you say in this situation? What should I have done?</i>

Teaching communication strategies

The teachability of CSs is a subject of debate among scholars. One of the claims against teaching CSs is that they are not exclusive to L2 acquisition. On the contrary, they are cognitive processes speakers have already developed in their mother tongue, and thus, can be automatically transferable to their L2 repertoire. From this point of view, there is no reason to teach CSs. As pointed out by Kellerman (1991, as cited in Dörnyei, 1995), a noted researcher in the field of CSs, "There is no justification for providing training in compensatory strategies in the classroom...Teach the learners more language and let the strategies look after themselves". (Kellerman, 1991, as cited in Dörnyei, 1995, p. 60).

In contrast, Mariani (2010) describes such assumptions as radical. According to the author, it is necessary to introduce communicative tasks that explicitly foster the use of CSs. This does not imply learners cannot profit from the communicative abilities they have already acquired in L1, but that such abilities need to be individually addressed and that they cannot be assumed to be the same in all learners' background knowledge given that every speaker has a different approach to oral communication due to cultural and personality variables. To justify the teaching of CSs Mariani (2010) lists the following benefits of *strategy education*:

-It allows learners to hold a conversation for longer periods. This provides them with valuable input that can help them increase and correct L2 knowledge.

-It can help them achieve better performances. This, in turn, contributes to the learning of the language given that the content of successful interventions can be more easily ingrained in their memory.

-As CSs can assist learners to maintain the communication channel open, they have more opportunities to speak and receive feedback on their performances. Moreover, they are also able to control how much information they get from their interlocutor by using some strategies such as "asking for clarification".

-CSs instruction prepares learners to handle unexpected situations that occur during authentic spoken interaction.

-CSs give learners the opportunity to step out of their comfort zone. By taking risks while communicating in an L2 that is still restrictive, learners take control over their language learning journey instead of limiting themselves to be passive participants.

After making a case for the teaching of CS, Mariani (2010) describes five different approaches for teaching them.

A descriptive, rather than prescriptive, approach

According to the author, the teaching of CSs needs to be flexible. Instructors cannot expect to introduce CSs as lists of fixed and infallible mechanisms to communicate in L2 situations. It's important to consider that, just as it happens in the L1, speakers have preferred ways to communicate in the foreign language. What can be attempted is to find patterns in the use of CSs, as well as encouraging learners' creativity when using them. Moreover, the use of CSs will also be determined by other variables such as L2 proficiency, and the type of communicative tasks they are exposed to.

An awareness-raising approach

As discussed above, strategies are not automatically transferable from one language to another. Consequently, it's necessary to teach them explicitly. This includes teaching learners their importance as well as when and how to use them by providing models in advance. The author also suggests graduating the amount of guidance instructors provide until learners are able to use them in freer activities that will resemble authentic encounters in L2.

An inductive experiential approach

The author proposes a cyclical model to teach CSs. It starts with *the experience-exposure stage* where instructors present learners with authentic material in which CSs contribute to the unfolding of, let us say, a conversation. The instructor asks questions that guide students to analyze verbal and non-verbal devices speakers use according to their intention. Then, in the *observation-exploration stage* learners are prompted to identify and evaluate the CSs used in the models as well as inferring how they are used in context. The next stage corresponds to *experience-practice* in which learners put in practice the former strategies in activities that simulate real-life interaction (i.e. role plays, games). The aim is to help learners internalize the strategies by using them in authentic settings. Finally, in the *observation-evaluation stage* learners evaluate their use of CSs by looking at the final products of the activities, for instance, the recordings of their performances.

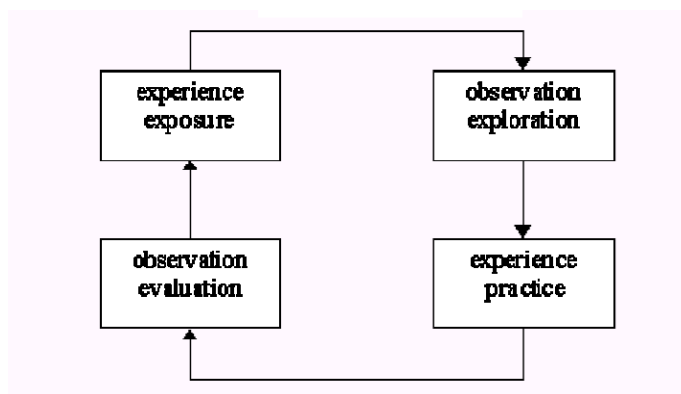


Figure 4. “A possible approach to strategy education”. (Mariani, 2010, p.55).

An explicit approach

The former model is complemented by a direct approach that promotes the explicit teaching of CSs by means of concrete examples and models of language formulae. This is particularly relevant if we consider that many strategies are based on the use of fixed phrases. For instance, in the case of meaning expression strategies learners can resort to the same structures when they do not know a word (i.e. you use it for..., it is used by..., you find in ...). Nonetheless, the author suggests strategies of this sort cannot be overtaught as one risks to interfere with learners’ language acquisition for they will tend to use the same words and phrases instead of learning new vocabulary.

A cross-linguistic, intercultural approach

Once again, the author emphasizes the fact that learners come with a language background that cannot be ignored during L2 learning, but rather compared to the new system so that learners understand that communication problems are present in all languages, and that there are similarities and differences in the way to approach them. Consequently, learners need to understand how the new speaking community deals with communication breakdowns, what is acceptable and not, and how they will be able to accomplish communicative goals in a community that shares different conventions and rules.

Activities to promote oral production

After considering speaking abilities from a conceptual stance, it is time to delve into the activities that will help attain communicative goals in the speaking course, in this case, a conversation club. When instructors venture to teach the spoken language they need to acknowledge that in day-to-day interaction people communicate with different intentions.

Brown & Yule (1983) began by identifying talk as *interaction* and talk as *transaction*. Interactional talk refers to the use of language to maintain social relationships. It is defined as *listener-oriented* for the purpose of the speaker is to contribute to setting a comfortable mood during the interaction even if that implies overlooking the topic being discussed. In contrast, transactional language is *message-oriented*. It corresponds to “getting things done in the real world” (Brown & Yule, 1983, p.13) (i.e. a visit to doctor’s office). Therefore, to successfully convey the message, the language to be used needs to be more precise. Later on, Richards (2006) added “talk as performance” to the former categories. It focuses on both, message and audience, and has a predictable format. In this sense, it is the type of talk that resembles written language the most. (i.e. lectures, speeches, reports).

Another variable to consider in the planning of the activities is that in the context of a conversation club, these must aim to develop learners’ fluency, that is, “the capacity to string long runs together, with appropriately placed pausing” (Thornbury, 2005, p.64). Nonetheless, this does not imply overlooking the correct use of language. As stated by Nation & Newton (2009) “As the ease increases with which learners make use of what they know, then they are able to give more attention to the quality of what they use.” (p.152). According to the authors, activities that target fluency must meet three conditions: they must be meaning focused; they must put previously learned language items into use; and they must support and encourage learners to perform to higher standards.

To plan activities that meet the conditions of fluency development instructors need to consider the following recommendations (See Nation & Newton, 2009):

a. Easy tasks:

To favor fluency learners must be familiar with the language, topic, and discourse conventions that are to be used in the task. In the case of speaking, the instructor can let the learner choose the topic or rely on other sources such as notes and visual supports while speaking.

b. Message focus:

To create meaning focused tasks the facilitator must propose an outcome for each activity so that learners use the language to achieve authentic-like purposes. According to the authors “commonly used outcome in activities include completion; distinguishing, matching, classifying; ranking, ordering, choosing; problem solving; listing implications, causes, and uses; data gathering, and provide directions”. (Nation & Newton, 2009, p. 154).

In addition, the authors also suggest using the 4/3/2 technique to foster meaning focused activities due to the emphasis it places on the speakers’ audience. In this technique, the learner delivers the same message to different partners. As the activity progresses, the time allotted to each intervention diminishes (4’, 3’ and the 2’). This dynamic allows participants to prioritize the information they will convey, and to adjust the message according to the new audience.

c. Planning and preparation

Crook (1989 as cited by Nations & Newton, 2009) established the effect of planning and preparation in learners’ performance in speaking tasks. In his study, learners carried out an instruction-based task. Participants who had ten minutes to prepare created longer utterances and more grammatically complex speech compared to the group who was not given preparation time. To incorporate planning and preparation into activity design the author recommends:

- brainstorming the topic
- pre-reading on the topic
- observation of others doing the activity

- repeated opportunities to do the activity
- preparing and practicing in the first language
- proposing prediction activities

d. Repetition

Repetition is a useful way of developing fluency as it allows learners to rehearse and automatize the intended content of each activity. In the case of speaking activities in groups, the instructor needs to promote encounters with different partners to focus learners' attention on the message rather than on keeping their audience's interest after listening to the same speech. One way of doing this is to follow the 4/3/2 technique mentioned above.

Appropriation activities

According to Thornbury (2005) one important condition to foster oral production is to help learners transition from *controlled activities*, in which the main aim is to rehearse features of the spoken discourse, to *practiced control* activities which allow freer participation with the purpose of letting students exert control over their own speech. To achieve this, learners produce to a certain degree what they will say—usually along with their peers—or customize the models to be used in the activities. When learners are allowed to make decisions over the language they will use, and the strategies to be employed when they make mistakes, they acquire tools to better handle oral communication. Under these conditions, L2 knowledge is more easily incorporated. Some of the support activities types the author recommends include:

a. Drilling and Chants

The drilling technique is a useful way to practice control. One of its main advantages is to draw learners' attention on specific items such as formulaic expressions. Repeating the highlighted material will help learners memorize it, and access to it during communication. Moreover, the drilling technique also provides learners with opportunities to improve the articulation of foreign sounds so that the pronunciation of words they have stored through input matches their overt speech.

b. Writing tasks

Writing is an effective tool during the process of language appropriation through speaking tasks. As discussed above, speaking, in contrast to other skills, is challenging because the time learners have to build and articulate the intended message is limited. Asking learners to write in advance what they want to convey will help them improve the quality of their utterances for they will not rely on the formulas and language they resort to conventionally during impromptu interaction to keep the flow of communication going.

c. Reading aloud

Reading aloud also contributes to practice control because it allows learners to devote their attention to the items being introduced, particularly pronunciation features such as stress and intonation without concerning about what they are going to say next. One of the main challenges with this sort of exercise is that the rest of the group may feel impatient when they listen to their partners read inaccurately. To improve the experience, learners can mark on their text word stress and intonation patterns, and rehearse them before reading it aloud.

d. Assisted performance or scaffolding

The role of the instructors here is to select the type and amount of support according to the learners' level. This includes asking questions, solving doubts, reformulating the students' speech and their own interventions as well as using translation. In addition, assisted performance can also be carried out by learners themselves. One example of it is the Community Language Learning approach (CLL) in which learners decide on the topic they want to discuss while the instructor, if needed, provides the language they require to get their message across. Then through recordings and transcripts of the conversation learners analyze their output.

e. Dialogues

Dialogues are one of the most popular alternatives in language learning activities. In the case of *practice control* they constitute an effective tool because much of the content in a speaking course can be embedded into dialogues that are built, modified or memorized by

learners themselves. Moreover, dialogues are flexible activities that can be carried out in several ways according to the purpose of the lesson and the learners' level. For instance, the instructor and one student can perform a dialogue to model the activity. Then, students can get together to practice the dialogue on their seats while the instructor monitors the activity. After it, learners can enact the dialogue in front of the class.

Practice control activities aim at helping learners practice within a safe framework. However, it is important to remark that they primarily target self-control. Therefore, activities must be challenging as well. This includes: switching the role learners play in the dialogue, the relationship between the speakers, the context, and the time allotted to practice or perform the dialogue.

f. Communicative tasks:

To foster authentic communication, instructors need to propose activities that prompt learners to automatize the cognitive processing behind the production of speech. To do this, instructors need to divert their attention from language rules to language use. This implies proposing activities in which learners resort to the linguistic resources they have to achieve some sort of outcome under authentic conditions: limited time, interaction with the listener, appropriate speed, etc. Well-known communicative tasks include: information-gap activities, jigsaws, surveys, and guessing games.

g. Task repetition

As mentioned in previous lines, task repetition is a useful technique to get learners rehearse a newly automatized language item, particularly idiomatic expressions. To illustrate this, the author presents the case of three students who were asked to practice the same dialogue three times. In the third attempt, the quality of their production improved. One of the strategies observed during the exercise was learners reusing some phrases they've heard from their peers during previous attempts.

Mixed-level groups

It is virtually impossible to find homogeneous groups if we consider learners vary in many aspects including proficiency level, aptitude, learning style, cultural and educational background, maturity, first language, and autonomy (Beatty, 2016¹). Even if instructors start with a close to homogeneous class, as time goes by, they will notice some learners seem to advance at a different pace (Bell, 2012). In addition to the aforementioned factors, this can be due to other variables such as motivation, opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom as well as affectional and physiological traits.

Teaching mixed-level groups is a challenging task for instructors as it demands more planning time, creativity to tailor the activities according to the students' needs, an empathy to understand where each student stands, and how to make them feel equally assisted in spite of their level. For this reason, instructors need to be the first to enter the classroom with a positive attitude, portraying diversity as an enriching experience in which basic learners can profit from the guidance of more advanced students, and in turn, in which advanced learners get to consolidate what they learn by means of teaching others. Apart from making the mixed-course more manageable, fostering cooperativity in the classroom is very valuable as this work dynamic prepares students for real life challenges (Dudley, 2016).

Teaching strategies for mixed-level groups

Grouping

One of the most common techniques to approach multi-level classrooms is grouping. It can seem just natural to group students according to their level so that even in a mixed-class they can share with classmates of a similar level of competence. Nonetheless, grouping students exclusively by proficiency level is disadvantageous since it creates an atmosphere of detachment, as if learners share nothing but the same physical space. Furthermore, clustering students in the same groups will habituate them to the same tasks, and the same people. Once this occurs, it will be hard for them to move to unfamiliar settings (Bell, 2012). In addition, the labeling of students as more or less capable groups or by levels might hinder their

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhiYY0uIkJU&t=1s>

learning. If they always go to the group of “less able” students, they will start building a negative perception of themselves as language learners. (Dudley, 2016)

That being so, instructors need to become skillful at grouping learners according to several variables, among which are the purpose and the stage of the lesson, the type of activity, and the relationship between classmates.

In a sample of a mixed-level class provided by Cambridge University Press ELT (2013) the instructor begins by reviewing vocabulary of the previous lesson. Then on a table, he displays three piles of worksheets corresponding to easy, mid, and advanced material to let students choose. Then, he organizes learners in *like-ability* groups so that they begin by working on the same content, and move relatively at the same pace. Later, the class changes to *cross-ability groups*, that is, a group of students who based on their level chose different worksheets. Because the information in the handout is the same, they can share their answers and interact with one another even if they belong to different levels. To finish, the instructor checks the learners’ understanding as *a whole class*. This serves as a closure activity in which students can solve doubts, and correct their answers together.

The type of grouping is another factor to be considered during the planning of the activities. Like-ability groups can work on activities like problem solving, sequencing and process writing, whereas cross-ability groups can focus on jigsaw activities; board games; and creating posters, lists, art, and multimedia projects (Shank & Terrill, 1995). The type of grouping will also depend on the purpose of the activity. Activities that target accuracy work better within homogenous groups in which students have similar language needs. Heterogeneous groups, on the other hand, are more suitable for working on fluency. Basic level learners can profit from their more advanced classmates to acquire new vocabulary, and grammar structures from an input that is not as difficult to grasp as native speech. Advanced learners can have the opportunity to speak more than usual, practice modifying their speech according to their audience, and consolidate what they know by means of reviewing. (Bell, 2012).

Lesson planning

The type of tasks introduced in mixed-level classes need to vary in terms of difficulty and the skills they target. Instructors must acknowledge that proficiency level is not a clear-cut criterion to define the learners' overall skills in an L2. Some students may be better than others in certain domains. There are students who may excel at speaking, but need to polish their writing skills. In contrast, others can be very good at writing, but not so good at speaking. The goal is to make all learners feel comfortable and assisted in the class dynamics. (Bell, 2012)

Moreover, Bell also suggests mixed-level classes must be theme-focused. This will allow instructors to arrange the activities coherently according to the students' needs as well as keeping the group on the same page, and promoting cooperative work. On the other hand, Dudley (2016) advises to include open ended-activities, that is, activities which can be solved in several ways. For instance, in a reading comprehension exercise the group works on the same text. While basic learners carry out activities like highlighting parts of the text, or matching words with pictures, advanced students engage in writing tasks.

Adding on the former example, Beatty (2016) proposes the following ideas to deal with activity planning in mixed-level groups. In the case of basic students, activities can emphasize receptive skills. For instance, reading a text and answering closed-ended questions. Additionally, they also need to introduce controlled practice of productive skills. This can be carried out through interview activities. Basic learners can assume the role of interviewers having the questions written as support material while more advanced students answer them. In contrast, advanced students will not need much support, and they will tend to finish first. Thus, instructors can provide them with extra-tasks to keep their interest. These include helping their partners, coming up with their own examples aside from the ones in the material, or even teaching a part of the lesson.

Another alternative to work with mixed-level groups are open-ended projects. According to Dudley (2016) project-based instruction helps teachers address all learners' needs in terms of skills and language items to be covered. In addition, projects allow learners to combine their unique talents to achieve common goals by means of negotiation and understanding. As noted by the author "An effective mixed-ability task is one that

incorporates and rewards a wide variety of different skills and abilities, both linguistic and non-linguistic.” (Dudley, 2016, p.60)

Finally, Bell suggests starting or ending the lesson with a *whole-group activity* to make students feel comfortable, and capable of working with all their partners. Whole group activities can include small talk at the beginning of the lesson; discussion based on visual material such as videos or pictures; interview questionnaires, and tasks where students achieve an outcome grouply. Furthermore, Shank & Terrill (1995) propose reading comic strips or photo stories, taking field trips, learning songs, and brainstorming on topics of interest.

Self-access material

Another key recommendation is to prepare materials for all levels and have them on the classroom so that students can access them. Examples of self-access materials provided by Bell include grammar exercises, texts from different sources (magazines, comics, books) along with reading comprehension questionnaires, and recordings to practice pronunciation. These materials need to include the correct answers, and clear instructions to allow autonomous work. Moreover, they need to be reusable. Instructors can laminate the material, and have students answer with erasable markers.

Luckily, nowadays teachers have the chance to save time with the aid of technology. They can take learners to language labs to work on computer assisted programs that target all skills at different levels using a wide assortment of topics. One of the advantages of letting students choose is that they will set personal goals, learn according to their needs, interests and expectations, and work on developing autonomy (Pearson English, 2016²).

To sum up, working with mixed-level groups is challenging. Nonetheless, there are strategies instructors can apply to create an enriching learning environment for everyone. The planning of the lessons need to include a wide range of activities and topics that reflect the particular needs and expectations of each learner. Useful strategies include grouping students in a way all feel a sense of achievement and contribution to the class as a whole. Tuning the

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjzFJAJZF7U>

class dynamics so the lesson plan runs smoothly under these conditions is an on-working process. Some students may be reluctant to work with partners of inferior levels as they may feel they hold them back; others may feel frustrated for not achieving much compared to their classmates' standards. This is inevitable. Here is where instructors must draw on sensitivity and positivism to portray cooperative work as a profitable approach for all participants, and autonomy as a means of setting particular goals and actions towards becoming skillful language learners.

English clubs

According to Malu & Smedley (2016) English clubs constitute informal settings where individuals meet regularly to practice their English under real life conditions through activities that support and encourage the use of the language. Clubs may target skills such as reading, writing, listening or speaking. However, as the teaching of English in formal education often focuses on written communication, the majority of English clubs choose to invite learners to engage in oral interaction. Pereira, Ismail, and Othman (2013) claim academic environments can benefit from speaking Clubs to increase English practice time. The authors argue that, apart from improving their language skills, students who take part in these groups improved their overall academic performance, gained confidence, and acquired life skills such as working cooperatively.

In their article about community-based English clubs Malu and Smedley (2016) offer the following guidelines to lead speaking clubs:

- Clubs must have a leader. Language teachers are preferable candidates given their experience to plan and lead activities. Nonetheless, teachers must acknowledge the club differs from the classroom. Their role is to be flexible and supportive while carrying out the activities.

- Create rules. These rules must be created and agreed upon by participants. Basic rules include: punctuality, mutual respect, avoiding topics that arouse heated controversy, and no flirting.

-Give everyone the opportunity to speak. Members can be assigned roles to moderate the activities such as group director, note-taker, timekeeper, vocabulary collector, and grammarian.

-Include engaging activities. Some suggestions include: skits—short scripted performances in couples or groups —, role plays, debates, and community focused activities where members can contribute to social change.

While highlighting the benefits and strengths of conversation or speaking clubs, these informal spaces for extracurricular practice do not come without their own challenges. For example, given their extracurricular nature, irregular attendance is frequent. Based on their experience, the cited authors present possible solutions to challenges club leaders may face.

Table 5. Challenges and possible solutions. Malu & Smedley, 2016, p.15.

<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Possible solution</i>
A few members monopolize the meeting.	-Members decide on the length of time each member can speak—generally three minutes. -Members select a timekeeper who is responsible for telling members when time is up.
Men speak more than women.	-Club leader, in private conversations, encourages women to speak more. -Some meetings have separate discussion groups, in separate meeting rooms, for men and women. - Some meetings are for “men only” or “women only.” -Club meetings present role plays or skits that focus on this problem and follow up with discussions of strategies that will encourage equal participation. -Club meetings have child-care provisions for members who have young children.
Some members attend occasionally.	-Club leader checks that the meeting time and place are convenient. -Club leader takes care that conversations are respectful and safe.

	-Members create a “buddy chain” to remind others about upcoming meetings.
Members argue about English language problems such as grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation.	-Club secretary notes the problem and seeks assistance. -Club meetings have time at the end for talking about English language problems. -Club members volunteer to research the issue(s) and report their findings at the next meeting.
A member is disrespectful.	-Club leader speaks to the member in private, referring to the club rules as appropriate. -Club leader reviews club rules at the beginning of the meeting. -Club members talk about this problem openly in a club meeting and add or revise club rules. -As a last resort, member is sanctioned and banned from attending a number of meetings—or dismissed from the club—as appropriate.
Some members want to argue about controversial issues	-Club leader reminds members that the purpose of the club is to practice English. -If the club is for members of a religious community, then religion may be an acceptable discussion topic—otherwise, the club leader reminds members that religion is not a club discussion topic, particularly in cases where conversations suggest recruitment or proselytization.

METHODS

The present study follows a case study approach to propose suitable activities to foster oral communication in a mixed-level conversation club. According to Duff & Anderson (2015):

A case study generally constitutes a qualitative, interpretative approach to understanding the experiences, features, behaviors, and processes of a bounded (a specific or defined) unit. The essence and value of a case study resides in its – typically – holistic and in-depth characterization of individual entities within a particular context, which permits researchers and readers to gain grounded new understandings of certain issues... (Duff & Anderson, 2015, p. 112)

This approach was selected bearing in mind conversation clubs are new learning settings within the language courses offered to undergraduate students. Consequently, little research has been conducted on how to run these particular clubs in which instructors must consider relevant academic content, and varied activities due to the learners' level gap.

Furthermore, a mixed-method approach was employed in the current study. As noted by Creswell (2009) "There is more insight to be gained from the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research than either form by itself. Their combined use provides and expands understanding of research problems" (p.203). The qualitative data consisted of a semi-structured focus group interview, a teaching journal, and field observation notes. The quantitative data was collected through an online survey. The multiple data sources used in this study provided new insights on how the planning should be carried out providing guidelines and activity ideas for future facilitators.

Context

The study was conducted at Universidad del Valle, a state-supported university founded in 1945 based primarily in two campuses in the city of Cali, Valle del Cauca, Colombia. The conversation club took place in San Fernando campus which hosts the faculties of Administration Sciences, and Health. Additionally, the university has several branch campuses across Valle del Cauca department in the cities of Buenaventura, Buga, Caicedonia, Cartago, Palmira, Tuluá, Yumbo and Cauca department.

Conversation clubs are part of Red CAAL (Red de Centros de Apoyo para el Aprendizaje de las Lenguas, in Spanish), a network of language centers that seek to provide students with immersion settings in which they can work autonomously according to their needs and preferences to complement in-class work. Other activities include team teaching in L2, computer-assisted work, song's club, reading club, cinema forum, tutorship, and cultural events. Teachers, pre-service teachers, and native assistants are in charge of leading these activities.

Red CAAL is one of the strategies implemented by the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures in the restructuring proposal of the language curriculum for undergraduate students. This new approach aimed at addressing the language needs observed in this type of students, particularly by promoting the development of communicative skills with the purpose of helping students immerse in new academic and work settings.

Considering the above, language courses start with basic communicative skills from a general-purpose language and academic approach. Subsequently, the courses transition toward academic discourse. The first stage targets the four skills with particular emphasis in oral communication. During the second stage, students work on specific communicative academic skills according to the specialized discourses from each work area stressing written communicative skills. Finally, in the third stage students are allowed to enroll in optional courses to further develop their written and oral academic skills. At the end of the program students are expected to reach a B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Table 6. New curricular proposal for undergraduate English courses.

<i>Level</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Approach</i>	<i>Academic program</i>	<i>Number of students</i>
First stage: mandatory courses (from III semester and above)				
I	2	English with general purposes; English with general academic purposes; integrated skills; emphasis on the spoken language.	Mixed-all programs	25
II	2	English with general purposes; English with academic purposes; integrated skills; emphasis on the spoken language.	Mixed-all programs	25
Second stage: mandatory courses (from V semester and above)				
III	2	English with academic and general purposes; integrated skills; emphasis on the written language	specific academic programs or grouped by faculties.	25
IV	2	English with academic and general purposes; integrated skills; emphasis on the written language	specific academic programs or grouped by faculties.	25
Third stage: elective courses (VII semester and above)				
Elective I	2	Academic reading and writing	specific academic programs	15
Elective II	2	Oral academic skills	specific academic programs	15

Participants

The sample included undergraduate students who attended as part of the language course requirements as well as volunteer participants, and intermediate students who were placed in lower levels due to administrative reasons. Thus, despite targeting level I students exclusively, the club welcomed learners from basic to advanced levels. Students majoring in Speech Language Therapy and Foreign Trade were among the most regular attendees. Their

ages ranged from 16 to 25 years old. The majority of them participated actively during the session, just a few of them were reluctant to speak. Fortunately, as time went by shy students were also eager to intervene. The number of attendees per session varied between 5 and 10 students. Since attendance is not as regular as in a course, the number of participants per data collection technique or instrument also varies.

Data collection

a. Survey

An online survey was designed and administered to determine participants attitudes and perceptions about the pedagogical proposal regarding activities, topics, support strategies, club management, and students' perceptions on making part of a mixed-level group. The items included likert-type questions as well as open-ended questions. It was first piloted with twelve assistants and facilitators of other clubs as well as students from the English courses. The pilot survey served to determine which questions needed to be placed in separate items, and which required further clarification. The final version of the survey was administered on January 17th, 2019 to twenty four attendees who answered via Google Forms (see appendix 1). The only background information asked to participants were their undergraduate majors, and age. The survey was sent to 30 students, but only 24 submitted responses.

b. Field observation journal

A field observation journal was included with the purpose of registering the researcher's perceptions and reflections about the development of the sessions. Particular emphasis was placed on the effectiveness of the activities, the appropriateness of the material, the usefulness of support strategies, and the relationship among participants of different level of competence. This data informed the adjustments on the way clubs were held, and track the progress of the planning along the semester. Nine sessions were registered in a format that included three columns: description, analysis, and aspects to be improved (see appendix 2).

c. Focus group interview

A two hours focus group interview was carried out on January 21st, 2019 to explore attendees' thoughts and feelings regarding the conversation club. Participants were selected

based on their attendance and language levels. The sample included three females and three males with proficiency levels from A1 to B2. The interview was semi-structured. It began by inquiring about the students' expectations for the club, their experience on their language courses, and their prior experiences learning English. Afterward, questions were directed towards the activities, the topics, and the materials used in the club with the purpose of assessing their effectiveness in eliciting oral production. Then, students were asked about the perceived advantages and disadvantages of working with partners of different levels of competence. To conclude, the discussion centered around their general impression on the club, how the club helped them improve their English, and suggestions for future conversation clubs. The guiding questions for the focus group session are shown in *appendix 3*.

Procedure

This didactic proposal was carried out during the second semester of 2018. The club sessions, two-hour long each, were held during five weeks. Each lesson was planned along with the tutor's guidance who checked the plannings before they were implemented. At the beginning, the sessions followed a discussion-based format emulating authentic conversations. However, as time went by, this method proved insufficient due to the learners' level. From that point, the planning was based on guided activities with different types of supports, and materials targeting communicative tasks. Common activities included games, storytelling, interviews, dialogues, presentations, and role plays. The planning of the lessons centered around the topic which was selected based on the students' suggestions. The clubs began with a warm-up activity, usually a game presenting some vocabulary for the lesson. Then, it was followed by a controlled activity such as answering comprehension questions or carrying out scripted interviews. To conclude, students worked on a final product in couples or groups. A model lesson plan for a session is included as *appendix 4*. Table 7 below shows a summary of the sessions including date, topic, objectives and activities.

Table 7. Lessons summary.

Session	Date	Topic	Objectives	Activities
1	03/08/2018 07/08/2018	Language learning	-Introduce themselves and others. -Exchange basic personal information such as likes, hobbies, address. -Use circumlocution to convey meanings of unknown words -Use appropriate pragmatic and sociolinguistic conventions in face-to-face conversation. -Convey appropriate connections between ideas in dialogue or monologue: justification, narration and exemplification	-Interview on personal information. -Discussion about language learning. -Puzzle: debunking myths about language learning. -Game: taboo, paraphrasing. Students describe pictures to help their partners guess avoiding the taboo word. -Learners teach each other gestures around the world based on infographics.
2	10/09/2018 14/09/2018	Advertising	<i>Terminal objectives:</i> -Advertise a bizarre product. -Give their opinions about popular ads. -Identify cultural differences in advertisement. <i>Enabling objectives:</i> -Use vocabulary to persuade. -Identify techniques used in successful advertising. -Use common phrases to give opinions. -Get acquainted with some formats of advertising.	-Game: guess the product -Successful techniques in advertising: handout exercise, reading comprehension+analysis of popular ads -Billboard design based on successful techniques -Advertising products on TV, teamwork.
3	21/09/2018 24/09/2018	Storytelling	<i>Terminal objectives:</i> -Create and narrate a six frame story with five given words. -Describe story characters. -Identify different ways to tell a story. -Get acquainted with some theoretical notions about storytelling. <i>Enabling objectives:</i> -Use connectors of sequence to narrate a story. -Use adjectives to describe a character's external and internal features. -Identify the main elements in a story.	-Game: taboo, movie version. -Comprehension exercise based on the video: Pixar in a box, introduction to storytelling. -Guess each other's character through close and open questions. -Analysis of a short animated film. -Creation of a six frame story.

Session	Date	Topic	Objectives	Activities
4	28/09/2018 01/09/2018	Unsolved mysteries	<i>Terminal objectives:</i> -Propose hypotheses based on information given about an unsolved mystery. -Interrogate their partners as suspects of a murder crime. -Build an alibi based on a given place. <i>Enabling objectives:</i> -Understand and use wh-question words: what, where, when, who, why, how. -Develop receptive and productive vocabulary related to the topic of crime mysteries.	-Game: guess the word, introduction of topic-related vocabulary. -The tragic murder of Jonbenét: reading comprehension exercise, use of wh-questions. -A murder in the classroom: role play game trial.
5	11/12/2018	Talking about the future	<i>Terminal objectives:</i> -Make predictions on the content of a video. -Ask and talk about future plans. -State and opinion regarding life in the future. -Agree and disagree with fictional predictions for the future. <i>Enabling objectives:</i> -Use will and would to talk about the future. -Develop receptive and productive vocabulary related to life events. -Use “I agree” or “I disagree” to give opinions.	-Predictions based on funny clips. -Interview regarding future plans: what would you like to do in the next five years? -The world in 2040: students make predictions about the world in 2040 regarding different aspects. -Students report on their partners’ interview answers.

Data analysis

Data analysis for the present research drew upon various types of sources to ensure the internal validity of the study (Richardson, 1994, as cited in Duff, 2008). As mentioned above, data were obtained through quantitative and qualitative instruments which were later contrasted and compared during careful reading to determine useful guidelines and activities to develop a conversation club with mixed-level students. The analysis began with the online survey. The frequencies for closed-ended questions were automatically estimated by the platform, and later translated to percentages by the researcher. Responses to open questions were divided into categories according to the most recurrent answers. Afterward, the categories that emerged from each statement were quantified. Finally, the results were

displayed in tables and graphs, and analyzed in the light of the literature review, and the information collected through other sources.

Categories for qualitative data were generated through content analysis. The first categorization was carried out based on a priori codes that aligned with the purpose of the research, and salient themes identified in the survey. Then, after several readings, data were condensed into linked categories between both sources including *activities* and *mixed level group*, and categories identified for each source which corresponded to *English courses*, *club planning and evaluation* for the focus group, and *strategies* for the observation journal. The categorization process was done manually labeling the codes by colors in a word processor.

RESULTS

The present chapter reports the results and interpretations of the three data sources implemented in the case study. First, it analyzes quantitative and qualitative sources individually. Then, it proceeds to triangulate all the information collected in order to determine which activities and strategies were more effective to elicit oral production in the context of the conversation club.

Survey

1. The first question of the survey asked students to rank in a likert-type scale how willing or unwilling they would be to participate in some activities that were common or usual in the conversation club sessions. It is important to note that because of the differential attendance some respondents might not have experienced all the activities. Therefore an option labeled “not applicable” was included. Responses in the options *very willingly* and *willingly* were added up together as one single category as were those for *unwillingly* and *very unwillingly*. The grouping of related categories in one frequency was also applied to report all likert-type scale items in the survey.

Table 8. Willingness to participate in club activities.

Activity	Very unwillingly to unwillingly	Indifferent	Very willingly to willingly	Not applicable
Drama, role plays, simulations.	3 (12,5%)	0	16 (66,7%)	5 (20,8%)
Narrate story through drawings individually.	1 (4,16%)	1 (4,16%)	15 (62,5%)	7 (29,1%)
Narrate story through drawings grouply.	3 (12,5%)	3 (12,5%)	15 (62,5%)	3 (12,5%)
Spontaneous conversations.	5 (20,8%)	1 (4,16%)	18 (75%)	0
Spontaneous discussions from video	4 (16,6%)	1 (4,16%)	19 (79,1%)	0

content.				
Guided discussion based on questions given by the facilitator from video content.	4 (16,6%)	1 (4,16%)	19 (79,1%)	0
Interviews among partners (ask and answer questions).	3 (12,5%)	3 (12,5%)	15 (62,5%)	3 (12,5%)
Games: puzzles, trivias, hangman with limited time about vocabulary.	3 (12,5%)	1 (4,16%)	19 (79,1%)	1 (4,16%)
Fill in blanks exercises based on audio material.	4 (16,6%)	2 (8,3%)	15 (62,5%)	3 (12,5%)
Complete a story based on a short film.	3 (12,5%)	1 (4,16%)	14 (58,3%)	6 (25%)
Give and follow instructions (directions, handcrafts, recipes).	5 (20,8%)	1 (4,16%)	11 (45,8%)	7 (29,1%)

As shown in Table 8, among all activities proposed for the club sessions students affirmed they preferred: *spontaneous discussions from video content* (79,1%); *Guided discussion based on questions given by the facilitator from video content* (79,1%); *Games: puzzles, trivias, hangman with limited time about vocabulary* (79,1%); and *spontaneous conversations* (75%). The results suggest students favor activities that are spontaneous and imply interaction. Considering the number of basic participants surpassed the number of advanced students it was unexpected to find students liked guided and spontaneous exercises in the same proportion. It is also notable that both types of discussion activities are based on audiovisual material which was included as one of the support strategies to ease oral comprehension. It seems the strategy helped students be more confident about participating in the discussions. Regarding the game category, it reflects students' need of being exposed to the English language in a setting that allows them to practice in a stress-free environment compared to their regular classes. This activity was particularly useful at the beginning of the

club to get students acquainted with one another, as well as to introduce vocabulary for the lesson.

Table 8 also shows the least popular activity, considering the frequency between willingness (45%) and unwillingness (20,8%), was to *give and follow instructions (directions, handcrafts, recipes)*. According to the syllabus, and the observations carried out as part of the teaching practicum in one of the English courses, this type of activity is one of trendiest among students' mandatory courses. Perhaps, this is why they did not choose it for the conversation club. Another possible reason is that, compared to other activities like discussions based on videos, this activity was not carried out explicitly as in the examples mentioned in the statement. This is confirmed by the percentage of *not applicable* responses (29,1%).

2.1. When asked whether they preferred working individually or in groups, 79,2 % claimed they preferred working in groups while 20,8 % preferred to work individually.

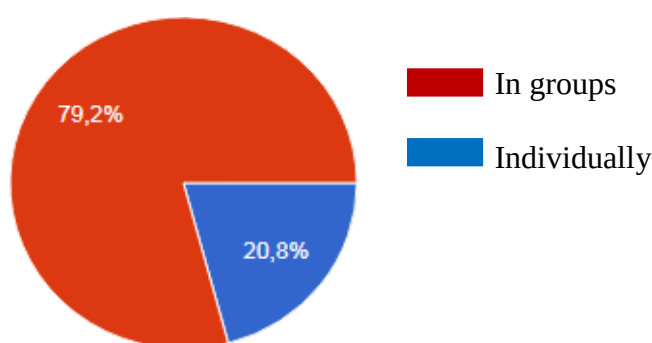


Figure 5. Students' preferences regarding individual and group work.

The result is consistent with the responses in Table 8 which state students prefer activities that allow interaction. This result shows that students acknowledge the importance of teamwork for the development of oral skills in the target language. It is important to consider that respondents of this survey were registered in different majors and from different levels. While this variety might lead to shyness and unwillingness to speak, for these participants group work continues to be preferred in spite of these conditions. We will dwell on this aspect in more detail when commenting on students' points of view on mixed-ability groups.

2.2. Apart from being asked whether they preferred working individually or in groups, students were also asked to justify their choice in an open-ended question. Considering that some responses included more than one reason, the percentage was estimated based on the sum of reasons (32), and not the sum of responses (24). Regarding the reasons to prefer working in groups students stated:

Table 9. Students' reasons to prefer team work.

It improves learning	8 (25%)
It promotes interaction among peers	5 (15,6%)
It provides support and boosts confidence	4 (12,5%)
It makes learning easier	3 (9,3%)
It contributes to the development of life skills	2 (6,25%)
They learn from their more capable partners	4 (12,5%)
They learn from each other	3 (9,3%)
It provides practice opportunities	3 (9,3%)

As seen in Table 9, the majority of students 8 (25%) claimed working in groups improves learning. Other reasons to favor group work show that, in general, students consider that working with others is beneficial for learning. The result is in line with Vygotsky (1962) social learning theory which states learning occurs through interaction with others, and with interactionist theories of language acquisition (Long, 1985; Swain, 1995). The following comments from the respondents support students' inclination toward group work:

Aunque aveces es complicado unir las ideas o concordar en opiniones con los compañeros pienso que en grupo se aprende más y se siente más respaldado y seguro a la hora de compartir la actividad realizada. (Survey, participant 12, January 17th, 2019)

El trabajo en grupo permite una retroalimentación de los conocimientos de todos los participantes, ya que cada persona tiene diferentes experiencias intelectuales las cuales pueden aportar directamente a la formación de los participantes. Pd. Sin embargo, el trabajo individual permite evaluar propiamente el lexico, la forma en que escribimos y el sentido de escuchar en este idioma. (Participant 20, January 17th, 2019)

Porque los conocimientos de mis compañeros me enriquecen y viceversa. (Participant 17, January 17th, 2019)

Promoting interaction among peers ranked second 5 (15.6%). The result can be attributed to the fact the majority of participants belonged to the same major and semester. Consequently, it seems the club was also a setting to establish or strengthen relationships among classmates who already knew each other. Moreover, the overall cooperative environment that resulted from enhancing how students relate to one another might have had a positive impact on their language learning by providing support and confidence.

Porque mejora la interacción entre personas y permite desarrollar el trabajo en equipo. (Participant 8, January 17th, 2019)

Me parece que es bueno para la interacción en grupo, ya que eso ayuda a mejorar todos los aspectos como el vocabulario, y la pronunciación. (Participant 4, January 17th, 2019)

2.3 Concerning the reasons given to justify a preference for individual work 2 students (8.6%) asserted they preferred working alone due to the level gap and 1 (4.3%) reported inhibition as the main reason. Noticeably, the frequency of students who chose individual work is considerably lower compared to the participants who prefer working in groups. Nonetheless, it is important to remark the most salient response corresponds to level gap. Perhaps, as highlighted by one of the participants, within this group students feel more comfortable sharing with advanced learners as they already knew them and felt comfortable around them. In groups where students do not know each other the frequency could have been higher. Another important item to consider is inhibition within mixed-level groups. According to Dudley (2016) it is inevitable that learners experience frustration when they compared their own performance to that of their more advanced classmates. Therefore, instructors must encourage them to meet their own standards. The following response shows that this inhibition is related to difference in language competence and more specifically, limited competence in pronunciation.

A veces existe cierta presión al estar en grupo, o al menos en un grupo dónde no hay mucha confianza. Incluso se puede tener conocimientos pero no se demuestran completamente por pena, en especial por la PRONUNCIACIÓN. (Participant 9, January 17th, 2019)

3. The following item aimed at knowing students' favorite topics for club sessions. Some of the topics were included in the current pedagogical proposal (see appendix 2) whereas the rest belonged to the planning of the piloting club carried out in the previous semester. For this questions, students were not required to answer based on the sessions they attended, but from a general point of view.

Table 10. Topic preferences.

<i>Topic</i>	<i>1-2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4-5</i>
Addiction to social media	2 (8,3%)	12 (50%)	10 (41,6%)
Movies	0	2 (8,3%)	22 (91,6%)
Healthy lifestyle in college	1 (4,16%)	4 (16,6%)	19 (79,1%)
Language learning	0	2 (8,3%)	22 (91,6%)
Advertising	2 (8,3%)	7 (29,1%)	15 (62,5%)
Storytelling	4 (16,6%)	7 (29,1%)	13 (54,1%)
Unsolved mysteries	4 (16,6%)	2 (8,3%)	18 (75%)
The future	2 (8,3%)	5 (20,8%)	17 (70,8%)
Love & relationships	4 (16,6%)	8 (33,3%)	12 (50%)
Paranormal phenomena	4 (16,6%)	3 (12,5%)	17 (70,8%)
Education	1 (4,16%)	6 (25%)	17 (70,8%)
Food	0	3 (12,5%)	21 (87,5%)
Biographies of famous people	4 (16,6%)	11 (45,8%)	9 (37,5%)

Table 10 shows students' favorite topics included *Movies and Language Learning* (22, 91.6%), followed by *Food* (21, 87.5%). It is rewarding to find the majority of learners were genuinely interested in learning English. Consequently, the success of the lessons is attributed not only to the planning and implementation carried out by the facilitator, but also to the students' attitude and engagement during each session. Contrarily, *Biographies of famous people* shows last in order with 9 (37.5%) students ranking it as their least likeable topic. This topic makes part of the language syllabus of their English courses. Therefore, it may seem iterative to deal with it in the conversation club as well. The result agrees with the

guidelines proposed by Thornbury (2005) who claims that due to the complexity behind the production of overt speech, it is important to minimize the decisions students take when speaking. One way of doing this is by selecting content students are knowledgeable of or curious about. As a topic for discussion, biographies might require an amount of preparation and review of sources that students associate more with regular classes than with speaking-oriented activities.

31. Other topics suggested by students included: culture, history, global and local news, traveling, sports, music, first time experiences, environment, current issues, sayings in English, business and videogames. Students also made emphasis on finding common topics among participants such as series, books, anime or favorite superheroes. Unfortunately this was not possible due to the participants' differential attendance.

4. Concerning the most suitable number of assistants for each club session students replied:

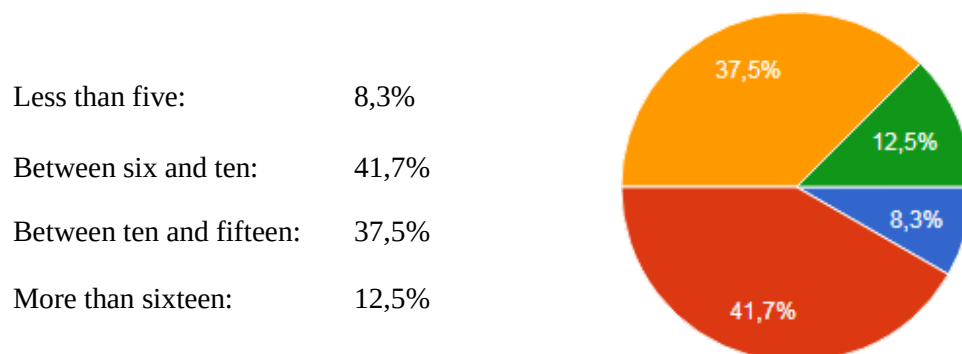


Figure 6. Number of club attendees students prefer.

Traditionally, it is believed students prefer smaller groups, particularly during sessions that target oral communication as they get more opportunities to speak, and more personalized assistance. Nonetheless, this group does not follow that tendency. Apparently, club participants see in larger groups the opportunity to interact with more people, and thus, make activities more entertaining. This is also reflected in their choice for activities (see table 8) in which *games* and *role play* were among their favorites.

5. In the following question, students were asked to evaluate different aspects of the implementation of the conversation club sessions. Affirmative statements described aspects such as the activities, materials, learning opportunities, resources and the role of the club facilitator. Students had to expressed their level of agreement or lack thereof to these statements in a likert-type scale. A higher frequency of responses in the options *agree* and *strongly agree* indicate a positive evaluation of the aspects described in the statements.

Table 11. Participants' assessment of the club sessions.

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly disagree to disagree</i>	<i>Not sure</i>	<i>Strongly agree to agree</i>
1. I had enough opportunities to speak.	0	2 (8,3%)	22 (91,6%)
2.The supports given in the club allowed me to participate.	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)
3.Activities were interesting	2 (8,3%)	1 (4,16%)	21 (87,5%)
4.The time allotted by the facilitator for each activity was appropriate	3 (12,5%)	2 (8,3%)	19 (79,1%)
5.The material used was according to my level	2 (8,3%)	3 (12,5%)	19 (79,1%)
6.The facilitator solved my doubts	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)
7.Group management carried out by the facilitator was appropriate	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)
8.I felt comfortable while the facilitator monitored my work	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)
9.The facilitator contributed to a good club environment	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)

10.The activities and materials had educational purposes (English learning)	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)
11.Audio material was according to my level	0	7 (29,1%)	17 (70.8%)
12.Reading material was according to my level	1 (4,16%)	4 (16,6%)	19 (79,1%)
13.The introduction of vocabulary prior to the session helped me engage in the activities	2 (8,3%)	1 (4,16%)	21 (87,5%)
14.Instructions were always clear	2 (8,3%)	4 (16,6%)	18 (75%)
15.There was a clear connection among activities	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)
16.There was a clear topic for each session	2 (8,3%)	0	22 (91,6%)

The results from Table 11 show an overall positive evaluation of the pedagogical aspects of the club sessions. All statements were positively assessed by 17 students or more indicating a clear perceived effectiveness of the club sessions regarding the elements that must intertwine to attain the overarching goal of developing oral skills. Most positively ranked statements were associated with lesson planning, and the facilitator's performance: (1,2,6,8,9,10,15,16).

The statements that followed corresponded to: *activities were interesting* (21 responses, 87.5%), *The introduction of vocabulary prior to the session helped me engage in the activities* 21 (87.5%), *The time allotted by the facilitator for each activity was appropriate* 19 (79.1%); *The material used was according to my level* 19 (79.1%); *Reading material was according to my level* 19 (79.1%); and *Instructions were always clear* 18 (75%). The statement *audio material was according to my level* ranked last with 17 responses in the

strongly agree-agree extreme of the scale (70.8%), and 7 (29.1%) responses in *Not sure*. It seems audio alone without the visual support is insufficient to help students understand the content. Moreover, the result reflects the facilitator's difficulty to find materials that were authentic, interesting and adapted to both levels as well.

6. For this items students were asked to rank common situations in the Conversation Club in a likert-type scale ranging from *very uncomfortable* to *very comfortable*. The statements were related to situations that may hinder or enhance oral production. These included: working with partners from different levels, speaking in front of numerous vs small audiences, using their mother tongue, and participating in competitive games.

Table 12. Participants' feelings during common situations in the club sessions.

Situation	Very uncomfortable to uncomfortable	Indiferent	Very comfortable to comfortable
Working with partners whose level was superior to mine.	5 (20,8%)	2 (8,3%)	17 (70,8%)
Working with partners whose level was inferior to mine.	2 (8,3%)	8 (33,3%)	14 (58,3%)
Talking within a small group.	4 (16,6%)	0	20 (83,3%)
Talking in front the whole group.	4 (16,6%)	5 (20,8%)	15 (62,5%)
Not using Spanish.	4 (16,6%)	5 (20,8%)	15 (62,5%)
Listening to others speak in Spanish.	3 (12,5%)	14 (58,3%)	7 (29,1%)
Participating in competitive games.	3 (12,5%)	3 (12,5%)	18 (75%)

Results from Table 12 are in line with results from Table 9 which revealed participants preference for group work in spite of the level gap. Contrary to the researcher's assumptions of basic students feeling intimidated to work with advanced learners, the results show this type of students were the most eager about the mixed-level dynamic 17 (70.8%)

compared to advanced learners 14 (58.3%), this frequency is interesting given that basic learners outnumbered advanced students. Nonetheless, group work continues to predominate as seen in the preference for participating in competitive games 18 (75%) even when advanced students tended to upstage groups of inferior levels. Furthermore, the frequencies obtained when inquired about their approval of others' speaking Spanish (14, 58.3% indifferent, and 7, 29.1% very comfortable to comfortable) may imply students are understanding of their partners difficulties, and their need to resort to the mother tongue.

As for students' preference for speaking during the sessions, 20 (83.3%) claimed they prefer working in small groups, whereas 15 (62.5%) feel comfortable talking in front of the whole group. The result was not unexpected given that, as mentioned above, groups were chosen by students themselves most of the times. That being so, they chose groups of partners they felt comfortable with, as mentioned when commenting in Table 9.

Regarding oral production , it is noticeable that 15 students (62.5%) felt comfortable with not using Spanish during the sessions. The response hints at a genuine desire to make the most out of practice time outside the classroom. The result also agrees with the responses in Table 10 which revealed students' motivation toward language learning.

7. On the subject of whether conversation clubs should continue to be mixed-level, 75% students agreed while 25% disagreed. Again, this contradicts common beliefs about mixed-level groups. Teachers are inclined to think of these mix of abilities as a negative factor for class management. They also believe this has a negative impact on students' learning. Yet, students participating in this conversation club think differently. They claimed the difference in levels is a variable that favors their learning. Before discussing this in major detail, let us look at the reasons students give to justify their choice.

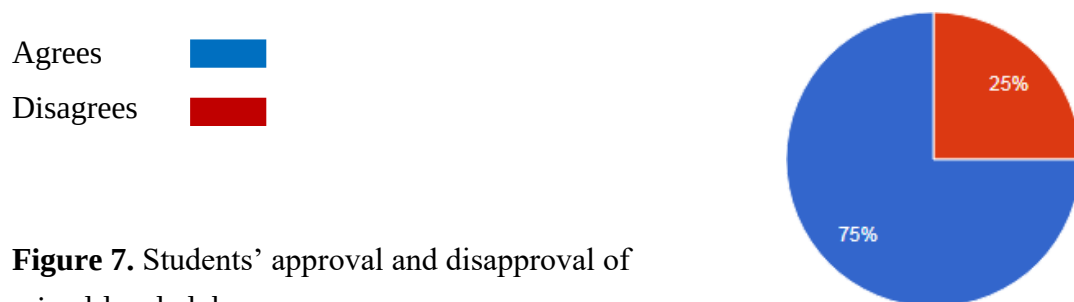


Figure 7. Students' approval and disapproval of mixed-level clubs.

7.1. With regard to the reasons why they support mixed-level clubs students replied:

Table 13. Reasons to support mixed-level clubs.

Improves learning.	3 (17,6%)
Beneficial for both, basic and advanced learners.	11 (64,7%)
Opportunity to learn from advanced students.	2 (11,7%)
Beneficial for basic learners.	1 (5,8%)

In contrast to the common concerns discussed in mixed-level literature regarding students reluctance to work with partners of different levels, Table 13 shows the majority of participants (17, 75%) valued the experience. Noticeably, most participants asserted that attending to a mixed-level club was beneficial for both basic and advanced learners (11, 64.7%). The result indicates most participants, in spite of their level, felt a sense of contribution and validation during the sessions. The response matches Dudley (2016) statements regarding the benefits of cooperative work within mixed-level settings in which different ideas and skills converge. Two speculative explanations might be put forward. On the one hand, it is likely that, most being from the same major, they know each other from other classes, which could help build a non-threatening classroom atmosphere in which cooperation emerged. On the other, it might be the case that the planning of the sessions, the support provided and the managing of the club by the facilitator contributed to a more collaborative dynamic in the sessions.

7.2. While the perception of the majority of respondents was favorable to mixed-ability groups, a few students disagreed, and expressed different reasons why mixed-ability groups were discouraging. These are the reasons given:

Table 14. Reasons to dislike mixed-ability groups.

Discouraging for basic learners.	1 (16,6%)
Disadvantageous for both, basic and advanced learners.	1 (16,6%)
Inconvenient for basic learners.	1 (16,6%)
Sorting students out by levels results in a more enriching experience.	1 (16,6%)
Uncomfortable/intimidating	1 (16,6%)
Level gap is too wide.	1 (16,6%)

Most of these reasons are consistent with the disadvantages of mixed-ability groups discussed in professional literature (Bell, 2012; Dudley, 2016; and elsewhere). These reasons are likely to come from those students at the extremes of the level gap, that is, those who are probably below A1 level, and those who are B2 or higher. For these extreme cases, the disadvantages of working with more proficient—or less proficient—partners are all too pressing. Most students, whose level was probably closer, did feel the interaction with more or less advanced partners was beneficial.

8. This item required students to rank the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to bridge the gap between levels and help them communicate in English. The scale ranged from 1 to 5 ; 1 being the lowest frequency and 5 the highest. As mentioned above options 1,2 and 4,5 were added up together in one single frequency.

Table 15.. Effectiveness of the strategies employed to help students participate in the club activities.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>1-2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4-5</i>
Introduction of vocabulary regarding the topic of the lesson	1 (4,16%)	2 (8,3%)	21 (87,5%)
Preparation time before speaking	0	2 (8,3%)	22 (91,6%)
Presentation of	0	1 (4,16%)	23 (95,8%)

models and examples about the activity			
Visual support: pictures, comics, drawings, videos without audio.	0	0	24 (100%)
Commonly used phrases to interact in a classroom in English (what's the meaning of?, slower please, can you repeat?)	0	1 (4,16%)	23 (95,8%)
Help from my partners when working in groups	0	3 (12,5%)	21 (87,5%)
Subtitled videos in English and Spanish	1 (4,16%)	6 (25%)	17 (70,8%)
Video transcripts	1 (4,16%)	4 (16,6%)	19 (79,1%)
Written texts to complement the comprehension of video material	0	3 (12,5%)	21 (87,5%)
Guiding written questions to interact with others	2 (8,3%)	1 (4,16%)	21 (87,5%)

Table 15 demonstrates the strategies implemented were instrumental in helping students participate in the club sessions as revealed by the fact that higher frequencies are located in the positive extreme of the scale. Positive evaluations of these strategies ranged from 17 responses (70.8%) to 24 (100%). It is important to highlight most marked items corresponded to the strategies most frequently used (see appendix 2): *Visual support: pictures, comics, drawings, videos without audio* (24, 100%); *Presentation of models and examples about the activity* (23, 95.8%); *Commonly used phrases to interact in a classroom in English* (what's the meaning of?, slower please, can you repeat?) (23, 95.8%); *Preparation time before speaking* (22, 91.6%). These are consistent with the effect that planning and preparation can have in speaking activities reported by Nation & Newton (2009). Moreover,

the use of visual support and commonly used phrases were also considered highly supportive to foster oral production as recommended by Mariani (2010) in his taxonomy for communication strategies. Lastly, the results revealed students appreciate examples for each activity to complement instructions as suggested by Thornbury (2005) & Kayi (2006).

Conversely, *Subtitled videos in English and Spanish* ranked last in order (3= 6, 25%); (4-5=17, 70.8%). The result may be attributed to the fact subtitles were not always used along with audiovisual material as they were not available or were inaccurate when they were auto-generated by automatic captioning applications. However, although this is the last in order, its evaluation is still positive with more than 70% of the students ranking it as a very effective strategy.

9. The last question of the survey asked students for suggestions to help improve the conversation club. By carefully reading their responses, suggestions made by students were classified in two categories; suggestions directly pertaining to club sessions, and suggestions of a more administrative nature.

Table 16. Suggestions to improve the club.

Club sessions	More subtitles.
	Include more materials and activities like audios and tongue twisters.
	Improve time management.
	Invite more advanced students participate in the sessions.
	Include more conversations in couples and small groups about “everyday” topics.
	Include more topics and activities related to the students’ major. (temas académicamente relevantes)
Administrative issues	Add more schedules and do clubs twice a week.
	More incentives to encourage students participate.
	Include an assessment chart to track participants’ progress.

In the first category, suggestions are consistent with responses from previous questions. Students’ request for tongue twisters, for example, reflects their preference for games and dynamic activities. Their call for inviting more advanced learners matches the majority’s preference for a mixed-level configuration of groups. What merges as a new line is the suggestion to include more academically relevant topics in the sessions. While topic choice was generally welcome by students, some suggests that topics that are related to their major would be a necessity for future sessions. In practice, it might be difficult to include this suggestion because of the variable nature of attendance to the clubs.

The second group of suggestions, as stated before, addressed more administrative issues such as schedules, progress tracking and participation. Students seem to enjoy the clubs and see value to attending it, but they feel they need a more explicit channel to receive feedback. They even suggested an assessment chart in which they could see what and how much progress they make. They also suggests that treats and other extrinsic rewards are included to promote participation. This might reflect a lack of autonomy from the students, and that the ultimate goal of the program has not been completely achieved. As we discuss

data from other sources this theme becomes recurrent and shall be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

Summing up, results from quantitative data show there was an overall acceptance of the mixed-level club as a setting to develop and practice oral skills. In contrast to common concerns regarding mixed-ability groups, it was revealed club attendees valued this work dynamic. Among the reasons given, students asserted it improved learning, led to cooperative work and make activities more interesting. Particular interest was observed from basic learners whose approval of this group configuration tend to be higher, and thus, demanded the participation of more advanced partners.

Beside the perceived benefit of learning through cooperative work, students also claimed the strategies introduced to elicit oral production, the planning and the role of the facilitator contributed to create an appropriate setting to practice the target language. Furthermore, results confirmed the effectiveness of the club sessions also lied on the majority of the students having a genuine desire to learn English.

Regarding the factors that proved less effective within the context of the club, students asserted they did not feel comfortable with activities and topics that resemble those from their regular English courses. Additionally, in spite of the positive perception of mixed-ability groups, some participants also shared their reason to disagree with it saying it can be intimidating and discouraging for basic learners.

Field observation journal

The field observation journal constitutes the reflections of the researcher in regard to planning implementation. Data from this source was sorted out and analyzed based on the researcher's interpretations, the literature review and the salient topics identified in survey and the focus group interview. From this process the following categories emerged: activities, strategies, and mixed-level dynamic.

Activities

As mentioned above, at the beginning of the club the lesson planning followed a conversation-based approach in which the only materials used were questions to guide spontaneous interactions around a topic. This dynamic was insufficient to elicit oral production in students whose linguistic resources were limited. For this reason, further plannings were based on several activities with supporting strategies. Popular activities included role plays, interviews, games, and storytelling. The students' attitudes registered in the journal revealed the majority of activities were enjoyable and useful to foster oral production. Nonetheless, some activities were not. The following lines dwell on the observed factors that contributed to successful activities, and the aspects in the planning which can be improved.

-Planning must consider the complexity of the activities regarding the linguistic and non-linguistic skills required: some activities entail skills students are not even familiar with in their mother tongue. Storytelling was one of the cases: Becoming a good narrator, one that is able to engage the audience, is an ability that requires practice. Therefore, asking students to narrate a story in a traditional manner may not lead to elicit oral production in a mixed-level group.

-Activities transitioned from controlled to spontaneous activities: despite including many support activities which aimed at making students rehearse specific items, students also had the opportunity to transition to spontaneous talk. One of the advantages of mixed-level groups is that listening to others speaking in English without a script motivates lower level participants to do the same, incorporating the words and phrases they hear from their more advanced partners into their own speech.

-Activities unfolded according to the participants' needs and abilities: students were allowed to make changes in the planning or perform the activity within their own standards. There were many times in which students deviated from the main topic, and started a spontaneous talk. This talks were particularly useful to identify gaps in their knowledge, and thus, direct future plannings to cover those needs.

-Activities based on listening comprehension exercises, particularly of authentic material, are very challenging to include in a mixed-level group. In contrast to advanced students, basic learners will need to listen to the material several times. This can be tiresome for students who understood the first time, and intimidating for basic learners if they feel unable to grasp the message after playing the audio several times. Moreover, even when subtitles can help ease the comprehension gap, they are not available for most of the material.

Considero que el video a pesar de tener subtítulos en inglés era muy avanzado para los estudiantes de nivel básico. Para esta actividad era necesario más de una reproducción, pero yo solo hice una ya que algunos estudiantes sí respondían a las preguntas. Esto fue un error. (Field observation journal, entry from 24th September, 2019).

-The planning must include few activities coherent among each other, but also extra activities that can also be adapted to the session sequence. One of the most challenging aspects of leading a mixed-level club was the planning. In contrast to regular English courses in which the teacher knows the classroom dynamics, the facilitator of the club sessions must deal with the unexpected. Some activities may take longer or less time depending on the number of attendees and their levels overall. Therefore, the planning should include few activities, plus expansion activities the facilitator can resort to in common cases such as advanced students finishing first.

Strategies

The analysis show the strategies implemented were useful to help students talk during the sessions. The most common strategies were visual supports. These allowed to include complex activities such as storytelling. When students were asked to tell the story using short phrases along with the aid of drawings, their performance improved, and their peers could follow the story more easily (see appendix 5).

Other strategies included the introduction of vocabulary and formulaic expressions; circumlocution through guessing games; use of models and examples; and time allotted to preparation. The supports targeted oral production, but also aimed to ease the comprehension gap among levels. In the context of the conversation club, as noted earlier, using listening exercises based on authentic material hampered speaking attempts from basic students as they

could not understand audio material with the same accuracy advanced students could. To overcome this obstacle visual material was introduced as support.

Moreover, it was observed strategies in general helped students decrease anxiety levels, and improve pronunciation. The following excerpts from the journal portray students acceptance of the strategies, and its usefulness:

In this case, the students' language level was pretty basic. In the beginning, students did not know how to provide clues for their peers. Writing fixed sentences along with vocabulary related to the topic of movies help them participate. Furthermore, repeating the same subject pronoun along with the verbs "to have" and "to be" may have helped students memorize the conjugation.

Al inicio los estudiantes tenían problemas para dar las pistas. No sabían cómo empezar. Por eso les di tres clases de pistas que podían utilizar (plot, genre, actors):

-It is a movie about_____

-It has (name of an actress/actor) in it

-It is a (genre) movie.

Estas pistas fueron de mucha utilidad para que los estudiantes tuvieran un punto de partida. (Entry from September 24th, 2018)

Once again, the use of fixed phrases proved to be useful to help basic students participate. *Taboo* was one of the most common games used in the planning for members found it entertaining. Besides, it was useful to introduce vocabulary at the beginning of the session in a way the information was not merely given but discovered by students themselves. Given its effectiveness, I reused it several times. It is advisable not to overuse an activity as it may result tiresome for some students. Instead, facilitators can look for other activities that also elicit the target strategy, in this case, circumlocution.

Cuando mencionó su gusto por los juegos decidí llevar a cabo la actividad Taboo, cuyo objetivo era mostrar a los estudiantes que se pueden utilizar la técnica del "parafraseo" para compensar la falta de vocabulario o gramática en la lengua extranjera. Para ello, le señalé al estudiante una lista de frases que podía utilizar para describir objetos, personas o situaciones. Me puse muy feliz al ver que

el estudiante comenzaba a utilizar varias de las expresiones y que gracias a eso él notaba que para mí era más sencillo entender sus pistas durante el juego.(Entry from September 24th, 2018)

Giving learners time to prepare is essential for both types of learners. In the case of basic students, it is important to acknowledge they have not yet automatized many of the processes that are implied in speaking. Evidently, their main constraint is language knowledge. In contrast, advanced students also need preparation time to think about the content they will convey particularly if the question is complex.

En la siguiente actividad “Estrategias exitosas usadas en publicidad” los estudiantes tuvieron una respuesta positiva frente a la propuesta. Algo que me llamó la atención fue que esta vez no tuvieron mayor dificultad al responder en inglés. Reflexionando sobre este punto puedo darme cuenta que el tiempo de preparación para fomentar el habla en estudiantes de nivel básico es vital. A veces no tomo esto en cuenta y hago preguntas muy espontáneas pensando que para ellos no representa mayor dificultad responderlas. (Entry from September 14th, 2018)

Different from what it is usually expected for a club that targets speaking skills, writing tasks can be of great help to support members’ oral production. As noted by Thornbury (2005) asking learners to write in advance what they will say help them improve the quality of the sentences they build by looking for new alternatives to the vocabulary and phrases they usually use.

Durante la socialización los estudiantes se desarrollaron muy bien, escribir previamente sus ideas fue un apoyo importante para los estudiantes de todos los niveles especialmente para corregir errores de pronunciación. (Entry from September 28th, 2018)

Strategies must also address affective variables. The facilitator should devote more attention to members with a level below average. Letting them work with more advanced partners or learners who may not be understanding of their limitations may lead to students’ reluctance to attend the conversation club. In contrast, receiving guidance, tips, and encouragement from the club leader may motivate them to come back and also foster positive feelings toward language learning.

Este grupo también lo hizo muy bien. Por último pasó nuestro grupo, el estudiante, a pesar de contar con un nivel de inglés muy básico logró desenvolverse bien en la actividad. Se apoyó en las respuestas que ya habíamos ensayado y en mis gestos. Incluso fue capaz de responder a una de las preguntas espontáneas de uno de sus compañeros. (Entry from October 1, 2018)

Mixed-level group

In contrast to the survey in which students highlighted the pros of mixed level groups, the field journal registered the challenges this class configuration entails for both, the facilitator and attendees. For instance, some students perceived their level based on the level of their partners. That being so, students whose level was slightly higher than the average thought they did not need to carry out the tasks in the same manner. They would not use the supports or ask for help during practice time. Then, when they had to perform the activity in front of the group it was evident they could have profited from the supports just as everyone else did.

Otro inconveniente en la actividad fue la diferencia en los niveles de los estudiantes, ya que los que percibían que tenía un nivel más alto no escribieron lo que planeaban decir para que yo los ayudara (a pesar de insistirles) y, al hacer la presentación, algunos tenían varios errores que tuve que corregir mientras hablaban lo cual es inapropiado cuando se busca el desarrollo de la fluidez. (Entry from September 21st, 2018).

Another obstacle was the level of motivation during group work. One of the strategies when working with mixed-ability students is grouping basic and advanced learners together. During the sessions I observed basic students who were not motivated relied on their advanced partners to do all the work asking to perform the easiest part of the tasks due to their level.

En esta pareja, el chico de nivel avanzado era muy entusiasta, repasaba sus líneas constantemente y trataba de motivar a su compañero. Sin embargo, este se había tomado la actividad a la ligera ya que en su intervención solo debía repetir la frase “Yes, Sr.”. Al observar esto les propuse cambiar de rol con el propósito de motivarlos a trabajar un poco más en la actividad. (Entry from September 10th, 2018).

Nonetheless cooperativism was observed during the majority of the sessions, particularly during clubs in which students already knew each other. On the other hand, group support did not limit to linguistic knowledge. Students were also able to contribute to the activities with their own abilities. In spite of the level gap, and even when some students upstage other participants during some exercises, all seem to enjoy the activities, showing a genuine desire to learn. The following excerpts exemplify these situations:

Durante la actividad, los estudiantes estaban muy involucrados en el caso. Todos trabajaban por igual en cada grupo o pareja. Algunos resolvían sus dudas preguntándole a sus compañeros, usando diccionarios en línea o traductores y llamándome cuando tenían preguntas sobre el texto. (Entry from September 28th, 2018).

Esta fue la sesión con más estudiantes hasta ahora. Me sentí muy feliz al ver la actitud de cada participante hacia las actividades y la forma en la que cooperaban unos con otros. (Entry from September 28th, 2018).

A los estudiantes les encantó la actividad, incluso querían seguir jugando. El único inconveniente fue que la participación de dos de los grupos opacaba al resto; ellos eran los que por lo general adivinaban primero. No obstante, todos los grupos participaron con entusiasmo. Incluso los que no estaban obteniendo mucho puntos. (Entry from October 1st, 2018).

La estudiante de nivel intermedio seguía la discusión, mientras que su compañera se veía confundida e intimidada. Durante el ejercicio la estudiante comentó que le gustaba practicar yoga. Por ello, con el fin de darle una sensación de control sobre la situación, le pedí que nos enseñara algún movimiento. Mientras ella hacía los pasos, yo intentaba narrarlos en inglés. (Entry from December 11th, 2018).

Focus group

The answers from the focus group interview were categorized through thematic content analysis. The interview was transcribed, and read thoroughly to identify the responses that aligned with the purpose of the research as well as the themes that emerged in the survey and the field observation journal. As a result, data were sorted out in four categories: English courses, club planning, mixed level group, and evaluation of the conversation club.

The English courses

In order to get a closer look on the attendees' oral production, students were inquired about the speaking activities they carried out in their regular English courses. All participants belonged to the same level, but were enrolled in different groups. In spite of planning the sessions based on the same syllabus, each teacher has the choice to address the speaking component according to their criteria. Two of the students that were indeed in the same group

agreed their teacher gave them enough opportunities to speak. However, as students were too shy to participate voluntarily he decided to direct questions to specific participants during each class. Furthermore, he assigned presentations based on major-related topics. Participant #2 claimed his teacher was encouraging, and proposed entertaining activities. These were related to holidays, and students' personal information. The rest of the group asserted they did not feel comfortable speaking in their English classes as their interventions, according to them, were apparently graded, and should last at least thirty seconds. During these daily interventions students were asked to make an oral summary of the previous lesson.

F: ¿en sus clases de inglés tienen la oportunidad de hablar en la lengua?

P3: nuestra profesora más que todo que digamos que hicimos la clase pasada.

P4: sí, pero muy intimidante ahí con el cuaderno de notas y te queda mirando así sería [risas], sí como que lo mira al que más esté hablando y le pregunta y mientras responde pone la nota es como la presión de la nota. (Focus group interview, participants 3& 4)

sí, ese espacio donde ella te pregunta al final de la clase que hicimos o al principio de clase que hicimos la clase pasada y usted tiene que responder y a veces te pone que tienes que hablar como mínimo 30 segundos. Entonces claro hay muchos que se frenan o que... uno empieza a balbucear a veces por que ya no sabe ni qué decir uno siempre dice que la clase estuvo bien [risas] o que estuvo mal da una opinión verdadera. (Participant # 5).

Opportunities to speak were mainly given during end-term assessed tasks. For instance, for the midterm, students had to perform a job interview. Participants claimed they did not feel comfortable either during this activity due to excessive feedback after the presentation.

F: ¿Cómo son las actividades de habla? ¿Recuerdan algunas en particular que les hayan gustado?

P5: sí, pero hasta ahora solo hemos hecho la de la entrevista, que nos dijo como tenía que ser una entrevista de trabajo, que parece que nos estuviera preparando para pedir trabajo [risas] porque cuando terminamos, ustedes agachan la mirada, que hacen así...

P4: sí era así y hasta calificaba y todo

P5: yo pensaba que era algo más dinámico de ir y salir a hablar con el otro, pero cuando ya terminamos todos que no que unos se paran así, que otros se sientan torcidos, que se sientan muy relajados

P4: sí, que uno nunca se ríe medio por ahí, ni mira de reojo. (Participants 4 & 5).

Furthermore, interviewees claimed they did not feel comfortable speaking in class given that sometimes the teacher makes fun of their partners' doubts.

La otra vez que [Juan³] preguntó algo como del “you” y ella se rió, pues todos nos reímos, le seguimos la risa, pero...(Participant # 4)

Claro yo me imagino, a mí no me ha pasado que se me rían todavía, pero claro yo me pongo en los zapatos de alguien y si yo estoy hablando y se me rien, me voltea la cara o algo así, yo no vuelvo a participar, yo me siento mal porque ella al hacer eso todo el salón se ríe. (Participant # 5)

From these answers and comments, it is apparent English teachers acknowledge the importance of developing speaking skills based on the guidelines and content stated in the syllabus which include articulating day-to-day English and academic discourse. Fostering oral production while simultaneously developing other skills is a challenging endeavor for instructors who work with an average of 25 students from different majors. To overcome teaching obstacles and meet the course requirements under these conditions, teachers may resort to strategies which can lead to counterproductive results such as increasing students' anxiety to speak, and thus, hindering their performance. This state of affairs validate the pivotal role outreach activities have in supporting in-class work by evening the opportunities students have to speak and, in general, develop other skills at their own pace.

Club planning

When questioned about the club activities, students agreed the majority were fun and useful to elicit oral production. Among their favorites students chose role plays for they felt in a different setting, and thus, the use of the language became more authentic.

sí, por eso yo te digo que el que más me gustó fue el juego de rol. Porque me pareció muy chévere que era como sentarme y con mis propias palabras descubrir si era [Luisa] o hacerla quedar culpable para que no me ganara [risas] entonces me gustaba esa actuación que hubo ahí, entonces si eso se repitiera más seguido sería bueno. (Participant # 5).

sí, a mí también, como que uno se mete en ese mundo y es divertido. (Participant # 4).

³ In order to maintain anonymity of participants, this and other names are pseudonyms.

Moreover, they also pointed out at games, and discussions based on visual materials as the activities they preferred. Conversely, interviewees disliked activities that do not resemble authentic encounters. These included extended reading comprehension exercises and an oral summary of a short film. In the former case, students suggested they would have rather performed the short film.

pues creo que fue la última, que creo que era un cortometraje y teníamos que contarle a los demás que habíamos visto, era como que no es que la disfrute mucho, que había que como decirlo, ni siquiera había que actuarlo, creo que lo íbamos a hacer, pero el tiempo no alcanzó. (Participant # 4).

Regarding the topics they preferred, participants claimed the most memorable sessions were *unsolved mysteries* and *advertisement*. One common trait between both sessions was that it allowed students to solve problems and create an outcome together through cooperative work. In addition, both sessions included varied activities students enjoyed such as role plays and drawing. Students also appreciated cultural topics such as food and gestures, and asked to include more in future sessions. To conclude, participants suggested the following topics: entertainment, diversity and inclusion topics, sports, series, and, in contrast to the results from the survey, one of the advanced interviewees suggested to include biographies from people in her field.

Materials were also a key component to help students participate in the club. The selection and design was one of the most challenging parts of the club planning. In contrast to what was registered in the field observation journal, participants affirmed materials were suitable to their level. They emphasized comprehension was not a major issue except when they encountered unknown words or words whose pronunciation was similar to others.

pues hasta el nivel que uno diga así como muy difícil no, digamos que uno a veces se quedaba como en ciertas palabritas, pero luego complementaba con los compañeros, en general en todo. (Participant # 4).

Attendees shared it was easy for them to overcome comprehension difficulties with the support of their partners and the facilitator. Contrary to the students' perceptions, I observed understanding audios, videos, and oral instructions was challenging for some of them.

Antes de empezar hicimos un ejemplo en el tablero con la palabra “winter”. Al inicio se les dificultó seguir la instrucción de pasar al frente para hacer la actividad, pero luego con ayuda de gestos pudieron entender. (Field Observation Journal, September 14th, 2018).

Con ellos iniciamos la actividad Taboo: películas. Se les dificultó mucho entender las instrucciones incluso con el ejemplo. (Field Observation Journal, September 21st, 2018).

Perhaps, working with others made it difficult for members to identify comprehension gaps. It is also possible that they felt intimidated by the other interviewees who claimed they could understand the material easily.

Mixed level group

The focus group interview confirmed students approved the mixed level configuration portraying it as an opportunity to learn from their more advanced partners, and reinforce previous knowledge by means of teaching lower level participants. Moreover, students also agreed they could profit from their partners different skills and ideas to accomplish the club tasks. Conversely, one of the basic learners claimed during one activity he felt his partner from a higher level got bored while working with him.

Pues la verdad chévere conocer a esas personas, aunque... hubo una sola persona que me acuerdo [risas] que pues como que él manejaba muy bien el inglés, entonces él hablaba y yo no le entendía, y le decía como que, puedes repetirlo, y entonces como que se aburría mucho. (Participant #6).

Nonetheless, as registered in the other data sources, there was an overall approval and interest from basic learners to work with students from superior levels. They highlighted it as an opportunity to have authentic opportunities to practice, and to learn from a reliable source, particularly because one of the advanced student had picked up her English abroad. The major issue regarding the mixed level group was pointed out by some of the advanced learners and supported by their peers. Advanced learners perceived it was unfair for them not to have the opportunity to practice with people from their same level. Basic level students agreed, saying it was the advanced learners' fault for not attending the conversation club. The discussion led to identify another obstacle in the proposals of conversation clubs.

sí, pues en mi caso así suene muy egoísta a mí me hubiera gustado que hubiera gente de mi nivel como la vez que vino el muchacho de intercambio, que pues me pareció chévere porque yo también aprendía que él sabía cosas que yo no, y yo podía hablar con él par a par, entonces a mí me gustó mucho eso, y además que tratara como diferente acento porque hablaba británico. (Participant # 1).

As noted above, students claimed more advanced members should join the conversation club. However, they understand advanced learners do not feel interested in these activities because they are not mandatory for them. Therefore, they propose to offer incentives to advanced learners and all attendees in general to promote their participation in the clubs. This was a salient topic in the discussion taking approximately ten minutes of the interview. The response may hint at a lack of autonomy from these club attendees, since they still need external motivators (such as treats or other extrinsic rewards) to attend and to become involved in the clubs. This suggests that one of the guiding goals of the program still needs to be reinforced in some students, particularly freshmen who may not be used to autonomous work.

pero no es porque la gente no pueda venir, si no que, ahí está el problema, es que los avanzados no vienen, no es que nosotros... yo entiendo a [Natalia] porque ella quisiera hablar con más personas, pero yo tengo el ejemplo del Colombo que es un viernes y en ese club hay gente de todos los niveles, entonces es gigante, pero hay gente de todos, básicos, avanzados, pero están juntos, entonces los que no sabemos tanto es bueno escucharlos a veces. (Participant # 5).

P1: deberías ponerle a tu profesor ahí que debería ser para todos

F: ¿qué cosa?

P1: o que les dieran como un bono no sé

P5: sí, o sea que así homologuen hagan las horas

F: ya entiendo, ¿les gustaría que fuera obligatorio?

P4: pues no obligatorio, pero como estímulos, ofrecerles algo más

Another complaint from advanced students was some basic learners were not interested in the activities, and thus, left them working alone for the most part.

a mí también me gusta cuando hay alguien de un nivel superior a mí, porque es como una guía para uno ser cada día mejor, y pues cuando pasa al revés, es como que no sé, es como raro porque yo no soy muy paciente [risas] entonces pues yo intento hacerlo lo mejor que yo pueda explicarlo y así,

pero me acuerdo de la actividad, una actividad de la publicidad algo así que me tocó con el chico de ingeniería mecánica algo así, emmm pues que yo hice el guión completamente todo el guión lo hice, era el de “yes sr.” “sí señor” entonces nosotros estábamos ahí haciéndolo todo, entonces yo le decía como tienes que decir esto y él “sí sí”, entonces repitámoslo, y él como que “ayy se me olvidó” como que no le ponía el empeño, como que dale, pero inténtalo, dale, pero de resto sí, al menos que lo intenten. (Participant # 2).

Evaluation of the club session

All participants evaluated the club positively. Before attending the sessions students held the idea that conversation clubs were about sitting in groups and discussing current issues or interchanging personal information without much intervention from the facilitator. That being so, students asserted the club exceeded their expectations. They enjoyed participating in varied activities, and speaking English while having fun. Moreover, they also affirmed the facilitator’s encouragement, and her willingness to correct mistakes and provide support overall contributed to the club’s success for they felt they could talk without fear of making mistakes as opposed to their mandatory English courses.

Regarding the impact the sessions had in the development of oral skills, participants asserted the club was useful to improve fluency and pronunciation, articulate their ideas coherently and learn new vocabulary. The following excerpts correspond to the students’ perceptions of improvement:

A mí sí me sirvió bastante en la manera que me ayudó a expresarme mejor, en el sentido de que me trababa mucho. (Participant # 2).

Sí también creo que en la fluidez porque a veces uno piensa pero la cabeza... como que no da la velocidad como que la lengua aghhh...[risas] entonces más en la fluidez y la pronunciación. (Participant # 5).

Yo diría que sí, uno aprende ciertas cositas que se le quedan a uno, cierto vocabulario, o escucharte a ti pronunciando algo y que uno como que dice lo pronuncio de una manera y uno se da cuenta ¡ayyy! estoy errada, entonces sí. (Participant # 4).

Afterward, students were asked about the aspects that could be improved in future conversation clubs. In this section participant #2 claimed that during some sessions there were too many activities, and time did not seem enough to cover all of them. Moreover, participant #4 suggested adhering to the maximum of attendees given that there were too many in one of the clubs. Aside from this, the rest of the comments were related to administrative issues. The results agree with the survey responses in which students demand for more clubs and varied schedules. Moreover, they suggested including other languages.

In closing, the analysis of the focus group interview shows the club achieved its main purpose of eliciting oral production within a mixed level group. Nonetheless, some adjustments in the planning, and the programming of these activities are still needed to ensure more students can benefit from the proposal, and the activities and material match the students' expectations and needs more accurately in regard to their level.

Table 17 below shows a summary of the main findings of the study. It also shows in which data sources the findings were obtained. As it can be seen, the findings emerged in more than one data source, validating its presence and providing internal reliability. For example, students' preference for group activities emerged as a common threat in all three data-collection techniques, the survey, the field observation journal and the focus group. The perception that the strategies I employed to support their participation in the sessions decreased anxiety and even improved pronunciation emerged in my field notes and in the interactions in the focus group, but no important evidence of this was found in the survey. In overall, positive comments and perceptions towards the way the club sessions were implemented are prevalent.

Table 17. Main findings summary.

Results	Survey	Field Observation Journal	Focus group
Students preferred to work in groups as they perceived it improved learning, and boosted confidence.	✓	✓	✓
Students dislike activities and topics that resemble those from their regular English courses.	✓	✓	—
Members evaluate the conversation club positively in regard to the activities, materials, topics and group management.	✓	—	✓
The majority of attendees valued the mixed level dynamic as means to learn from others and hold authentic interactions.	✓	✓	—
Some advanced participants claimed the mixed-ability configuration is disadvantageous to them as they do not always have the opportunity to practice with like-level peers. Furthermore, unmotivated members tended to rely on them to fulfill the tasks on their own.	✓	✓	✓
The strategies implemented were effective in helping students participate in the club sessions.	✓	✓	✓
Among the trendiest strategy students selected the use of audiovisual material as one of the supports to ease oral comprehension.	✓	✓	✓
Strategies helped students decreased anxiety levels and improve pronunciation.	—	✓	✓
Cooperativism was present during the majority of the sessions, particularly during clubs in which students already knew each other.	—	✓	✓

Students considered club topics interesting and effective to elicit oral production.	✓	✓	✓
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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research aimed at designing and evaluating a didactic proposal to elicit the development of oral production of college students in a conversation club of mixed-level members during a semester period. Nine sessions were executed and registered in a field observation journal that informed the planning of future clubs along with the guidance of the dissertation advisor. Once those plannings were carried out the proposal was evaluated by means of an online survey, and a focus group interview with the most regular attendees.

Results obtained through these sources validate the effectiveness of the club planning to help members develop oral skills. Particular emphasis was placed on variables such as activities, strategies, and mixed-level configuration in the success of the club. In regard to the activities students agreed they were fun and engaging. They favored activities that implied interaction, and allowed certain freedom to let them put in practice what they knew already. Yet, they appreciated the strategies implemented to support their performance. Notably, the trendiest strategy corresponded to the use of audiovisual material with 100% of members ranking it as highly effective. Overall, the positive impact of the club apart from students' perceived improvement in fluency, pronunciation, and their capacity to link phrases coherently, was also reflected on members' willingness to participate including shy students.

Concerning the mixed-level dynamic, contrary to the researcher's assumptions, attendees claimed they valued this experience as an opportunity to learn more via authentic practice, and guidance from advanced peers as well as to reinforce their own knowledge of the language by means of teaching other members. Nonetheless, it is important to remark that the advantages from working with mixed-ability learners were mostly perceived by basic students during the interview. In contrast, the few advanced learners that took part in it considered it was to a certain degree unfair to them not having enough opportunities to practice with students from their same level. In addition, they complained about unmotivated basic students who relied on them to carry out the tasks. This situation draws attention on the pivotal role autonomous work plays not only for the individual improvement of language skills, but also for the optimal development of tasks that target cooperative learning. In spite of these challenges, participants continued to approve mixed-groups. This was observed on a

general environment of cooperation, participants' understanding of their partners limitations, and the way they valued not only the knowledge of the language, but also the multiple skills and ideas with which their peers contributed to group activities.

Based on the experience of carrying out a conversation club with mixed-ability students, the following suggestions are offered to future club leaders:

- Club activities must differ from classroom activities. Exercises that demand too much time, or focus extensively on other skills such as reading comprehension are not suitable for these settings.

- In order to reduce anxiety levels, feedback should always take place at the end of students' interventions.

- Prepare for the unexpected. In contrast to teachers from regular courses, facilitators cannot predict how the session will unfold given they do not know attendees in advance. Therefore, the planning should include few activities that, apart from being coherent in regard to the topic, do not fully depend on one another as club time may not be enough to cover them all. Expansion activities should also be included in case some members finish first or activities fall flat.

- If a student arrives with a level that is significantly lower than the average, work with him/her. It is not advisable to pair them with advanced students unless you know they will be patient enough to guide them. If their partner is not tolerant, they might feel intimidated and never come back.

- Finding suitable materials for both levels is challenging. Audios alone are not recommended for not all learners will understand them in the same detail, and thus it will be necessary to replay the audio several times. To even comprehension demands, facilitators can look for materials with captions and choose between English or Spanish depending on the attendees' level. Moreover, visual materials are also very useful to help learners understand, particularly short films and comics.

-Activities must go from controlled to free practice. It is important to acknowledge some students need supports that may seem artificial in order to communicate. Nonetheless, given that the club targets authentic interaction, the planning should also include activities that allow students to speak freely, and put their language skills to test .

-Activities unfold according to the students' response. Facilitators must realize the club is not a classroom. It is okay to deviate from the main topic as long as all students engage in the discussion. At the end, all efforts of the planning seek to elicit students' active use of the language. Moreover, spontaneous talk give facilitators the opportunity to pinpoint knowledge gaps so as to address them in future plannings.

-In relation to the former point, written supports are also very valuable for speaking clubs as they provide a departure point for members to participate, and help them decrease anxiety levels.

-Bearing in mind the club is directed to college students, the planning can also benefit from including transversal academic topics across majors.

Even though the present research proposed useful activities and strategies to foster oral skills, it is important to acknowledge this is a context-specific case study, and thus, findings must be adapted by future facilitators to the specific requirements of their conversation clubs. Furthermore, future studies may employ quantitative research techniques to assess the effectiveness of the conversation club in regard to members' speaking skills improvement by means of a pre and post-test. Lastly, it will be interesting to delve into the types of strategies learners use in these settings, categorize them and establish a relationship between the sorts of strategies they use, and the impact they have in the improvement of oral production.

In closing, conversation clubs may have a significant influence on students' progress. They are informal settings that do not resemble the language classroom. Yet, they are structured enough to comply with members' academic, cognitive and emotional needs. Some students may be reluctant to speak in the target language for they do not want to be made fun of in class. Perhaps, some feel pressured about the grades, and others may only have few chances to speak in their regular courses. The conversation club aimed to address these

obstacles by offering students a supportive environment where they could unwind, learn, practice along with others, and even make new friends. In spite of what the title might imply, conversation clubs are not just regular meetings where students gather to talk about a topic. They require careful planning particularly with mixed-ability groups where the sequence of activities and materials must simultaneously address different components. Given their complexity, they are suggested to provide further training for facilitators to face a teaching context they may be unfamiliar with. The present study hoped to provide a glimpse into the challenging dynamics of a mixed-ability conversation club in order to help future leaders exploit the benefits of students' diversity.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1. Survey

25/4/2019

Encuesta sobre actividades y sugerencias para promover la producción oral en el Club de Conversación de Inglés

Encuesta sobre actividades y sugerencias para promover la producción oral en el Club de Conversación de Inglés

Esta encuesta busca conocer tu percepción sobre la efectividad de las actividades del club de conversación para mejorar tu habilidad de habla en inglés. Así mismo, busca indagar qué otras actividades y cambios se deben implementar en futuros clubs de conversación. Con el propósito de conservar tu privacidad y facilitar tu libertad de expresión, la encuesta es anónima; garantizamos que la información recogida es de carácter confidencial y será utilizada solo por el encuestador. Agradecemos de antemano tu participación en este ejercicio y esperamos que respondas este cuestionario con toda sinceridad.

*Obligatorio

25/4/2019

Encuesta sobre actividades y sugerencias para promover la producción oral en el Club de Conversación de Inglés

1. 1. Señala la disposición que tuviste al participar en las actividades que se listan a continuación. Si no participaste en estas actividades o actividades similares selecciona "no aplica". *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Muy indispuesto	Indispuesto	Indiferente	Dispuesto	Muy dispuesto	No aplica
Dramatizaciones (juegos de rol, simulaciones)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lectura de diálogos con un compañero	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dibujar y narrar historias de forma individual	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conversaciones espontáneas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dibujar y narrar historias en grupo	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Discusiones espontáneas a partir del contenido de un video	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Discusiones guiadas por preguntas dadas por el asistente a partir del contenido de un video	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Entrevista entre compañeros (hacer y responder preguntas)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Juegos: adivinanzas, rompecabezas, ahorcado, trivias con límite de tiempo (sobre vocabulario, gramática), etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ejercicios de llenar espacios en un texto a partir de un audio	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Completar historias a partir de un cortometraje	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dar y seguir instrucciones (direcciones, manualidades, recetas de cocina, etc)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. 2. Para las actividades del club prefieres participar: *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Individualmente
- ☐ En grupo

25/4/2019

Encuesta sobre actividades y sugerencias para promover la producción oral en el Club de Conversación de Inglés

3. 2.1 ¿Por qué? *

4. 3. A continuación, enumera los temas del 1 al 5, donde 5 es el más interesante y 1 el menos interesante. *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	1	2	3	4	5
Adicción a las redes sociales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Películas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Estilo de vida saludable en la universidad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aprender un idioma	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Publicidad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Narración de historias	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Misterios sin resolver	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
El futuro	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Amor y relaciones	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fenómenos paranormales	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Educación	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Comida	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Biografías de personas famosas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. 3.1. Sugiere otros temas interesantes para el club: *

6. 4. Qué número de asistentes consideras más apropiado para un club de conversación: *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- ☐ Menos de 5
- ☐ Entre 6 y 10
- ☐ Entre 10 y 15
- ☐ Más de 16

7. 5. Señala qué tan de acuerdo estás con las siguientes afirmaciones sobre la experiencia de participar en las sesiones del club de conversación: *

Marca solo un óvalo por fila.

	Muy en desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Indeciso	De acuerdo	Muy de acuerdo
Tuve suficientes oportunidades para hablar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Los apoyos fueron suficientes para que participara en las actividades	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Las actividades despertaron mi interés	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
El tiempo que la asistente dio a cada actividad fue apropiado	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
El material de video utilizado era acorde a mi nivel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
La asistente resolvió mis dudas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
El manejo del grupo por parte de la asistente fue apropiado	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Me sentía cómodo/a cuando la asistente monitoreaba mi trabajo	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
La asistente propició un clima agradable durante las sesiones	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Las actividades y los materiales que la asistente utilizó tenían propósitos educativos (aprendizaje del inglés)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
El material de audio utilizado era acorde a mi nivel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Las lecturas utilizadas eran acorde a mi nivel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Al principio de cada sesión, la introducción del vocabulario clave facilitaba que participara en las siguientes actividades	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Siempre tuve claras las instrucciones de lo que debía hacer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Había una relación clara entre las actividades	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Había un tema claro para cada sesión	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. 6. Indica cómo te sentiste en las siguientes situaciones: **Marca solo un óvalo por fila.*

	Muy incómodo/a	Incómodo/a	Indiferente	Cómodo/a	Muy cómodo/a
Trabajar con compañeros cuyo nivel de inglés era superior al mío.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trabajar con compañeros cuyo nivel de inglés era inferior al mío	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hablar dentro de un grupo	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hablar para todos los asistentes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No usar el español	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Escuchar que otros hablaran en español	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Participar en juegos competitivos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. 7 ¿Consideras que los clubs de conversación deben seguir siendo de nivel mixto (básico y avanzado juntos)? **Marca solo un óvalo.*

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

10. 7.1 ¿Por qué? *

11. 8. Enumera las estrategias que la asistente utilizó para que participaras en el club del 1 al 5, donde 5 es muy efectiva y 1 poco efectiva. **Marca solo un óvalo por fila.*

	1	2	3	4	5
Presentación de vocabulario sobre el tema del día	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tiempo de preparación antes de hablar	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Presentación de modelos y ejemplos sobre cada actividad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uso de apoyo visual (imágenes, historietas, dibujos, videos sin audio)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Frases de apoyo para interactuar en inglés (What's the meaning of...? Slower, please. Can you repeat?)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ayuda de mis compañeros al trabajar en grupos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Uso de subtítulos en español y en inglés	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Transcripciones de los videos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Textos escritos complementarios al contenido de los videos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Preguntas guía escritas para interactuar entre compañeros	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. 9 ¿Qué otras sugerencias tienes para el club de conversación? *

¡Gracias por tu colaboración!

13. Programa académico (escribe el nombre de la carrera no el código) *

14. Edad *

Con la tecnología de
 Google Forms

Appendix 2. Field Observation Journal.

Universidad del Valle
Facultad de Humanidades
Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras
Curso: práctica docente
Semestre: agosto-diciembre 2018

Plan #1

Fecha: 3 de agosto 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
A este club solo asistió un estudiante. Por ello, muchas de las actividades planeadas fueron modificadas u omitidas. La sesión se centró en una charla con el estudiante. Al inicio, nos basamos en el modelo de preguntas y respuestas de la actividad "Let's meet". A medida que la conversación avanzaba surgían nuevos temas, todos ellos relacionados con la vida, los gustos del estudiante y su experiencia viviendo en Cali. El estudiante tenía un nivel básico, por ello hacía uso constante del español en las preguntas que le resultaban complejas. Sin embargo, trataba de hacer uso del inglés en mayor medida, para ello recurría a pedirme aclaraciones cuando no entendía las preguntas, me pedía que escribiera las nuevas palabras que le decía o incluso trataba de	Al principio me sentí un poco intimidada ya que sabía que debía modificar todo lo planeado en función de las características del único asistente. Afortunadamente, el estudiante respondió positivamente a todas las actividades; era participativo, espontáneo y, aunque su nivel era muy básico, se notaba su motivación hacia el uso de la lengua. Por otro lado, me sentí un poco mal al no poder hacer que el estudiante hablara más en inglés. Sin embargo, también soy consciente de que la charla fue principalmente espontánea y por ello era complejo aplicar las estrategias habituales	Introducir más material de apoyo y actividades de preparación para que los estudiantes puedan comunicarse en la lengua meta. Considero que a veces dejo que hablen mucho en español porque no me gusta interrumpirlos o porque no quiero hacerlos sentir mal.
anotarlas el mismo. Para corregir errores fue necesario hacer uso de la corrección explícita ya que cuando trataba de hacerlo por medio de la repetición el estudiante reincidía en el error. Un ejemplo de las aclaraciones fue explicarle que en inglés no se utiliza el verbo "To have" sino el verbo "To be" para indicar la edad. Después de la explicación, el estudiante no volvió a cometer el error. Esta expresión fue utilizada varias veces mientras el estudiante señalaba las edades de sus seis hermanos. Otro tema a tratar fue su experiencia durante las clases de inglés en primaria y bachillerato. El estudiante refiere que "esperaba clases más dinámicas, en las que hubiera juegos o en las que pudiéramos hablar, pero eso nunca pasó [risas]". En sus clases primaban los ejercicios de escritura y el aprendizaje de aspectos gramaticales, según él "básicos". Cuando mencionó su gusto por los juegos decidí llevar a cabo la actividad Taboo, cuyo objetivo era mostrar a los estudiantes que se pueden utilizar la técnica del "parafraseo" para compensar la falta de vocabulario o gramática en la lengua extranjera. Para ello, le señalé al estudiante una lista de frases que podía utilizar para describir objetos, personas o situaciones. Me puse muy feliz al ver que el estudiante comenzaba a utilizar varias de las	como introducción de vocabulario o frases modelo. Un punto positivo que resalto de este club fue haber escuchado las opiniones del estudiante para modificar el curso de la sesión. En cuanto a la planeación del club, gracias a mi tutor pude darme cuenta que no había conexión entre las actividades y que no era evidente cuál era el tema en común. Siento que al tratar de enfocarme en las estrategias para el desarrollo de la producción oral olvidé el desarrollo coherente que toda planeación debe seguir.	En futuras planeaciones es necesario hacer explícitos los objetivos y no olvidar seguir una secuencia lógica y estructurada de las actividades.

expresiones y que gracias a eso él notaba que para mí era más sencillo entender sus pistas durante el juego. Para finalizar, el estudiante compartió algunas de las estrategias que utiliza para aprender inglés ahora que se siente más motivado a hacerlo. Refiere que ha comenzado a escuchar música y a ver películas en inglés. Adicionalmente, comenta que le gustaría hacer ejercicios en línea para mejorar su gramática. Con base en las respuestas anteriores y en sus gustos como el animé y la cultura japonesa decidí compartirle contenido relacionado en inglés: -Manga Death Note -The Water City, Gujo Hachiman (Video Vlogs sobre la cultura japonesa disponibles en inglés y japonés con subtítulos en español e inglés, entre otros idiomas)		
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Universidad del Valle Facultad de Humanidades Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje	Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras Curso: práctica docente Semestre: agosto-diciembre 2018
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Plan #1

Fecha: 7 de agosto 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
El club inició a tiempo con 2 estudiantes de comercio exterior. Mientras esperábamos a 2 más de sus compañeros, en español, le pregunté a las asistentes acerca de su experiencia en la clase de inglés. Una de ellas no estaba conforme ya que la profesora "Pone muchísimas actividades en la clase y no nos da suficiente tiempo para terminirlas". Como ejemplo nos dijo que en una clase los hizo hacer 3 mapas mentales con base en el contenido de 3 videos sobre el comercio exterior. Una vez llegaron todos los estudiantes iniciamos con su presentación personal. Debido a que su nivel no era tan básico decidí omitir la actividad "Let's meet"	Durante este club me sentí muy bien, especialmente al ver que dos de los estudiantes hacían parte de los asistentes asiduos del club anterior. Su llegada fue sorpresiva ya que debido a sus horarios pensé que no lograrían asistir. Una de las estudiantes era muy seria y eso me intimidaba un poco. Sin embargo, a medida que el club avanzaba la estudiante cambió de actitud; se veía muy contenta durante las actividades.	-Dar las instrucciones de forma clara y por pasos para evitar confundir a los estudiantes. -Promover la participación de los estudiantes en la formulación de preguntas y no solo al responder durante las discusiones para que la interacción sea e-e y no e-f. -Hablar de forma pausada e incluir más gestos para que los estudiantes puedan comprender más fácilmente. Evitar en los

con respuestas y preguntas predeterminadas y, en su lugar, dejar que lo hicieran de forma espontánea. Después, continuamos con la actividad introductoria. En ella los estudiantes decían palabras correspondientes a una categoría (frutas, colores, etc.). Si alguno tardaba en responder, debía proponer una nueva categoría. Entre las propuestas de los estudiantes estaban países. En esta ronda nos dimos cuenta que tres de las estudiantes se sentían atraídas por la cultura sur coreana. Una de ellas nos dijo que le gustaba mucho la comida de ese país, nos habló de un plato típico y del restaurante en que lo vendían. Al preguntarle por la ubicación ni la estudiante ni su compañera pudieron hacerlo en inglés. En esta parte me di cuenta que es necesario repasar preposiciones y frases para pedir y recibir direcciones. Posteriormente, iniciamos la discusión sobre el aprendizaje de una lengua. Durante esta los estudiantes compartieron sus experiencias previas con el aprendizaje del inglés y otros idiomas como el portugués, el coreano y el italiano. La mayoría manifestó haber tenido experiencias positivas. En cuanto al proceso de aprendizaje dos de los estudiantes lo hicieron en sus colegios como parte de los requisitos académicos y las otras dos estudiantes por gusto. Entre las estrategias que utilizaron se encontraban el uso de una aplicación que cada hora	En cuanto a la primera actividad: discusión del aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera, me di cuenta que soy yo la que en su mayoría hace las preguntas a los estudiantes, por eso al responder, ellos se dijeron a mí y no a sus compañeros. En la actividad de gestos alrededor del mundo pude identificar otra dificultad y fue la forma en la que doy instrucciones o me dirijo a los estudiantes. Ellos tuvieron problemas entendiendo qué había que hacer en la actividad porque les di todas las instrucciones de una vez y no por partes. Además, a veces hablo muy rápido y eso también dificulta la comprensión. Por otro lado, algo que también puede mejorarse es el uso del material. El video sobre gestos colombianos pudo aprovecharse mejor, en lugar de solo presentarlo a los estudiantes. Una buena idea habría sido dibujar los gestos en el tablero y pedir a los estudiantes que recordaran los adjetivos se utilizaron en la descripción del gesto. Otro aspecto a resaltar fue que, aunque les di a los estudiantes tiempo de preparación	posible la traducción. -Organizar todo el material en bolsas individuales y revisarlo antes de la sesión para evitar situaciones como la del rompecabezas. -Hacer uso adecuado del material sacándole el mayor provecho posible. -Fijar un tiempo para cada actividad y respetarlo con el propósito de evitar que los estudiantes se sientan intimidados al ver que sus compañeros terminan antes. -Diseñar las actividades de tal forma que todos los estudiantes estén involucrados activamente en cada una.
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muestra en el teléfono una palabra en el idioma seleccionado, su pronunciación y definición. Adicionalmente, señalan que les gusta estar expuestos a contenido en la lengua y por eso ven series y películas o escuchan canciones en el idioma que están aprendiendo. Por último, al preguntarles sobre la habilidad que más se les dificultaba tres de los estudiantes respondieron que era la escucha y solo una la escritura. Esto quizás se deba a que hay un fuerte énfasis en la comprensión oral durante los primeros niveles, por eso es más sencillo identificar dificultades en esta habilidad. La siguiente actividad: "Debunking myths about language learning" no se llevó a cabo. Esto sucedió porque al abrir mi folder me di cuenta que, aunque había separado las piezas del rompecabezas previamente, estas se habían mezclado y tomaría tiempo volverlas acomodar. A pesar de que esta actividad no se hizo, las demás actividades planeadas cubrieron la totalidad de la sesión. Continuamos entonces con la actividad "Gestos alrededor del mundo". Comenzamos nombrando otras formas de comunicación como introducción a la actividad. Después, repartí a los estudiantes infografías sobre el tema con instrucciones de cómo hacer el gesto y su significado. Los estudiantes se	para que leyeran e identificaran vocabulario desconocido en las infografías antes de presentar la información a sus compañeros, dos estudiantes dijeron que estaban listos cuando no era así. Considero que esto ocurrió porque dos de las estudiantes que tenían un nivel un poco más avanzado terminaron mucho antes y quizás a los demás les incomodó hacer esperar al resto. La actividad "Taboo" funcionó muy bien como actividad de cierre y cumplió con los objetivos planeados. Sin embargo, es necesario incluir a todos los participantes en las actividades para próximas planeaciones y así evitar que se disipen.	
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mostraron muy interesados en la actividad, hacían preguntas sobre el origen de los gestos y el porqué de la variación en su significado. Entre sus dificultades estaban la pronunciación de algunas palabras y el desconocimiento de su significado. Por eso, durante la actividad hicimos pausas para abordar ambos aspectos. Durante estas noté que los estudiantes se interesaron en aprender vocabulario sobre redes sociales y slang. Así, dedicamos una parte de la sesión a hablar sobre esto. Para concluir la actividad, proyecté un video sobre un estadounidense mostrando los gestos que tenemos en Colombia. A los estudiantes les encantó. Hacían los gestos, se reían y comentaban si estaban familiarizados con ellos o no. Para terminar la sesión, llevamos a cabo la actividad "Taboo". En esta un estudiante debía hacer que su compañero adivinara una palabra describiéndola sin utilizar tres palabras clave. Mientras una pareja hacía la actividad le pedí a los otros dos estudiantes que estuvieran a cargo de tomar el tiempo ya que era una competencia entre parejas. Si bien les gustó mucho la actividad y esta fomentó la producción oral y el uso de la circunlocución como estrategia compensatoria, noté que las parejas que no estaban participando en el momento, se comenzaron a dispersar y hablar entre ellos de otros temas en español. De esta forma, el club parecía dividido. Afortunadamente, la última pareja sí se incorporó a la actividad durante el turno		
de sus compañeros. Ya que durante la discusión del aprendizaje de una lengua extranjera los estudiantes dijeron que les gustaría leer en inglés, les envié a sus correos material de acuerdo a sus gustos.		

Plan # 2

Fecha: 10 de septiembre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: publicidad

Asistentes: 7

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
La clase inició con dos estudiantes de primer semestre de comercio exterior. Posteriormente, llegó un estudiante de ingeniería mecánica. Con ellos inició la actividad de apertura en la cual debían escribir la palabra más larga que se les ocurriera por cada letra de una palabra dada, en este caso la palabra "advertising". Los estudiantes se mostraron muy interesados en la actividad, especialmente porque era una competencia y tenían la presión del tiempo (5min). En la primera actividad los participantes debían adivinar qué tipo de producto estaba siendo pautado en publicidad japonesa. Ellos se sorprendieron al ver las diferencias culturales entre este tipo de publicidad y la publicidad Colombiana. Esta actividad fue útil para iniciar la discusión ya que despertó el interés de todos los	Dentro de los aspectos positivos resalto la buena respuesta de los estudiantes al material. Considero que uno de los fuertes en mis planeaciones es mi interés por elegir temas atractivos para los estudiantes, que despierten su curiosidad y los haga hablar al respecto. Por otro lado, algo que me inquieta en este club y en clubs anteriores es mi actitud como "profesora". Considero que a veces me esmero mucho porque los estudiantes se sientan cómodos. Siempre soy muy sonriente, les hago comentarios positivos sobre su desempeño y trato de entablar conversaciones con todos ellos. Claramente,	-Establecer reglas de comportamiento desde el inicio de la sesión. -Dar ejemplos e instrucciones precisas de lo que se espera de la tarea, preferiblemente de forma oral y escrita. -Monitorear la tarea de los estudiantes en todas sus etapas antes de que la socialicen con el resto del grupo.
asistentes alargando incluso el tiempo previsto. Uno de los inconvenientes de la actividad fue la diferencia de niveles ya que uno de los estudiantes tenía un nivel conversacional, mientras que los demás contaban con un nivel más básico. Para sortear esta situación decidí dirigir preguntas más sencillas a los estudiantes de nivel básico y hacerlas con base en lo que decía su compañero. Para la segunda actividad los estudiantes, en grupos, debían leer la guía "8 estrategias utilizadas por publicistas exitosos" para identificarlas posteriormente en algunos comerciales de TV. Esta actividad se demoró más de lo previsto porque tres de los estudiantes se retiraron. En este lapso me acerqué a una de las estudiantes que había quedado sola. Conversando con ella me di cuenta que no participaba mucho porque su nivel era realmente básico. Sin embargo, durante la conversación trataba de utilizar todos sus recursos para comunicarse conmigo. Al verla muy nerviosa le dije que no se preocupara, si no sabía cómo decir algo podía preguntarme utilizando la fórmula "How do you say..." o incluso decirlo en español. La actitud de la estudiante me hizo sentir muy feliz de estar dirigiendo el club. Se le notaba que estaba muy a gusto porque yo me había acercado a hablar con ella en inglés. Esto me motivó a seguir trabajando con estudiantes de nivel básico y a ser más consciente de la diversidad de niveles, así todos en teoría estén en el mismo nivel.	es positivo preocuparse por hacer sentir bien a los estudiantes durante un club de conversación, sobre todo porque hablar en otra lengua es una situación intimidante. Sin embargo, en mi caso considero que por mi extra amabilidad, porque soy tan joven como ellos y porque no tengo un rol "oficial" como profesora los estudiantes hacen cosas que no son propias de un espacio académico como irse al baño en medio de la sesión o utilizar sus teléfonos (en este club este no fue un problema ya que se los aclaré desde el inicio). Considero que uno de mis problemas es que no quiero que se sientan mal, por eso se me dificulta mucho hacer reclamos o llamar la atención. Algo positivo, es que gracias a los clubs he podido ir poco a poco aprendiendo a lidiar con esto aunque aun me cuesta acostumbrarme. En cuanto a la planeación de las actividades, nunca me había sucedido que un grupo terminara mucho antes que otro. Me sentí muy preocupada al ver que los estudiantes no tenían aparentemente nada que hacer. Por eso comencé a hablar con ellos en inglés o hacerles sugerencias sobre la actividad y a decirles que ensayarán su intervención. En esta ocasión sentí que los estaba sofocando	-Ofrecer más apoyos y modelos que faciliten la tarea del estudiante y disminuyan su ansiedad frente a la misma.

Una vez estaban todos los asistentes en la sala iniciamos la actividad. Todos los estudiantes participaron dando propuestas interesantes y debatiendo con el otro grupo acerca de la respuesta correcta. Algunas de las propagandas incluían más de una estrategia; los estudiantes pudieron identificarlas todas con facilidad. La siguiente actividad en el plan era "Utiliza tu voz como una herramienta". Decidí omitirla por recomendación de mi tutor quien señaló la dificultad de podrían tener los estudiantes al comprender el video y la necesidad de varias reproducciones. Por otro lado, también decidí omitirla por falta de tiempo y porque las demás actividades estaban más relacionadas con lo que se había hecho anteriormente en la sesión. De esta forma, continuamos con la actividad "pauta un producto bizarro". En ella los estudiantes debían crear un comercial de TV con base en los ejemplos analizados. En esta ocasión tomé en cuenta la diferencia de niveles de los estudiantes para formar los equipos agrupando a los de nivel más avanzado con los de nivel más básico. La dificultad durante esta actividad fue que uno de los grupos terminó mucho tiempo antes que los demás. En esta pareja, el chico de nivel avanzado era muy entusiasta, repasaba sus líneas constantemente y trataba de motivar a su compañero. Sin embargo, este se había tomado la actividad a la ligera ya que en su	porque cada vez que pasaba cerca de ellos, empezaban a practicar. Respecto a las actividades, considero que me falta dar más ejemplos y apoyos. En estudiantes de nivel básico lo más apropiado, según mi experiencia, es minimizar el número de decisiones que los estudiantes tienen que tomar. Por ejemplo, en la actividad final debí haberles dado frases modelo a utilizar, o una situación en específico para interpretar, entre otras instrucciones que limitaran sus posibilidades, ya que esto les causaba dificultad y angustia al no saber exactamente qué hacer. Esta fue la etapa más complicada de la actividad, decidir qué hacer. Para próximas actividades se les podría dar el nombre de un lugar o unos actores etc, sin limitar tampoco su creatividad.	
intervención solo debía repetir la frase "Yes, Sr". Al observar esto les propuse cambiar de rol con el propósito de motivarlos a trabajar un poco más en la actividad. Me sentía muy incómoda al ver que se habían quedado sin nada que hacer. Luego, me sentí un poco mal por haberles impuesto ese cambio. Los demás equipos tenían dificultad planeando que debían decir. Los sentía un poco preocupados con la tarea. Especialmente, a los estudiantes de nivel básico quienes como estrategia de compensación hacían uso de Google translate y diccionarios en línea, algunos también me hacían preguntas sobre vocabulario mientras me desplazaba por la sala. Al momento de las presentaciones me sentí muy feliz al ver las propuestas de los estudiantes. Todas eran muy creativas y graciosas. En cuanto a situaciones que se pueden mejorar, resalto nuevamente la precisión al dar las instrucciones. En esta caso por ejemplo la mayoría de los estudiantes leyó sus líneas, incluso aquellos que acabaron antes. Si bien yo revisé sus diálogos, los cuales estaban muy bien escritos, pasé por alto pedirles una demostración de cómo lo iban a hacer. Al leer las líneas, el estudiante de nivel básico del grupo que terminó primero tenía varios problemas de pronunciación y fluidez. Me sentí muy culpable ya que en el tiempo en el que se quedaron sin hacer nada pudieron haberme pedido ayuda con sus dificultades.		
La sesión terminó a tiempo para firmar los pasaportes de los estudiantes. La mayoría no lo tenía aun. Solo una estudiante tenía la planilla temporal para registrar la asistencia a las actividades. Las demás firmas las hice en el cuaderno de inglés de los estudiantes. Por último les recordé imprimir la planilla.		

Plan # 2

Fecha: 14 de septiembre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: publicidad

Asistentes: 14

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos por mejorar
A diferencia de otras ocasiones, esta sesión tuvo lugar en un salón de clase y no en el laboratorio. Alrededor de ocho estudiantes llegaron a tiempo, todos ellos de comercio exterior. Como actividad introductoria decidimos jugar "escribe la palabra más larga". En esta se propone una palabra y los grupos deben escribir la palabra más larga que se les ocurra por cada letra. En este caso la palabra fue "advertising" aludiendo al tema del día. Antes de empezar hicimos un ejemplo en el tablero con la palabra "winter". Al inicio se les dificultó seguir la instrucción de pasar al frente para hacer la actividad, pero luego con ayuda de gestos pudieron entender. Disfrutaron de la actividad,	Durante esta sesión destaco mi mejoría al momento de dar instrucciones. Los estudiantes de este club comprendieron más fácilmente lo que debían hacer en comparación con los estudiantes de la sesión anterior. El ejemplo fue clave no solo para hacer claro el ejercicio, si no también para involucrarlos en la actividad. En la actividad de la publicidad japonesa considero que debí hacer preguntas más puntuales como introducción a la discusión. Las preguntas que hice no fueron efectivas para promover la participación de los estudiantes (quizás les resultó un poco complejo responder a ellas en inglés).	-Formular preguntas más sencillas. -Dar tiempo de preparación a los estudiantes para participar en las discusiones. -Asignar más tiempo a las actividades finales. -Disminuir el número de actividades. Especialmente, cuando están articuladas entre sí.
escribieron palabras largas, de vocabulario avanzado y con muy pocos errores ortográficos. En la actividad siguiente los estudiantes debían adivinar qué producto estaba siendo pautado en publicidad japonesa. Posteriormente en la discusión sobre las características y diferencias entre ese tipo de propagandas y las propagandas colombianas, los estudiantes no hablaron mucho acerca del tema, solo decían que les parecían muy extrañas. Después, continuamos con la actividad "estrategias exitosas usadas en publicidad". En ella los estudiantes debían leer la copia "8 estrategias utilizadas por publicistas exitosos" para luego identificarlas en algunos comerciales. El tiempo de lectura tomó un poco más de lo esperado, algunos estudiantes estaban haciendo el ejercicio de la copia a pesar de decirles que no era necesario. Al momento de identificar las estrategias los estudiantes respondieron y justificaron acertadamente sus elecciones. La mayoría no tuvo dificultad al hacerlo en inglés, salvo por desconocimiento de vocabulario muy específico. Como última actividad analizamos algunos vallas publicitarias y todos los elementos que contribuían a comunicar el mensaje tipo de fuente, fondo, frase,	En la siguiente actividad "Estrategias exitosas usadas en publicidad" los estudiantes tuvieron una respuesta positiva frente a la propuesta. Algo que me llamó la atención fue que esta vez no tuvieron mayor dificultad al responder en inglés. Reflexionando sobre este punto puedo darme cuenta que el tiempo de preparación para fomentar el habla en estudiantes de nivel básico es vital. A veces no tomé esto en cuenta y hago preguntas muy espontáneas pensando que para ellos no representa mayor dificultad responderlas. Por otro lado los videos seleccionados fueron muy útiles para mantenerlos interesados en el tema y suscitar comentarios. La actividad de la valla no resultó ser tan exitosa como yo esperaba. Aunque el ejercicio dirigía la atención de los estudiantes a identificar diferentes estrategias para comunicar un mensaje, realmente no promovía la producción oral, lo cual es el objetivo del club. Sabía esto de antemano y por eso la actividad final era la que busca cumplir este objetivo nutriendose de las etapas anteriores de la sesión. Sin embargo, por cuestiones de tiempo esto no se pudo lograr. Para la última actividad había planeado la creación de un comercial de 50 segundos	

fotografías, gama de colores, etc". Después le di a los estudiantes cartulinas y colores para que en grupo crearán sus propias vallas. Para ello les asigné un tipo de estrategia y un producto. La mayoría de estudiantes disfrutó la actividad. Sin embargo, algunos dejaban a sus compañeros trabajar mientras hacían otras cosas como jugar en sus teléfonos. Cuando veía esto me acercaba y les preguntaba cómo iban y qué tenían planeado hacer (evitando que volviera a suceder el inconveniente de la sesión anterior). Para esta actividad los estudiantes tardaron más de lo que había planeado, en parte porque se esforzaron en sus vallas haciendo dibujos lindos y detallados. Debido a esto decidí incluir la última actividad en ese espacio, diciéndoles a los estudiantes que hicieran un mini comercial que acompañara la valla. A pesar de que tuvieron muy poco tiempo lo hicieron muy bien. Algo incomodo durante esta sesión fue que varios estudiantes llegaron faltando una hora para que terminara y otras dos se fueron una hora antes. Adicional a esto, el nuevo espacio dificultó el desarrollo del club, especialmente porque durante este hubo muchos asistentes.	pautando el mismo producto, haciendo uso de diálogos y creando una situación. Esta actividad tenía una estructura y un guión de un famoso comercial como modelo para los estudiantes. Al juntarlo con la otra actividad, tuve que omitir toda la parte estructurada y ponerlos básicamente a improvisar. Lo cual salió bien con algunos estudiantes pero pudo haber salido mejor con otros. No es bueno arriesgarse.	
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Universidad del Valle
Facultad de Humanidades
Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras
Curso: práctica docente
Semestre: agosto-diciembre 2018

Plan # 3

Fecha: 21 de septiembre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: Storytelling

Asistentes: 17

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
La sesión de hoy inició con dos estudiantes. Ambos tenían un nivel de inglés muy básico a tal punto que se les hacía complejo presentarse. Mientras llegaban los demás asistentes, les pregunté a los estudiantes sobre su experiencia con el inglés antes y ahora durante los cursos en la universidad. Los dos me dijeron que el inglés nunca les había gustado, hasta el punto de aplazar el curso hasta casi el final de la carrera. A pesar de esto, ambos concuerdan en que sus nuevos profesores los han ayudado a cambiar su sentir hacia la lengua gracias al tipo de actividades que planean.	En esta sesión me sentí muy mal. Fue la primera vez que consideré seriamente seguir por el camino de la traducción en lugar del de la didáctica. La planeación de los clubs es algo que me tomo muy en serio y a lo que dedico mucho tiempo, por eso mi ánimo decae (aunque no lo demuestre) cuando no todos los estudiantes se interesan en las actividades. Reconozco que no todos ellos quieren estar ahí, que no les gusta el inglés y que solo asisten como un requisito, sin embargo es una situación difícil de sobrellevar cuando se inicia en la labor docente. Uno siempre sueña con ser ese profesor que los motive a aprender.	-Verificar que todo el equipo funcione antes de iniciar la clase. -Tomar en cuenta el tiempo dedicado a las actividades con un número mayor de asistentes. -Escribir y hacer que en grupo se lean las reglas de un juego antes de iniciar. -Hacer que todos los estudiantes realicen la actividad de la misma forma, incluso si los estudiantes perciben que su nivel es más alto y que no necesitan de la escritura, en este caso, como apoyo. (Durante la

Poco después llegaron los demás estudiantes quienes en su mayoría eran los estudiantes asiduos de comercio exterior. Con ellos iniciamos la actividad Taboo: películas. Se les dificultó mucho entender las instrucciones incluso con el ejemplo. Una vez el ejercicio estuvo claro iniciamos. Los estudiantes se pusieron muy felices y daban las pistas exclusivamente en inglés, estaban emocionados y eso los hacía hablar, incluso aquellos que tenían un nivel básico participaron. El inconveniente con esta actividad fue que olvidé hacer énfasis en algunas reglas como no decir el nombre de los personajes. Cuando los estudiantes rompían la regla y yo les decía que recordaran que no se podía y por eso debíamos cambiar de película y anular el punto noté que algunos se molestaron. En la siguiente actividad los estudiantes veían el video "Introduction to storytelling" el audio del salón no sirvió. Debimos hacer una pausa hasta que llegara el técnico de sonido. Mientras tanto ellos veían el video solo con subtítulos. Después comenzaron a verlo con en sus celulares. Una vez se solucionó el problema,	Por otro lado, otro problema que afectó la sesión fueron dificultades técnicas como el del audio, el video beam que no se podía apagar para escribir en el tablero y la incomodidad del salón sobre todo al momento de desplazarme. Siento que todos estos detalles me restaron profesionalismo como docente, me sentí muy debutante. En cuanto a la planeación me parece que es adecuada, toma en cuenta los principios básicos de los planes de clase (coherencia, variedad y flexibilidad) y busca atraer la atención de los estudiantes con contenido de su interés. Sin embargo, al momento de aplicar el plan algo falla. En el caso de la última actividad no esperaba que asistieran tantos estudiantes, por eso no resultó tan bien. La idea era que los asistentes narran el cortometraje mientras iban pasando las imágenes a manera de apoyo. Esto no fue posible por el tiempo y por supuesto influyó en el éxito del ejercicio ya que el resto de los compañeros no entendían lo que el grupo en turno estaba narrando. Además, como ya era casi hora de irse prestaban menos atención.	presentación comprobé que les hubiera servido).
continuamos con la actividad. A los estudiantes les gustó el video. Durante la socialización se desarrollaron muy bien. Como todos estaban familiarizados con las películas de pixar y en especial con la mostrada en el video los estudiantes hicieron varios aportes. "Who am I" era la actividad que seguía en el plan. Sin embargo decidí no hacerla porque eran muchos estudiantes (17) y el tiempo no era suficiente. Así continuamos con la actividad "Dissect a short film" en ella los estudiantes debían identificar los elementos básicos de una historia en un cortometraje que se asignaba a cada grupo. Previamente habíamos hecho un ejemplo juntos con el cortometraje <i>Piper</i>, de Pixar definiendo cada uno de los elementos (character, plot, setting, conflict, theme). Al final, los estudiantes debían narrar la historia a sus compañeros. La actividad fue positiva porque me permitió hacer correcciones a los estudiantes sobre aspectos gramaticales en los borradores de lo que planeaban decir. Entre sus mayores dificultades detecté la conjugación de los verbos en presente para la tercera persona del singular, la confusión entre los verbos en pasado y en presente	En cuanto al manejo del tiempo, siento que esta ha sido una de las peores sesiones. Al haber tantos estudiantes cada actividad toma más tiempo. En el último ejercicio quería que todos hablaran aunque fuera un poco y eso hizo que la sesión se acabara justo a las 16:55. A esta hora no había terminado de firmar los pasaportes, ni de arreglar el salón, el cual había desorganizado para acomodar los asientos en semi círculo. Como punto positivo resalto que las actividades que se pudieron realizar sí cumplieron los objetivos planteados, entre ellos el objetivo general de promover la producción oral, principalmente en la primera y la segunda actividad en la que los estudiantes se sentían más libres para comunicarse de forma espontánea. En este punto cabe hacer una aclaración. Estas primeras actividades fueron favorables en mayor medida para los estudiantes que ya cuentan con un nivel de inglés intermedio, pero no favoreció tanto aquellos que apenas comienzan a familiarizarse con la lengua. Para ellos, la segunda actividad fue más apropiada ya que les dio tiempo de planear lo que iban a decir y de hacer correcciones	

(e.g. lefts) errores ortográficos y mezcla de ambos tiempos en la narración (iniciaban escribiendo en presente, después en pasado y luego en presente). Adicionalmente, la interferencia de la lengua materna en la narración ya que muchos construían frases muy largas y con repeticiones. Esta vez sí me cerciore de que cada estudiante me mostrara puntualmente que iba a decidir para así ayudarlos con la pronunciación de palabras desconocidas. Lamentablemente, muchos de los estudiantes, los que eran tímidos o los que no estaban interesados en la actividad terminaron diciendo muy poco en comparación a sus otros compañeros. Otro inconveniente en la actividad fue la diferencia en los niveles de los estudiantes, ya que los que percibían que tenía un nivel más alto no escribieron lo que planeaban decir para que yo los ayudara (a pesar de insistirles) y, al hacer la presentación, algunos tenían varios errores que tuve que corregir mientras hablaban lo cual es inapropiado cuando se busca el desarrollo de la fluidez.	con la ayuda de sus compañeros y la mía. No todo fue malo por supuesto, la mayoría de los estudiantes estaban interesados, se reían mucho con las actividades, preguntaban cómo decir algo si no lo sabían, y me llamaban constantemente para que los ayudara. Si bien ya llevo cierto tiempo con el club me sigue pareciendo lo más lindo del mundo cuando los estudiantes me llaman diciéndome "teacher", me siento muy feliz. Considero que soy una persona muy sensible y por eso al ver que así sea un solo estudiante no se siente agusto o se muestra desinteresado me afecta enormemente. Esto es algo que necesito cambiar.	
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Universidad del Valle
Facultad de Humanidades
Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras
Curso: práctica docente
Semestre: agosto-diciembre 2018

Plan # 3

Fecha: 24 de septiembre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: Storytelling

Asistentes: 7

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
Tres de los asistentes llegaron una hora antes por un error en la programación. Mientras empezaba el club, le sugerí trabajar una hora en los softwares de la sala ya que eso también sumaba a su porcentaje de trabajo autónomo. El club comenzó a las tres en punto con cuatro asistentes más. Ya que la mayoría no se conocían, cada estudiante se presentó brevemente. Iniciamos con la actividad "Taboo: movies". Los estudiantes tuvieron problemas al entender las instrucciones de la actividad, tratando de hacerlos entender me enredé más durante la	Durante este club me sentí muy feliz. Los estudiantes que asistieron estaban muy comprometidos y en su mayoría hablaban en inglés a pesar de tener un nivel básico. En esta sesión tuve la visita de mi tutor. Pensé que estaría muy nerviosa, pero al cabo de un rato se me olvidó que estaba ahí. Taboo: movies Siento que me faltó prepararme más para esta actividad, en este caso debí haber pensado en la película ejemplo antes ya que al hacerlo en clase no se me ocurrió nada y hubo un silencio incómodo. También hubiera sido útil pensar en	-Incluir menos actividades en la planeación. Proponer actividades más cortas y sencillas con menor tiempo de preparación. -Hacer énfasis en las reglas de los juegos. -Pensar en ejemplos con anticipación. -Dar a los estudiantes su espacio. -Controlar mejor el tiempo. -Dedicar mayor tiempo a las

explicación. Como sé que por lo general es difícil entender solo con las instrucciones orales, siempre doy un ejemplo antes de empezar. Esta vez olvidé planear la película ejemplo y me costó pensar en algo en el momento, se sintió como un minuto en mi mente. Una vez hicimos el ejemplo y explicamos las reglas comenzamos a jugar. El club se dividió en dos grupos para esta actividad. Los estudiantes del equipo contrario tomaban el tiempo de los que jugaban. Al inicio los estudiantes tenían problemas para dar las pistas. No sabían cómo empezar. Por eso les di tres clases de pistas que podían utilizar (plot, genre, actors) It is a movie about _____ It has (name of an actress/actor) in it It is a (genre) movie. Estas pistas fueron de mucha utilidad para que los estudiantes tuvieran un punto de partida. Otro inconveniente fue que los estudiantes olvidaban constantemente las reglas y por eso se debían anular los puntos. Por otro lado, la actitud de los estudiantes fue muy positiva, la cuestión de los puntos no les interesó, eran	instrucciones más sencillas para facilitar la comprensión por parte de los estudiantes. Afortunadamente, el ejemplo fue de gran ayuda. Nuevamente, creo que debo buscar otro modo presentar las reglas ya que a los estudiantes se les seguían olvidando. Esta vez dije las reglas de forma oral, di ejemplos, luego las proyecté en la presentación ppt y le pedí a uno de los estudiantes que leyera. Sin embargo, se les olvidaba. También debo estar más atenta durante la actividad, ya que uno de los estudiantes usó la palabra Taboo y yo no me di cuenta. Mi tutor fue quien lo notó. La actividad siempre es efectiva para promover la producción oral ya que es una actividad divertida, en equipos y en la que se cuenta con la presión del tiempo. Las frases de apoyo fueron clave para que los estudiantes se pudieran desenvolver mejor en el ejercicio. Introduction to Storytelling Considero que el video a pesar de tener subtítulos era muy avanzado para los estudiantes de nivel básico. Para esta actividad era necesario más de una reproducción, pero yo solo hice una ya que algunos estudiantes sí respondían a las preguntas. Esto fue un error.	actividades de comprensión oral. Sobre todo cuando se hacen con base en material auténtico.
participativos, incluso aquellos que tenían un nivel muy básico. Disfrutaron mucho la actividad. Para hacer la transición entre actividades le pregunté a los estudiantes cuáles eran sus películas favoritas. En esta ocasión lo hice uno por uno para que todos pudieran participar. Después les pregunté qué otras formas de contar historias conocían. La siguiente actividad fue "Introduction to storytelling" en ella los estudiantes debían ver uno de los videos educativos de la serie <i>Pixar in a Box</i> sobre la narración de historias realizado por el director de la película <i>Monsters INC</i> y responder a tres preguntas con base en este. Antes de la actividad leímos las preguntas en grupo y trabajamos en el vocabulario desconocido. El video tenía subtítulos en inglés, sin embargo noté que muy pocos estudiantes entendieron completamente el video. Los que participaron al responder las preguntas fueron los estudiantes de nivel intermedio.	Shortfilms La elección de los cortometrajes fue acertada por su contenido y duración. También destaco el modelo que diseñé para los estudiantes ya que fue una buena guía para que escribieran sus propias narraciones. Por otro lado, me sirvió mucho como un medio diagnóstico para detectar las principales dificultades de los estudiantes e incluirlas en próximas sesiones. Adicionalmente, creo que debido al tiempo sería mejor no incluir siempre actividades tan largas en las sesiones y en su lugar reemplazarlas por actividades más cortas en las que todos los estudiantes puedan participar y en las que el tiempo de preparación sea menor. Otro aspecto a resaltar en esta actividad fue la proximidad con los estudiantes. Como en esta actividad estaban trabajando en equipos yo sentía que no tenía nada que hacer, especialmente porque eran solo dos grupos, a diferencia de la sesión anterior en la que tuve cinco. Esto hizo que monitoreara excesivamente a los dos grupos. Creo que no fue una buena decisión porque recuerdo que como estudiante me intimidaba que el profesor nos observara cuando estábamos trabajando en grupo. A los	

A continuación vimos un de los cortometrajes de Pixar "Piper" este no tenía ningún tipo de diálogo. Después le di un modelo a los estudiantes del cortometraje narrado de forma escrita por mí y acompañado de dibujos. Ellos debían hacer lo mismo, pero con diferentes cortometrajes que ya había descargado y copiado a algunos de los computadores de la sala. Esta actividad la hicieron en parejas y fue la que más tomó tiempo. Los estudiantes estuvieron muy comprometidos durante la actividad. Todos trabajaban, resolvían sus dudas entre sí y se divertían. En esta etapa me di cuenta que si bien algunos de los estudiantes tienen dificultades al comunicarse de forma oral, saben muchas cosas en inglés (palabras, reglas gramaticales, expresiones) Eso me gustó mucho. También resalto que si bien este ejercicio fue principalmente escrito y no oral, fue de gran ayuda para corregir errores gramaticales, ortográficos y de pronunciación. De igual forma, fue un apoyo importante al momento de narrar la historia de forma oral.	estudiantes no pareció disgustarle, ya que su actitud era muy positiva. Incluso ellos mismos me llamaban cuando tenían dudas. No obstante creo que era necesario darles más espacio. En cuanto a la planeación creo que fue muy ambiciosa. Dos de las actividades no se pudieron hacer en ninguna de las dos sesiones. Esto implica que también hay objetivos que se quedaron por fuera. En próximas planeaciones debo proponer menos actividades para que el tiempo no se convierta en obstáculo y la sesión pueda desarrollarse mejor.	
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Universidad del Valle
Facultad de Humanidades
Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras
Curso: práctica docente
Semestre: agosto-diciembre 2018

Plan # 4

Fecha: 28 de septiembre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: Unsolved mysteries

Asistentes: 20

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
El club empezó a tiempo con alrededor de 15 estudiantes. Poco tiempo después llegaron otros cinco. Si bien el límite son 16 asistentes, me costó decirles que se devolvieran porque estaban a tiempo y porque son los estudiantes que siempre van. Iniciamos con la actividad "Broken telephone". En esta, cada estudiante debía susurrar a su compañero vecino la misma frase. Todos hacían lo mismo hasta llegar al último integrante quien revelaba el mensaje final. Hicimos tres rondas. Las dos últimas frases fueron elegidas por los estudiantes. Solo uno de los mensajes originales logró llegar	Esta fue la sesión con más estudiantes hasta ahora. Me sentí muy feliz al ver la actitud de cada participante hacia las actividades y la forma en la que cooperaban unos con otros. Broken Telephone Considero que esta actividad fue muy efectiva especialmente con este grupo en el cual la diferencia entre niveles era significativa. Al ser una actividad en la que todos participan cada estudiante está atento y a la expectativa de que llegue su turno. Por otro lado al ser una actividad secreta se	-Buscar estrategias para que los estudiantes de nivel más avanzado no opaquen al resto del grupo en las actividades. -Planear actividades más cortas considerando el número de asistentes.

hasta el final. Como primera actividad jugamos “What’s the word?” Un ejercicio cuyo objetivo era introducir vocabulario relacionado al tema del día. Los estudiantes en unos mini tableros borrables debían escribir la palabra a la cual correspondía la definición que se proyectaba en la pantalla. En caso de ser una palabra difícil, podían pedir como pista una imagen alusiva a ella. A los estudiantes les encantó la actividad, incluso querían seguir jugando. El único inconveniente fue que la participación de dos de los grupos opacaba al resto; ellos eran los que por lo general adivinaban primero. No obstante, todos los grupos participaron con entusiasmo. Incluso los que no estaban obteniendo mucho puntos. A medida de que iban respondiendo, anotaba las palabras en el tablero. Esto fue muy útil en las siguientes actividades ya que los estudiantes podían referirse a la lista cuando tenían dudas sobre vocabulario.	disminuye la ansiedad ante el error. Nadie puede saber quién se equivocó. What's the word Esta actividad fue muy útil para trabajar con un grupo numeroso. Por otro lado, también fue de gran ayuda para introducir el tema y apoyar a los estudiantes en las actividades que seguían. La diferencia de niveles no deja de ser un obstáculo. La idea en este tipo de actividades es que todos puedan participar. En esta ocasión dos grupos eran los que respondían en su mayoría. Gracias a la actitud de los estudiantes esto no fue mayor inconveniente, todos participaban con el mismo entusiasmo aunque no fueran a obtener puntos. Sin embargo, sé que es necesario tener en cuenta que en otros contextos esto puede desmotivar a los estudiantes. The murder of Jonbonét Los estudiantes se interesaron mucho en el tema. Esto fue favorable al momento de hacer la discusión en grupo sobre quién era el culpable. Algo a resaltar es el uso del español durante los ejercicios que son en	
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En la siguiente actividad los estudiantes, en grupo, debían decidir quién había sido el asesino de Jonbenét, una niña de seis años reconocida por su participación en certámenes de belleza, uno de los misterios sin resolver más famosos en los últimos veinte años en EE.UU. Para introducir el tema, le pregunté a los estudiantes qué crímenes sin resolver conocían. Ellos mencionaron el caso Colmenares y el caso de Juliana Zamoni. Ambos temas despertaron el interés de los estudiantes quienes comenzaron a participar en inglés. Los estudiantes de nivel más básico también lo hacían, pero en su caso principalmente por medio de palabras clave: S: Teacher, how do say “arquitecto”? F: Architect S: The little girl and the architect, remember? ----- F: Why do you think they (the two women involved) killed Andrés (Colmenares)? S: Teacher, how do you say “infidelidad” F: Cheating or infidelity S: Because of cheating	grupo. En su mayoría las interacciones entre pares se daban en la lengua materna. Solo unos pocos lo hacían en inglés. Por esta razón considero que este tipo de actividades durante la etapa de preparación se orientan más a corregir errores puntuales, en lugar de dar espacio a la interacción entre pares en la lengua meta. En líneas generales considero que he mejorado en el manejo del grupo. Doy mejores instrucciones y monitoreo las actividades sin necesidad de intimidar a los estudiantes al quedarme mucho tiempo en cada grupo. También mi actitud ha cambiado, aunque sigo siendo amable con los estudiantes dejen en claro las reglas desde el inicio y cuando los estudiantes no cumplen con el acuerdo hago un llamado de atención general sin necesidad de señalar a un estudiante en particular. Esto ha funcionado muy bien. En cuanto a la planeación considero que las actividades realizadas alcanzaron los objetivos propuestos. Sin embargo, como en ocasiones anteriores, una actividad no pudo realizarse y por ende algunos de los objetivos no se cumplieron.	
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Después, proyecté el trailer del documental "Casting Jonbenét" para introducir el caso. Como algunos estudiantes ya lo conocían, ayudaron también a presentarlo. Una vez terminó la introducción, repartí por escrito la información clave del caso (when, where, who, what happened). Algunos estudiantes leyeron en voz alta. Posteriormente, explique la actividad final. En parejas o grupos de tres los estudiantes debían deducir, a través de los perfiles de los sospechosos e información que los involucraba en el crimen, quién de ellos era el culpable. La información era dada de forma escrita. Al final de la hoja los estudiantes tenían unos cuantos renglones para escribir quién lo había hecho y por qué. Esto se hacía principalmente a manera de apoyo ya que el objetivo final era que los estudiantes compartieran sus respuestas de manera oral. Durante la actividad, los estudiantes estaban muy involucrados en el caso. Todos trabajaban por igual en cada grupo o pareja. Algunos resolvían sus dudas preguntándole a sus compañeros, usando diccionarios en línea o traductores y llamándome cuando tenían preguntas sobre el texto.		
Durante la socialización los estudiantes se desarrollaron muy bien, escribir previamente sus ideas fue un apoyo importante para los estudiantes de todos los niveles especialmente para corregir errores de pronunciación. La última actividad no se llevó a cabo ya que, debido al número de estudiantes se requerían como mínimo 50 minutos más y solo quedaban 30. Adicionalmente, me propuse ajustarme a la duración de 1 hora y 30 minutos de los clubes para mejorar el manejo del tiempo. Considero que fue acertado terminar en este horario ya que entre las firmas del pasaporte y resolver las dudas de algunos estudiantes pasaron 20 minutos. Mientras firmaba los pasaportes le pedí a uno de los estudiantes que proyectara otro caso y que lo presentara ya que sabía mucho sobre él y quería hacerlo.		

Plan # 4

Fecha: 01 de octubre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede San Fernando

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: Unsolved mysteries

Asistentes: 5

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
La sesión inició con cuatro estudiantes los cuales ya habían asistido al club del viernes el cual contaba con la misma planeación. Llegaron con veinte minutos de antelación. Al llegar les expliqué que el club sería el mismo, sin embargo decidieron quedarse. Uno de ellos llegó antes porque necesitaba una asesoría con una tarea sobre WH questions. Justamente el tema de la sesión. Revisé la tarea, todos los ejercicios estaban correctos. Como no había muchas observaciones por hacer le pedí al estudiante que leyera el párrafo de la tarea para corregir su pronunciación.	En esta sesión me sentí muy contenta. Desde el inicio me emocionó ver que los estudiantes se mostraban comprometidos con el club al llegar con bastante tiempo de antelación. Algo por resaltar fue la llegada de un estudiante a pedirme asesoría sobre un taller. Mi situación con este estudiante es particular. Al inicio pensaba que solo asistía como requisito ya que no era muy participativo e interactuaba poco con sus compañeros durante los ejercicios grupales e incluso conmigo cuando me acerca a ofrecerle ayuda. Sin embargo, con el pasar del tiempo me di cuenta que era uno de los estudiantes más comprometidos con el club	-Es aconsejable tener algunas planeaciones adelantadas como reserva en situaciones como la de este club. -Proponer actividades extra a los estudiantes que terminen primero para evitar que se disipen.
Iniciamos el club con una charla espontánea sobre el reinado de belleza transmitido la noche anterior y temas afines. Todos los estudiantes tenían un nivel avanzado de inglés por lo cual era posible seguir una charla natural. Después, como ya habíamos hecho dos de las actividades principales en el club anterior decidí introducir un nuevo misterio "The kid in a box" El caso de un pequeño quien había sido encontrado sin vida en una caja y cuya identidad nunca pudo ser determinada. Hablamos un rato sobre el tema y después antes de la actividad "build an alibi" hicimos un repaso del pasado simple en la plataforma Kahoo, esta actividad fue realizada en parejas excepto por uno de los estudiantes quien tuvo que hacerlo solo. A los estudiantes les encantó la actividad e incluso querían continuar con ella. No obstante considero que lo más adecuado sería hacer solo diez preguntas en lugar de treinta ya que la actividad siguiente demandaba más tiempo. Como actividad final llevamos a cabo el juego de rol "Build an alibi" En este la mitad	ya que asistía a todas las sesiones. Paulatinamente, fui notando un cambio en su actitud. Ya no era tan tímido, hablaba más con sus compañeros, se ría y en general se le veía más a gusto. Verlo llegar antes por una asesoría me hizo muy feliz pues por un lado se evidenciaba nuevamente su interés por la materia, y por el otro, supe que confiaba en mí como guía. Esto me enseñó que no hay que juzgar a los estudiantes por su actitud. Algunos necesitan más tiempo que otros para adaptarse y desenvolverse en un contexto como el del club. En cuanto al desarrollo de las actividades considero que en general el plan cumplió con los objetivos planteados. Uno de los principales inconvenientes fue la asistencia de los estudiantes a las dos sesiones de la semana que se llevaban a cabo con la misma planeación. Por esta razón algunas de las actividades terminaron siendo prácticamente improvisadas. Esto hizo que no se les pudiera sacar tanto provecho si se hubiesen planeado antes y con la posibilidad de adjuntar material de apoyo. Entre estas resalto la actividad de Kahoot. Si bien los estudiantes la disfrutaron mucho, pudo haber tenido un mayor impacto.	

de los estudiantes eran sospechosos de haber asesinado a su profesora de inglés, mientras el resto eran los encargados de interrogarlos sobre el crimen. Antes de empezar, le pregunté a los estudiantes qué tipo de preguntas creían que se podían hacer en este contexto. Después de escribir sus preguntas propuestas en el tablero, iniciamos la actividad. Para ello repartí a cada estudiante el contexto del crimen en un papel. Una se ofreció a leerlo. Por último buscamos el vocabulario desconocido y aclaramos otras dudas respecto al caso. Como no había suficientes estudiantes para formar parejas en cada grupo decidí hacerme con uno de los estudiantes. Tiempo después, me di cuenta que sería mejor trabajar con el estudiantes que tenía el nivel más básico. La actividad fue útil para promover la producción oral ya que durante todo el ejercicio los estudiantes hablaban en inglés. Uno de los inconvenientes en esta ocasión fue que al ser estudiantes de nivel avanzado terminaron antes la actividad mientras yo seguía trabajando con mi compañero. Como la mayoría eran amigos, se dispersaron un poco y comenzaron a hablar en español. Una vez terminamos esta	La actividad final Build an Alibi, que sí estaba planeada, pero no se había realizado en la sesión anterior por falta de tiempo, fue muy efectiva para promover la producción oral. Considero que este tipo de actividades funcionan muy bien con estudiantes de niveles mixtos ya que les permite a los estudiantes de niveles avanzados hablar de forma espontánea y agregar tanto detalle como ellos consideren, y por otro lado, permite que los estudiantes de nivel básico puedan conocer de antemano las preguntas que se les van a hacer y así planear sus respuestas. Para concluir, considero que acompañar a los estudiantes de nivel básico es esencial cuando comparten con estudiantes avanzados ya que sentirse intimidados o ansiosos inhibe su capacidad para comunicarse. En el caso del estudiante de nivel muy básico fue reconfortante ver el cambio entre una sesión y otra al participar en la actividad final.	
parte, seguimos con la etapa final de la actividad. En esta cada pareja pasaba al frente y hacía su representación. Una de las parejas estaba muy emocionada con el ejercicio y se tomó más tiempo del previsto. Por eso, tuve que preguntarles cuál era su pregunta final para que pasara el siguiente grupo. Este grupo también lo hizo muy bien. Por último pasó nuestro grupo, el estudiante, a pesar de contar con un nivel de inglés muy básico logró desenvolverse bien en la actividad. Se apoyó en la respuestas que ya habíamos ensayado y en mis gestos. Incluso fue capaz de responder a una de las preguntas espontáneas de uno de sus compañeros		

Plan # 5

Fecha: 11 de diciembre 2018

Nombre de la institución: Universidad del Valle, sede Meléndez

Nivel: I

Practicante: Rosana A. Gómez

Duración: 2 horas

Tema: Talking about the future

Asistentes: 2

Descripción	Reflexión	Aspectos a mejorar
Este club se llevó a cabo en el centro de recursos sede Meléndez. Solo una estudiante llegó a tiempo. Como la mayoría de las actividades eran grupales y el nivel de la estudiante lo permitía, decidí iniciar con una charla informal para conocerla mejor. Las preguntas iban orientadas a los temas que se tratan en el nivel I. Me habló de su carrera, sus gustos, su familia, sus pasatiempos y también de su experiencia en los clubs con hablantes nativos. La estudiante refiere que ha notado una mejoría en su comprensión oral ya que está expuesta a un discurso auténtico y a	Este club estuvo muy regular, uno de los mayores retos fue la diferencia entre el nivel de las estudiantes y la baja asistencia. Siento que no supe cómo abordar la situación. A continuación haré la reflexión sobre cada actividad: Make predictions Siento que la actividad es más divertida cuando se hace en grupo. Al hacerlo con una sola estudiante no tiene mucho sentido.	-Mejorar las planeaciones: proponer temas más sencillos para los niveles básicos. -Tener material genérico y actividades que se puedan adaptar y utilizar en ocasiones en las que se deba hacer cambios en las planeaciones. -Descargar todo el material.
diferentes acentos. Además, compartió varios aspectos culturales que había aprendido de los países de origen de los asistentes de lengua. Tiempo después se dio inicio a las actividades. La primera fue "what will happen next?" en la cual la estudiante hacía predicciones sobre el contenido de un video que compilaba momentos graciosos. En la segunda actividad "ask about future plans" a partir de una encuesta se discutían planes sobre el futuro con la fórmula "would like". Mientras la actividad se desarrollaba entre la estudiante y yo, llegó una asistente más. La estudiante contaba con un nivel muy básico por lo cual hablaba principalmente en español y pedía que le repitiera constantemente. Las dos estudiantes continuaron con el ejercicio. A pesar de que sugerí hacer preguntas adicionales a las que estaban en la copia con el fin de tener una charla más natural y conocerse mejor, la estudiante de nivel básico no lo hacía. Al sentir que la actividad era muy mecánica, decidí hacer preguntas espontáneas. La estudiante de nivel intermedio seguía la discusión, mientras que su compañera se veía confundida e intimidada. Durante el	Talk about future plans Con la primera estudiante que llegó iniciamos una charla informal. El ejercicio fue muy útil porque le di a la estudiante la oportunidad de hablar en la lengua meta de forma extensa. Yo solo hacía preguntas. Su actitud era muy positiva y su nivel de inglés era conversacional. Uno de los beneficios de este tipo de interacciones es que se centran en el estudiante por lo cual se toma en consideración el componente afectivo y, en términos comunicativos, contribuye a que el estudiante se desenvuelva mejor ya que si bien tiene limitaciones lingüísticas, no las tiene a nivel de contenido. Por otro lado, considero que la actividad de la encuesta también cumplió su objetivo. Las preguntas adicionales hicieron que el ejercicio fuera más auténtico. Con la estudiante de nivel básico la actividad resultó un poco más compleja. Sin embargo, lo hizo bien después de explicarle el uso de la estructura. Debido a su nivel no hacía preguntas adicionales.	

ejercicio la estudiante comentó que le gustaba practicar yoga. Por ello, con el fin de darle una sensación de control sobre la situación, le pedí que nos enseñara algún movimiento. Mientras ella hacía los pasos, yo intentaba narrarlo en inglés. Continuamos con la siguiente parte de la actividad en la cual ambas estudiantes se dibujaban la una a la otra con base en la información que habían recolectado en la encuesta. La estudiante de nivel básico se confundió y se dibujó a sí misma. Al terminar de exponer los dibujos seguimos con la actividad "The world in 2040". En ella, le presentaba a las estudiantes trailers de los episodios de la serie Black Mirror y les preguntaba qué tan probable era que las situaciones que se mostraban en los capítulos se volvieran realidad en el futuro. Las estudiantes no se veían interesadas en el ejercicio. Además, parecían no entenderme cuando explicaba. Uno de los apoyos eran los videos de los trailers de cada episodio. Sin embargo, me confié de la conexión a internet y de los otros computadores y no descargué todos los videos. De igual forma, las estudiantes no	Me parece complejo llevar a cabo este tipo de actividades con estudiantes de niveles diferentes ya que el estudiante de nivel más avanzado puede aburrirse y sentir que no está practicando, mientras el de nivel básico se puede sentir intimidado. Eso fue lo que percibí durante este ejercicio. En cuanto a la pausa para hacer yoga considero que fue una estrategia acertada ya que le muestra al estudiante que ella o él también tiene algo interesante por aportar. Eso, a mi parecer, contribuye a que el estudiante se sienta más cómodo y valorado durante la sesión. Naturalmente se debe articular con el aprendizaje de la lengua meta. "The world in 2040" Esta actividad no cumplió con los objetivos propuestos. Una de las principales fallas fue, por un lado, no haber descargado todos los videos, y por el otro, que el tema no despertó el interés de las estudiantes. Además resultaba difícil de explicar sin el apoyo visual. Me sentí mal porque pensé que el resultado sería otro. Cambiar de forma inesperada el rumbo de la actividad no es	
estaban muy interesadas en el tema. Al notar que la actividad no estaba siendo provechosa, decidí cambiar la dinámica y preguntarles cómo sería el futuro en 10 años en diferentes ámbitos (medio ambiente, educación, moda). Aparentemente esto funcionó mejor, pero solo con la estudiante de nivel intermedio. Para finalizar estaba planeada la actividad "What I learned from my partner". Decidí no hacerla porque ya nos habíamos conocido lo suficiente y el ejercicio estaba planeado para un grupo más grande.	algo que me guste hacer. Aunque sé que es necesario, creo que con estudiantes de nivel básico son mejores las actividades planeadas donde se cuente con material de apoyo. La estudiante de nivel básico se veía un poco perdida, y siento que por eso caí en el error de darle prioridad a la estudiante de nivel intermedio. Este tipo de situaciones naturalmente me entristecen, pero a la vez me hacen apreciar mucho más la labor docente y me motivan a mejorar en la planeación y la ejecución de las sesiones.	

Appendix 3. Focus group interview.

PREGUNTAS GUÍA GRUPO FOCAL

Expectativas sobre el club de conversación de inglés

¿Qué expectativas tenían sobre el club de inglés?

¿Dudaron en asistir la primera vez? ¿Qué hacía que se sintieran inseguros de asistir?

¿Habían asistido a otros clubs de conversación? ¿Cómo eran esos clubs?

Información preliminar

¿Qué les parece más difícil al hablar en inglés?

¿En sus clases de inglés tienen la oportunidad de hablar en la lengua?

¿Cómo son las actividades de habla? ¿Recuerdan algunas en particular que les hayan gustado?

¿Se sienten cómodos hablando en la clase de inglés?

Actividades

¿Recuerdan qué actividades les gustaron más del club? ¿Qué fue lo que más disfrutaron de esas actividades?

¿Recuerdan las actividades que no les llamaron tanto la atención? En su opinión, ¿qué se podría hacer para mejorarlas?

¿Les parece que el tiempo dado para cada actividad era apropiado?

¿Creen que las actividades además de darles la oportunidad de hablar les ayudaron a aprender o repasar otras cosas sobre el idioma? ¿Podrían mencionarlas?

¿Para el desarrollo del club qué prefieren? ¿una charla espontánea sobre el tema del día o varias actividades sobre el tema?

¿Cómo prefieren trabajar? ¿De forma individual o en grupos?

¿Qué les gusta de trabajar de forma individual? ¿Qué les gusta de trabajar en grupos?

Material

¿Les parece que el material del club (los videos, escritos, infografías, etc) eran adecuados para su nivel?

¿Consideran que había variedad en los materiales?

¿Qué otro tipo de materiales les gustaría que se incluyeran?

Temas

¿Recuerdan algún tema en particular que le haya gustado mucho?

¿Recuerdan otros que, por el contrario, no les hayan llamado la atención?

¿Qué otros temas les gustaría que se incluyeran?

Grupo mixto

¿Cómo se sintieron al trabajar con estudiantes de un nivel diferente al suyo (nivel básico o avanzado)?

En su opinión, ¿cuáles son las ventajas y las desventajas de trabajar con estudiantes de un nivel diferente?

¿Consideran que los clubs deberían seguir siendo de grupos mixtos?

Preguntas de cierre

¿Consideran que los materiales y las actividades en conjunto eran acordes a su nivel?

¿En general cómo se sintieron en el club?

¿Qué fue lo que más les gustó? ¿Algún recuerdo en particular?

¿Qué otras sugerencias tienen para futuros clubs?

¿Consideran que la asistencia al club de conversación les ayudó a mejorar su habilidad para hablar en inglés? ¿De qué forma? ¿Qué aprendían en los clubs?

¿Sienten que las expectativas que tenían sobre el club de conversación se cumplieron?

Appendix 4. Model lesson plan.

LESSON PLAN #4		
Facilitator: Rosana A. Gómez	Schedule: Monday 15:00-17:00 Friday: 15:00-17:00	Week: 4
Level: I	Dates: September 28th, 2018 October 1st, 2018	Time: 2hrs
Unsolved mysteries		
Terminal objectives	Students will be able to -Propose hypotheses based on information given about an unsolved mystery. -Interrogate their partners as suspects of a murder crime using wh- question words. -Build an alibi based on a given place. -Answer wh- questions as part of their alibi in a murder crime.	
Enabling objectives	-Understand and use wh-question words: what, where, when, who, why, how. -Develop receptive and productive vocabulary related to the topic of crime mysteries.	
Vocabulary	Vocabulary related to crime and mystery.	
Grammar	Simple past: past tense of “be”, affirmative & negative statements, wh-questions.	
Time frame (in minutes)	Procedure	Material
5	Warm up: word association The F will give an initial word, for example, banana. Then, each ss will take turns to say a word which they associate with the previous word. If the connection isn't obvious, they will have to justify their choice. banana – monkey – zoo – tourists – hotel – bible ... source: https://eslgames.com/no-prep-warm-up-activities/	PPT Whiteboards
10	Guess the word! In groups, ss will guess a word related to the topic of crime and mysteries based on its definition. Each word will be displayed on the TV. Ss can also ask for a clue (a picture of the word). Once they get it, they will write it down on a whiteboard. The first group to answer gets the point.	

40	Vocabulary: Police Fingerprints Murder Evidence Arrest Guilty Innocent Autopsy Detective Clue Victim <i>Vocabulary that will also be introduced:</i> Alibi Crime scene Trial Witness Motive Transition questions: Are you familiar with unsolved mysteries? Have you ever heard of one? Which are the most common topics related to mysteries? Unsolved mysteries -The F will present the unsolved mystery of the tragic murder of Jonbenét. First, ss will read a card with basic information about the case, and a short paragraph including all of it. Name of the case: When: Where: Who: What happened: -After it, ss will watch a Youtube video about the case. This time they'll try to catch new information about it (if available). -Finally, in groups, they will propose a hypothesis about who the murderer was and what her/his motives were. (who, why) How did they get to the conclusion? Which information backs up their hypothesis?	Cards Paragraphs Downloaded video
15	Review: simple past Before the next activity we will review the following content: Simple past:	

30	-Past tense of “be”. -Affirmative statements. -Negative statements. -Wh-questions. A murder in the classroom Some ss in the club are suspects of having killed their English teacher. The F will provide the context: Background information On May 24th, 2018 at 10pm the dead body of the English teacher was found in her house located west side of the city. She has been hit on the head. The neighbors heard someone breaking in and called the police. Unfortunately, it was too late. The only clue they found in the crime scene was the students’ passports scattered on the floor. The club will turn into a trial. Half of the ss will be given the name of a place from which they have to built their alibi while the rest will play the role of the jury. Questions the judge may ask (Ss can also add their own questions according to their peers’ answers) How was your relationship with the English teacher? When did you last see him/her? Where were you at the time of the events? What were you doing at that place? Were you alone? How can you prove you were there? Finally the group will play the role of the jury voting for the less convincing alibi.	Background information Alibi: places
End of the lesson: 100		

Appendix 5. Activity model, storytelling.

PIPER, a short film by Pixar

