

**Working with Learning Tasks in a Multigrade Group for the Improvement of
Reading Comprehension**

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Santiago de Cali
2018**

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**Trabajo de grado presentado como requisito para optar por el título de Licenciado en
Lenguas Extranjeras**

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Santiago de Cali
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Introduction

The last decades have brought huge changes with them in terms of technology and labor. Learning a foreign language became a very important tool to fit in this demanding world and the changes transcend frontiers that allow intercultural relationships in which a foreign language is the principal communication channel. This situation represents one of the challenges of education. Schools must provide the students the best learning opportunities to become competent speakers in the foreign language; this process involves the development of *communicative competence*, that is; “the knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate” and the ability to “accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others.” (Hymes 1972, p. 277).

In this sense, addressing the challenges of a globalized world, in which effective communication is an imperative, English has taken an important role allowing people to be in contact not only in language but also in culture, education, and economy. This need has shaped the way schools perceive the teaching and learning process of a new language. Colombia has not been an exception in taking part of this renewal process and has recognized the importance of bilingual education. As an attempt to address these globalized challenges, the *Ministerio de Educación Nacional* (MEN) has promoted educational policies, aimed at protecting the mother tongue, indigenous and creole languages, and English as a foreign language in our country. (MEN 2006, p. 5).

At a first stage, the main goal of foreign language education set by the MEN was that students were supposed to reach the B1 level (pre intermediate level) by the end of high school. But, the ultimate goal is to turn Colombia into a bilingual country. In this context, the MEN has defined bilingualism as the different levels of knowledge that allow an individual to achieve communication in more than one language and culture according to his personal experiences; as follows: “El **bilingüismo** se refiere a los diferentes grados de dominio con los que un

individuo logra comunicarse en más de una lengua y una cultura. Estos diversos grados dependen del contexto en el cual se desenvuelve cada persona.” (MEN, 2006, P. 5)

In this regard, after finishing high school, students must be competent in the foreign language to at least a B1 level. The above is a defiance in our country because, despite the efforts MEN needs to measure the improvement of education quality through the ICFES national tests or *Pruebas Saber*. These tests have shown that students do not achieve the required language level and even more they do not reach the standard language level in their mother tongue (See Alonso, Díaz, Martínez, Mayora, Moreno, Ochoa & Roldan, 2016). This situation can be attributed to the low reading comprehension level students have when it comes to solve problem situations. For example, *Pruebas Saber*, which evaluate students from 3° to 9° level, results show that the average score in reading comprehension is between 300 and 313 points in a scale that goes from 100 to 500 (Bustamante, 2015.). This means that our students are in a minimum level top and results are not satisfactory.

After recognizing that context, the importance of improving the reading comprehension ability in students raises. Taking into account this situation, this project aims at working on the area with students, keeping track of the process and determining the impact of the intervention based on differentiated learning tasks, as the participants belong to a group conformed by students of different grades with different language levels.

This research project has been developed in the private school Santa María de Pance located in the outskirts of Cali, with a multigrade group integrated by students from sixth, seventh and eighth grade with different levels of English. This work is a qualitative research framed under the Action Research design, understood, according to Burns (2009), as a process in which one bridge the gap between the ideal (the most effective way of doing things) and the real (the actual way of doing things) in a social situation, which is in this case the classroom. In addition, for Burns, the pioneer of this investigative orientation, action research is “a

spiraling process of reflection and enquiry with the potential to become emancipatory and empowering because of its group structure.” (Burns, 1999, p. 27). The research instruction was developed following the Task Based methodical orientation; it promotes reflection and possibilities to approach the language learning meaningfully. To design the tasks, it was necessary to recognize the classroom context through observation, and complementing information with the results of a Needs Analysis, which provided the information about students’ interests and needs, in relation to English and reading comprehension knowledge. After task implementation, students’ perceptions were gathered through different focus groups.

This work is expected to provide useful information for future teachers who encounter difficulties in similar academic contexts working with multigrade groups, a common context in our city lately. And, even more importantly, through this work, students surely gain motivation learning English as a foreign language. In this way this work turns pertinent for both, teachers and students.

Research problem

Learning a second language has been a very important aspect concerning nowadays education. English knowledge has transcended from being a privilege to become a need in this globalized world. Under this reality, many schools have transformed their curriculum in order to provide students with a higher quality of education by becoming bilingual. However, accomplishing this objective is not an easy work; time, effort and commitment are required. This is the case of the school Santa Maria de Pance, an institution that aims at graduating bilingual students with the ability to face the challenges of a demanding and changing world.

The groups at school are divided by levels (basic and intermediate), so the groups for the foreign language are conformed by students coming from different grades. G2 corresponds

to students coming from sixth, seventh and eighth grade; G3 corresponds to students coming from ninth, tenth and eleventh grade. It is supposed that the groups are homogeneous as the students are in the same level. Nevertheless, the truth is that students' levels of language are very different in each group. It is possible to find students from eighth grade with an English level lower than the level of a student from sixth grade. This working situation represents a challenge for teachers who are in charge of providing the best learning opportunities to each student. In this sense, planning the classes become a very difficult process as the teacher must think and organize different activities paying attention to the individual needs of students according to their levels. What could be the best methodology to work with this group of students with different language levels? What kind of activities must be implemented taking into account these students' needs? These are probably some of the most common questions that arise among foreign language teachers as us.

English classes in this institution are based on a textbook provided by a particular editorial. The books are different for each language level (basic and intermediate); however, it does not take into account the different levels that can be found in one single classroom. G1 and G2 are multigrade classrooms, however, the topics and the instruction are the same for all the students in the group. As part of the investigation a pre test was implemented in the classroom with the aim of diagnose students reading comprehension skill. Low levels of proficiency among students were evidenced. Then, with the pass of the class observations, reality showed that many students do not understand neither the instructions nor the text itself. They cannot follow teacher's instructions or the textbook activities they are required. As a solution, students who understand show the answers to those who do not, but working under this dynamic, activities turn unproductive. Besides, this way of working affects students' motivation and participation, challenging even more the teacher's capacity.

With the purpose of helping the situation, this action research was proposed and carried out. It aimed at answering the following Research Questions:

- What is the impact of working with differentiated learning Tasks aimed at improving reading comprehension in a group conformed by students from different grades?
- What features characterize a multigrade classroom?
- What are the specific needs of students in this particular context?
- What aspects should be taken into account in the designing and implementation process of learning tasks, focused on the development of reading comprehension?
- What is the impact of the instruction in terms of language learning and students relations with English language?

Objectives

General Objective

To determine the impact of working with differentiated learning tasks for giving answer, in terms of reading comprehension, to a group conformed by students from different grades and different language levels.

Specific Objectives

- To describe the school in order to recognize the context in which the study takes place.
- To find out the needs and interests of students in terms of reading.
- To design and implement tasks focused on the development of reading comprehension, giving answer to students' needs.

-To analyze the impact of tasks in the reading comprehension and its relation with the group of students and their levels.

Justification

In a foreign language learning context finding groups conformed by students with different language levels can be very common and demanding for teachers who are in charge of guiding this learning process. This difference in levels undoubtedly affects the learning process. Some students affirm that these learning conditions also affect their concentration process when learning because of aspects such as the noise produced by the little students; “No me gusta porque no me dejan concentrar”, “Es malo porque los pequeños siempre hacen mucha bulla”.¹ On the other hand, it is also very difficult for teachers to develop as good orienteers when they have to deal not only with different levels in a same group, but also with different ages, different motivation levels, and different interests.

On the issue, it is important to say that this context does not help the main purposes of the Colombian government, to become a bilingual country by the year 2025 by helping students to communicate properly in English, to have access to better job opportunities. In addition, teachers are not prepared to face this special context. This means, teachers’ possibilities do not spin in harmony with the real classrooms conditions.

Moreover, it is necessary to understand that with the latest technology students are more involved with information from different types and sources. This is positive for learning, but our perception is that students should be guided, in order to be critical with the sources and the information provided. In this sense, we can assure that students need to improve the reading

¹ Opinions taken from the Needs Analysis applied on April 27 - 9:37 a.m

comprehension ability and turn into critical thinkers to understand world problems and to start being part of the solutions. In addition, for the school it is very important to obtain good results in the English language test, TOEFL, that students are required to take in eleventh grade. It can be thought that improving reading comprehension can be really useful to improve school standards, enhancing other skills, critical thinking and, as a result, the exam results.

Finally, this project can be useful not only for students, the school, but also for the teacher in charge of the groups, as valuable strategies and ideas are provided to improve reading comprehension in multigrade groups. It is expected that this work also transcends institutional borders and help other teachers who have to deal with similar difficulties in their classrooms in different schools around the country and around the world. In addition, the work can be significant for future researches in the field of foreign language teaching and multigrade teaching models.

Background and Related Research

Local

Pretel, 2014, Diseño, implementación y evaluación de una propuesta didáctica para la enseñanza de estrategias de lectura en inglés L2 en el programa de formación complementaria en la I.E. Normal Superior Santiago de Cali.

This work was developed by Carlos Alberto Pretel Meneses in Santiago de Cali, 2014. The group of study was a group of students from the Programa de Formación Complementaria para Maestros. Most of them were of legal age.

The study aimed at improving reading comprehension in the students through the designing, implementation and evaluation of a didactic proposal. To accomplish this purpose, the project

was divided into different steps under an action research methodology. First, as the author states, it was necessary to observe and know the institutional context and its relationship with the foreign language teaching process. For this, it was applied an observation period where the author detected the students' needs in terms of reading comprehension, their interests and motivation related to the foreign language, their proficiency level and, the interaction between the students and the teacher. In addition, a test was administered in order to establish the students' level of reading comprehension. Second, a bibliographical revision was developed in order to set up the basis for the creation of the didactic proposal. Third, the proposal was applied by working on different strategies followed by different workshops and activities evaluated at the end of each session to analyze the student's learning and improvement. Finally, the process was evaluated and analyzed, and a new test was administered.

The results of the study showed that action research methodology allowed the integration of the institutional policies of improvement and the theoretical information that worked as the basis for the designing of the didactic proposal. Also, working under a communicative approach through tasks, the students could relate the new knowledge to the previous knowledge through reflection and group work. Finally, the implementation of this project helped in the development of literal comprehension in the students and the adequate selection of the texts allowed the acquisition of different strategies to have a better understanding of the text.

This work is useful for the present project as it portrays a methodology of tasks that serves as an example to implement our proposal. In addition, this work is similar to ours in terms of topic (reading comprehension) and approach. However, the two projects differ in terms of context and groups of study. Pretel's work (2014) is focused on young adult students while our work is directed to children.

National

Pedraza and Paéz, 2015. Las Estrategias de Comprensión Textual y su Eficacia en el Aula.

This work was carried out by Adriana Castro-Pedraza and Nidia Jazmín Paéz-Castiblanco in Machetá, Cundinamarca. The group of study was made up of students of fourth and fifth grade of the school Institución Educativa Juan José Neira. The objective of this research was to explore the difficulties of the students in reading comprehension and to propose some improvement strategies.

This study was a qualitative study developed under the methodology of action research and was divided into three phases. First, the authors conducted a diagnostic phase in which they interviewed the teachers, surveyed the students and tested their reading comprehension, all this with the aim of identifying the student's difficulties and their possible causes. The second phase consisted on working with the teachers in the elaboration of didactic units to solve the students' difficulties; through this phase they also applied the didactic units. In the third phase, the authors evaluated the work developed, through a group of discussion with the teachers and another reading comprehension test with the students.

As a result of this process an improvement on students' reading comprehension skill was evident. Also, the teachers could learn about the strategies used in a reading comprehension exercise and the creation and design of didactic units. As a tool, the teachers created a guide with general strategies that could be used in different classrooms with different type of texts. This study is important in our work because we also worked with different reading strategies and almost the same methodology; the difference is that this study was applied to kids and our work is applied to high school learners, plus our context is different because we worked with three different groups at the same time, this work was with two different groups but in different times.

International

Lopez, 2010. La narración como recurso para el desarrollo de la comprensión lectora en niños de la escuela multigrado en Bochojbó bajo, del municipio de Zinacantán, Chiapas. Universidad Autónoma de Chiapas.

This study by Maria del Carmen López Espinosa in Chiapas, México, 2010 was an action research in a multigrade school in the city of Bochojbó Bajo, in Zinacantán, Chiapas. In this research, the author decided to use narration as a resource for the development of reading comprehension in students from four to six grade.

To achieve this objective, the author decided to organize the work into three steps. The first one that is called “la Escuela Multigrado y el Hábito Lector”, in which the author contextualizes what a multigrade school is like and how reading comprehension is in the context the proposal was applied. In the second one “La Narración y la Comprensión Lectora”, the author takes into account some key concepts about narration and let the readers know how this strategy can be successful in the process of improving students reading comprehension; it also establishes what reading comprehension is, its process, level and useful techniques. In the third stage called “La Narración: Recurso para la Comprensión Lectora”, the author presents the objectives, the design and the results of the investigation. The methodology used was a qualitative research in which the author appeal to an action research and observation was the main data-collection procedure.

Results show that due to narration and the strategies applied the students could see a positive progress in their process of reading comprehension; but also, the process of the teacher who has been trained to learn and teach how to teach in this new context. This document can be useful for our research in the sense that it is an action research designed systematically; and because the strategies they applied in their work, in the search of improvement of reading comprehension, can be useful to our context too.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, we will present the concepts and ideas that guided this project. Attending to a communicative teaching and learning process of the language, the intervention was guided on the bases of the Task Based Learning methodological orientation, in order to improve the Reading Comprehension skill of students from a Multigrade classroom through Differentiated Instruction.

Communicative approach

In this study, it is important that students approach the learning of the language not only as the memorization of grammatical rules, but also as the achievement of an ability to communicate that occurs in all the moments in life. This approach has been studied for many years by many academics and linguistics. With the purpose of understanding this approach we will present a brief definition and history of the concept.

Language, as innate faculty of human beings, serves to express thoughts, self-expressions, to solve problems, and, even more importantly, language is needed to communicate. In this sense, to learn a foreign language has become imperative to global communication because living in a world in which everybody is connected in few seconds regardless of distance implies understanding the language and the participants in the communicative process.

Thanks to this changeable and connected world, the conception of teaching and learning a foreign language has suffered a lot of changes since knowing a foreign language nowadays is

understood beyond the knowledge of grammatical rules; as Chomsky (1965) said, humans have an innate system of the language that allows individuals to generate the infinite set of grammatical sentences that constitute their language. Nevertheless, one of the main functions of the language is communication, in other words to learn a language in our days makes part of communicating a clear message in the correct situation. This is also described by Hymes (1972 p. 277):

A normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events and to evaluate their accomplishment by others.

The above receives the name of **communicative competence** and this is how the term communicative approach is born. In the communicative approach, communication is not only the result; it is also the development of a concrete speech act in a concrete real situation. That is why in the communicative approach it is not enough that students understand the grammatical rules but also that they understand how to use the language in an appropriate context with an appropriate interlocutor, in order to achieve an efficient communication. In the communicative approach, the language is not the end, it is the medium to achieve the end or a need; for example, asking for food in a restaurant in a country in which the foreign language studied is spoken.

In other way, Candlin & Widdowson (1973), among other academics, suggests that in this approach the functional and communicative potential of the language should be taken into account. But also, Wilkins (1976) tried to demonstrate the meaning systems that underpin the communicative uses of the language. He described two types of meaning: *Conceptual categories*, (concepts such as time, sequence, quantity, location, frequency) and *communicative function categories* (petitions, denials, offers, complaints).

Finally, it is important to highlight that the communicative approach is student centered;

that means the student is the center of the education and not the teacher, as was thought in previous times and it is based in lived experiences. Therefore, teachers were encouraged to develop learning materials based on the particular needs of specific groups.

Task Based Learning

Introducing Task based learning processes in classrooms has become a different way to teach languages. It improves the students' learning of the language by placing them in real world situations where the use of the language is essential for doing a specific task.

For Nunan (2004, p.10), a task is defined as:

A piece of work in the classroom that engages students in understanding, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their focus is on mobilize their grammatical knowledge to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than manipulate form.

Defining a task can be difficult as there are many conceptions expressed by different authors. Nunan (2004) made a distinction between pedagogical tasks and real-world tasks. The first refers to the use of language in the world outside the classroom, while the second refers to the tasks that occur in the classroom. When a real-world task is taken and adapted to the classroom environment, a real-world task becomes a pedagogical task.

The author considers the Task Based Learning process has the following principles and practices:

- A needs-based approach to content selection.
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts in the learning situation.
- Providing opportunities for students to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself.

- An improvement in the personal experiences of the student as important elements that contribute to the learning in the classroom.
- The linking of language learning in the classroom with the use of language outside this.

In this approach, it is important to take into account experiential learning; learning by doing and the students as such, since they play a fundamental role when completing a task. Therefore, task-based language teaching takes the immediate experience of the learner as a starting point for the learning experience. Knowledge, then, occurs when the student takes his or her experiences and reflects on them in a sequence of tasks.

Different task based models have been created. For this project, Ellis (2003) model is taken into account. He focuses on real-world activities that make the students use the language in real situations.

Table 1 a Framework for designing task based lesson (Ellis 2003)

Pre-task (consciousness-raising activities)	Framing the activity (e.g. establishing the outcome of the task) Regulating planning time Doing a similar task
During task	Time pressure Regulating topic
Post-task	Number of participants Learner report Repeat task Reflection

Following this model involves a process where language development takes place when the students have enough time to plan and perform the task, focus on communication activities and share their understanding. During the process, the teacher must be a facilitator to make the communication flow but having good strategies to make error correction suitably.

Reading comprehension

Currently reading comprehension has become very important for any educational institution. However, one of the big identified problems is that the majority of students have not developed an appreciation for reading, on the contrary, they read responding to a requirement and many times students do not understand what they read. Hence, it is necessary to work with students on this aspect. It is imperative to change the reading processes, from a superficial level to a deeper one, even more when comprehension is aimed in a second language.

So, as Pretel (2014) states, reading comprehension is a process where connections among words are established; this process requires understanding, remembering, deducing, and communicating information about a text. Reading is interacting and acting with a text and it is dominated by the reader's thinking and his/her physical and emotional states, the context of reading, its purpose and the limitations imposed by the reader. This takes active part applying reader experiences and prior knowledge to give sense and meaning to the text (Rieder-Bünemann, 2012).

We consider appropriate the definition given by the RAND (Reading Study Group) in 2002; comprehension is “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (p. 11). In this process, the reader with his or her individual characteristics, the text and the context have an important role; however, when the reader has more background knowledge about the content and context of the text, the connection with the information portrayed might be facilitated; and thus, the more likely the reader will be able to make sense of what is being read (Butcher & Kintsch, 2003; Schallert & Martin, 2003).

As reading comprehension becomes an important aspect in scholar processes, the

students must have the possibility to overcome all of the problems with comprehension that may arise in order to achieve the results expected in classes. In this sense, the teacher should provide the students with the appropriate strategies that help them to improve comprehension.

Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension: before, during and after reading

As the lack of comprehension is not new among students, many people have been interested in showing the importance of reading strategies and their effective role in enhancing and developing reading comprehension. Mc Namara et al (2009) point out that “reading strategies are useful and beneficial for learners who show lack of knowledge in the domain of reading, as well as those with lower reading skill, these kinds of learners are strongly needed to these strategies to achieve reading comprehension” (P, 218). Therefore, the use of reading strategies help the readers to have better comprehension of texts while reducing the efforts.

Different approaches to foreign language reading include varied kinds of reading activities, such as skimming, scanning or predicting meaning according to the phase, approach and specific aims of the lesson. This project guides the reading lessons recognizing three different stages: a pre-reading stage; a while-reading stage and a post-reading stage. These stages constitute the structure of activities that what students carried out when approaching a text for comprehension.

Pre-reading stage.

In this stage, activating prior knowledge is a way of getting students warmed up and ready to read. Pre-reading activities are those that students do before they read the text in detail. The intent of this stage is to facilitate the students’ connection with the text when reading it. The student is familiarized with the content of the text. Here the student **makes predictions** and **brainstorms ideas** of what the texts is going to be about. Magiliano (1993) stated, “Prediction

strategy involves thinking about what might be coming next in the text. It is applied by effective reader that mean, they used pictures, headings and text as well as personal experience to make predictions before they begin to read” (p: 35-53 in Souhilar 2014 p. 11). This means the reader thinks ahead and anticipates information from the text.

While-reading stage.

In this part of the process, the student is directly exposed to the text and the activities must help him/her to engage with its content. The student uses **skimming** to get a general idea of the text through reading it quickly and, by looking for specific information such as dates, names or numbers or specific words or ideas the student uses **scanning**; in this way, we can say that scanning is reading quickly to locate specific information (Test Wise Word Association, 2006 in Souhila 2014 p. 12).

As part of this stage, the contact with the new vocabulary and the ideas, implicitly expressed by the author of the text, is really important. Reading “between the lines” is part of **inferring** where the student gets to the point the author wants to state based on previous information and the information provided by the writer; “Drawing inferences from text is a technique which requires readers to use their prior knowledge (schema) and textual information to draw conclusions, make critical judgments, and form unique interpretations from text” Zimmermann (2009 p. 23 in Souhila 2014 p. 12). As part of this inferential process, the student has to overcome one of the biggest problems when reading a text; the new vocabulary. It is useful to guess the meaning with the information in the surroundings of the word, the way it is formed and the background knowledge of the students about the subject (E.O.I. de abinaningo organization, 1993).

Asking and answering questions and monitoring comprehension makes part of this stage. The student must be constantly asking questions. Monitoring comprehension means to

realize that if there is a good comprehension or not by asking yourself questions about the content of the text. Reading discussion, answering stated questions, matching and true/false activities are good while-reading activities.

Post-Reading Stage.

In this final stage, the readers realize or confirm they know what they read, think about it and relate what they have read to their own lives. This stage aims at helping the students use their acquired knowledge in other situations, to make use of keywords and structures by **summarizing** the text, to identify main ideas. Reading Rockets Organization (2014) stated:

“Summarizing teaches students how to discern the most important ideas in a text, how to ignore irrelevant information, and how to integrate the central ideas in a meaningful way. Teaching students to summarize improves their cognitive ability about what is read.” (Souhila 2014 p. 13).

Using activities like retelling, discussions, writing a paragraph, summarizing or role plays in this stage help the students to relate what they have read to what they already know or what they feel.

Multigrade Education

Multigrade classes tend to be associated with “developing countries” but they can be found in many countries around the world. In Colombia and other countries from Latin America, education through multigrade classrooms was well received and spread through a new model called *Escuela Nueva* especially in rural areas in the 90’s. However, nowadays some institutions continue with the implementation of this model for many reasons including a reduced number of teachers and limited budget or by full conviction of its functionality and effectiveness. This view of education emerged as a way to face the difficulties of those communities where it was

not easy to accomplish the goals of education owing to many inconvenient such as war, unfavourable geographical conditions, few students and lack of teachers or inappropriate facilities for the teaching and learning process. According to Vargas (2003 pp. 10), “multigrade schools are those where the teacher is in charge of teaching two or more grades simultaneously in the same classroom”. This expresses the reality of many students that have to receive their classes with partners from different ages and grades in the same classroom and with just one teacher in order to have access to education. In this sense, “multigrade teaching refers to the teaching of students of different ages, grades and abilities in the same group” Vargas (2003 pp. 14).

These classes represent a challenge for the teacher who must implement more than one curriculum simultaneously, dealing with diverse aspects among the students such as age, developmental level, background, experience, motivation and interests.

When referring to those schools where this model is implemented, there are two specific types of school; *Unitary Schools* where there is just a teacher in charge of all the grades or groups and who also has the role of the principal of the institution and, *Schools with Multigrade Sections* where some classrooms are multigrade and others are not.

According to the Project for Innovated Multigrade Schools (EMI for its initials in Spanish), the documentation and the pedagogical fundamentals for this type of schools is very little; most of the information comes from previous experiences from different countries where this innovative education was implemented. For EMI, a multigrade class offers the possibility of a higher quality of education as it takes into account the students’ learning rhythms and is based on diversity and respect providing learning opportunities to students from different grades in the same classroom;

“las escuelas Multigrado pueden potencialmente ofrecer alternativas de una educación de calidad porque su estructura, oferta de varios grados en una misma aula de clase, permite un enriquecimiento educativo basado en la diversidad y en el respeto de los distintos ritmos de aprendizaje de niños y niñas y además ofrece más grados a una población educativa

escasa, como es la población rural.” (2003, p. 8)

Multigrade classroom setting has been a source of constant analysis owing to its own characteristics and the circulation of knowledge shared by students from different ages and grades experimenting inside the classroom varied didactic situations;

“en las instancias de reflexión, el concepto mismo de multigrado es el que se refiere a un grupo de niños de diferentes edades y grados compartiendo no solo el aula; compartiendo situaciones didácticas y por lo tanto, los saberes que allí circulan”. (Bustos, 2010 en Santos, 2011)

Therefore, in the course of daily activities, the students’ knowledge levels can constantly vary due to the different events that occur inside the classroom. As a consequence, teachers’ working demands increase to the extent that more time is required to plan and organize the classes in such a way that could be possible to articulate and relate the contents of the different grades, avoiding fragmentation in the teaching and learning process and, taking care of the students according to their capacities and characteristics. In addition to time and commitment, teachers must find a balance between the topics from a grade and topics from the other grades to boost the students’ learning.

Multigrade Classroom Organization.

First of all, it is necessary to understand multigrade classrooms as a representation of flexibility in education; “in the multigrade classroom, where flexible grouping and individualized instruction characterize instructional organization, the traditional floor plan may limit flexibility” (Miller 1989 p. 54). However, at the beginning of the classes, it may be helpful to arrange desks in rows or other traditional alignments. This can aid the students and the teacher in establishing clear expectations for classroom routines and student behavior. Thereafter, teachers establish cooperative small groups and learning centers and other flexible classroom

arrangements that greatly facilitate classroom management and increases students' responsibility.

It is necessary to divide the classroom according to the students and teachers' needs; learning centers, individual or group work settings and specific places for the belongings are important to establish rules and work routines.

Multigrade Education in the Foreign Language Classroom.

One of the biggest challenges teachers of a foreign language have to cope with is the lack of homogeneity in terms of language level in the groups. Not a single group is homogeneous as the students are different with regard to aptitude, linguistic competence, attitude towards the language, learning styles, etc. In this sense, according to Natalie Hess (2002 in Duran et al. 2012) communicating in varied levels of language makes part of a multigrade classroom; “Una clase multinivel se entiende que incluye estudiantes que se comunican en inglés en una variedad de niveles”. Nevertheless, the language level also includes the different types of learning antecedents such as those the students learn orally or those learned through a book, the ages or their literacy levels in the mother tongue.

Hess (2002) suggests to take into account different aspects when teaching a foreign language in a multigrade classroom in order to reach a successful learning process; to awake the students' interest, to personalize and individualize the work, to implement collaborative work, to make self-reflection about learning, to achieve positive goals, to respect the scheduled times for the activities, and to maintain the variety of levels instead of representing an obstacle.

For the above, it is necessary to perform a needs analysis that allows to determine what the student needs and requires to learn, to implement a varied class planning that

integrates different strategies of group management, to group different strategies and learning purposes, to manage projects that maintain the interest in students and, quick and easy access to authentic material to promote autonomy.

Occasionally, defining how to start when working in a multigrade classroom becomes hard since the teacher needs commitment and dedication. Some difficulties set out how complicated is to find appropriate materials for each group, how difficult is to determine the individual needs of each student and, how complex is to maintain interest and motivation inside the classroom. However, the advantages of working in groups with this characteristics are so varied and enable a better learning of the foreign language as the students follow their own rhythm, work in groups become collaborative and the students develop strong relationships with their pairs.

Differentiated Instruction in Education

As an effort to ensure that all children receive an equivalent level of education, some standards are established. In this standards-based educational system, government has set requirements that all students must achieve regardless of the teacher, socioeconomic status, disabilities, or other differences in either the educational institution or the student. However, is through daily experience, that almost all teachers come to understand the students are different and have special particularities regarding their learning processes. Taking into account these particularities, it is necessary to establish new strategies that enable the customization of learning and teaching and, is the teacher who must provide varied classes attending individual characteristics and not assuming the students are equal when learning; “El docente debe proveer de manera específica, diferentes formas de enseñanza para cada individuo, ya que no se debe asumir, que todo alumno aprende en forma única e individual” (Tomlinson, 1999 en González

2012 pp. 29).

Differentiated teaching, as a philosophy, is based on the idea that students show better learning when the teacher recognizes the varieties in learning related to aptitudes, interests and profiles;

“La premisa principal de la enseñanza Diferenciada es que cada estudiante tiene una habilidad para aprender, y por medio de este modelo todo docente puede atender las necesidades de los estudiantes y ayudar a cada uno de ellos a sobrepasar los estándares establecidos” (González, 2012, p. 18).

Consequently, the students become the center in the teaching and learning process inside the differentiated instruction as a way of innovation to create new methods of teaching. In fact, this model focuses on the individual who is taught, where is taught and how is taught (Tomlinson and McTighe, 2006). Each student is considered as important and valuable, he is offered opportunities to demonstrate his skills and abilities through class activities that are connected to his social and cultural context, so Differentiated Education reflects Vygotsky's sociocultural theory as it relies on the social and interactive relationships between teachers and students.

Notably, every teacher who has entered a classroom has differentiated instruction in one way or another. There are various situations in the classes that show that, consciously or unconsciously, teachers differentiate the instruction; for instance, sometimes a student is given more time to finish an assignment, some activities allow the children to have a choice in what they read and, occasionally, some teachers give different types of assessments. Although these are all good strategies, as educators, we can make our classrooms more responsive to student needs by being more systematic in our approach to differentiation, which could result in better learning processes. In this sense, “Differentiated instruction is a set of strategies that will help teachers meet each child where they are when they enter class and move them forward as far as possible on their educational path” (Levy, 2001, p.1).

As Differentiated Instruction is not planning different lessons for each student, it is important to mix whole-class, group and individual work where continuous reflection implies

rethinking and reorganizing lessons in order to help students in their learning process. According to Tomlinson (2014, p. 14-17 in Pohtola 2015 p. 7), to do this process more efficient, there should be clarity about the essential things the students are expected to learn. In this sense, assessment must be continuous in order to facilitate changes and improvements in the lessons. Tomlinson (2014) states that the modifications in lessons relies on the content, the process and the product, sometimes also the learning environment (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 17-18 in Pohtola 2015 p. 7)

What to differentiate? Content, process and product.

As stated before, the government has established the standards and handed our curriculum down to us. The standards trace the goals settled for all the students and how they reach them may require different paths. According to Levy (2008), the main characteristic of these paths must be flexibility in content, process, and product based on the student's strengths, needs, and learning styles.

Content refers to what is taught, what we expect students to learn and the materials or tools used in the learning process. The specific content can be the same for all the students but the way they approach that knowledge and its levels can vary. In this regard, giving the students different materials help them in the process.

Process describes how the students will learn and the activities or strategies they are going to use considering their different learning styles, interests, or cognitive capacity. It also refers to the way teachers instruct (a whole class, group, pair, or individuals) and the criteria the teacher uses to organize the students during the class.

Product refers to how the students demonstrate what they have learned during the process. The teacher must take into account the different learning styles and skills the students have in order to understand the result of individual processes.

Finally, differentiating depends on how well the teacher knows the students and their individual characteristics. The level of teachers' consciousness on these aspects is determinant in the effectiveness of the differentiation.

As it is presented in this section, implementing differentiated tasks in classes is a useful pedagogical tool for addressing students' difficulties in terms of language skills; not only reading comprehension. This type of activities carried out in multigrade groups with specific characteristics provide the possibility to help the students increase their language level and overcome the difficulties that may arise in the process. In the same way, this kind of methodology can be used in current classrooms where the students' language levels and ages are so varied.

Methodology

Research method and design

This research project is conceived under the parameters of an action research as part of a qualitative investigation. All this, through the perspective proposed by Anne Burns (2009): "Action research is the combination and interaction of two modes of activity – action and research." This research project started from a process of observation and analysis of different phenomena that occur in the classroom. The analysis provided important data that reflected it was necessary to take actions in order to contribute with solutions or strategies to improve the students' reading comprehension skill.

The project was developed by using a Tasked Based approach; this understood as:

"...a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form." (Nunan 2004, p. 4)

For the elaboration of significant tasks, it was necessary to observe the group of study, then to design and implement a Needs Analysis that provided us the information needed according to students' interests and real needs related to English and reading comprehension in the foreign language.

A pre-test was implemented in order to obtain real data about the students' reading comprehension skill. After this tasks implementation occurred, and a post-test was implemented to find out information and then know if the students' really improved reading comprehension or not. Finally, the students' perceptions were gathered through a focus group.

Context

The institution where this project took place is a private school located in the outskirts of Cali; the school Santa Maria de Pance. It provides English classes to the students under a methodology where students from different grades and levels are gathered in the same classroom.

According to the above, in the institution the English classroom organization is different because it is made by levels. In high school, there are four different levels, each of them with its proper textbook. The levels are organized in this way: G2 - basic (level A2) it is formed by students with a basic language level from 6°, 7° & 8° grades. G2 - intermediate (level B1) formed by students with an intermediate language level from 6°, 7° & 8° grades. G3 - intermediate (level B1) formed by students with an intermediate language level from 9°, 10° & 11° grades. G3 advanced (level B1+) formed by students with an advanced language level from 9°, 10° & 11° grades.

Participants

The classroom in which the intervention took place correspond to the group G2. This group is formed by six girls and twelve boys with varied language levels, but according to the first diagnostic test implemented by the institution, they belong to a basic language level. The students are in an age range of eleven to fourteen years. The classroom is equipped with a board and two fans, the TV and the data projector can be used depending on the availability because these resources should be shared with the rest of the teachers.

Inside the classroom, the students are organized in lines. Each student has a place that cannot be changed. In the front of the classroom is the teacher who has a paper with the corresponding place for each student. There are four rows.

Instruments for data collection

In this section, we present the instruments used for collecting the information used during the project.

Institutional documents study: Through the study of documents, such as the P. E. I (institutional educational project according to its acronymous in Spanish), the school community handbook, the syllabus and the lesson plans we learned some characteristics of the methodology used in the school for the English classes. According to syllabus, at school classes are taught under the communicative approach. Through books, the students are expected to develop communicative skills in written and oral production and comprehension. In the books, some MEN standards are taken into account. In addition, we studied the lesson plan and the curriculum, which were designed into a traditional and grammar-based approach.

Through this study of documents, we could explore how English was taught at the school and they served also to give us a panoramic view of the English department in the institution.

Observations

Observation registers were made during the whole investigation to collect data. In the first step of the process, we observed and registered all the classes with the aim of describing them and the group of study and with the purpose of collecting data about the main phenomena and situations that occurs in the classroom. During the intervention, we also kept observation registers with the aim of collecting information, to analyze it later and to conclude the final results. Observation registers were the instruments that served us to conclude if the students improved their skills or to see if the project actually had something useful or not.

Needs Analysis questionnaire

This instrument was used to know students' main needs in relation to the English class and their reading comprehension skill with the aim of planning an intervention that touched their motivation and interests in the area.

Focus group

With this data-collection technique, students' perceptions and feelings about the task intervention, the newspaper and their English learning were collected.

Reading comprehension diagnostic test

As a part of the investigation, a pre and post test was applied with the aim of measure students reading comprehension skill and the results of the intervention impact. The test is a sample of a TOEFL junior reading comprehension test, which is the test they are supposed to take and pass in the next years.

Research Phases

Following the statements of Burns (2009) about action research defined as the combination of action and research in order to give answer to a specific phenomenon, we followed the process described below for the designing and implementation of a task aimed at improving reading comprehension in students from a multigrade classroom.

First, we made different observation sessions that allowed us to identify the principal characteristics of the group, followed by the implementation of a Need Analysis Questionnaire that supported the information about the students' real interests and needs.

Second, information was analyzed and became the basis for the designing of the intervention planning which consisted on the implementation of tasks using differentiated instruction giving answer to the reality of the group. During this intervention, more observation registers were written and this helped to collect more information about the different aspects may arise during the process.

Finally, the information collected during the steps presented before was analyzed and understood based on the theory that supports the project and this opened the door to the writing process of the final report of the research process carried out.

The Intervention

The task

The intervention was proposed under a task based learning methodology with differentiated instruction according to the students' language level and reading comprehension skill. It consisted in one main task but with some differentiated activities for the three groups in the same stages (pre, while and post). Some levels of difficulty of the activities were also varied according to the groups. The final product of the main task was to create a school newspaper in which all the students from different grades and levels could participate in the construction process.

The newspaper had relevant information about news that occurred in the institution during the time the intervention took place. It was collected through interviews and shows the results of the students learning process during the intervention.

Intervention schedule

The implemented task was planned and designed taking into account students' answers of the needs analysis questionnaire. Most of the students said they liked news, to write and they liked role-plays. We designed the task in such a way that all the interests and motivations of the students were included.

Table 2 Intervention schedule

DATE AND TIME	ACTIVITIES	SESSION NUMBER
25th October 2017 2 hours	Activity 1: Diagnosing my Reading Comprehension. Modality: Individual Activity 2 Exploring Media to Be Informed. Modality: all group works together	1
02nd November 2017	Activity 3 Listing the Characteristics of Media	2

2 hours	Modality: all group works together Activity 4: Creating Vocabulary Tree Modality: all group works together	
7th November 2017 1 hour	Activity 5: Exploring Newspapers. Modality: all group works together	3
10th November 2017 2 hours	Activity 6: Creating a questionnaire Modality: all group works together Activity 7 Part 1: Looking for news at school Modality: 6°, 7°, 8° separated.	4
16th November 2017 2 hours	Activity 7 Part 2: Looking for news at school (same as part 1) Modality: 6°, 7°, 8° separated. Activity 8: Translation time Modality: all group works together	5
21st November 2017 2 hours	Activity 9: Checking translation Modality: all group works together Activity 10: Classifying news Modality: all group works together	6
28th November 2017 1 hour	Activity 11: Main headlines in my school. Modality: all group works together	7
30 th Nov.6 th Dec. 2017 3 hours	Activity 12: Learning Reading strategies Modality: all group works together	8
12th December 2017 2 hours	Activity 13: Applying Reading strategies Modality: 6°, 7°, 8° separated.	9
14th December 2017 2 hours	Activity 14: Writing my news report. Modality: 6°, 7°, 8° separated.	10
15th December 2017 1 hour	Activity 15: Reading comprehension test Modality: Individual Activity 16: Focus group Modality: all group works together	11 12

Task cycle.

Task Title: *NotiSchool*: From students to students

General Objective: To design and present a News in School

Rational: According to a needs analysis questionnaire applied to the students of the institution *Santa Maria de Pance*, G2 level, students feel they need to improve their reading comprehension, particularly, they need to understand instructions. With the objective of offering a solution to these needs, a learning task was designed to help students improve their reading comprehension skills. This improvement is expected to be shown through the production of their own News from School. Working on these aspects, the English area would also give account of what these students are expected to learn according to the national standards set out by the MEN:

• *Escribo mensajes cortos y con diferentes propósitos relacionados con situaciones, objetos o personas de mi entorno inmediato.*

• *Comprendo instrucciones escritas para llevar a cabo actividades cotidianas, personales y académicas. 1, 2*

Note: This intervention relies under the methodology of differentiated instruction. In this sense, through the development of this intervention it is necessary to clarify if the work is developed by the students as a whole group or as divided groups.

Product: Students will create a newspaper about the main events in the school.

PRE-TASK

Session 1

Sensitization time (15 minutes)

Before starting with the activities, the teachers will socialize the project with the students, what is expected from them and the rules and dynamic for the classes.

At the end of the session, the students will learn some vocabulary related to news and media and they will present their analysis about the characteristics of media.

Activity 1: Diagnosing my Reading Comprehension

Activity 1	Duration	Modality
Objective: The objective of this activity is to diagnose students reading comprehension skill through a news about French caves.	30 minutes	Individual Work

Description: Students will be given a test, which requires from them to follow instructions and answer some comprehension questions about a news.

Instruction: Read the text and answer the questions.

Product: Students' answers of the diagnostic test.

Activity 2 Exploring Media to Be Informed

Activity 2: Exploring Media to Be Informed	Duration	Modality
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Objective: To activate and exploit students' previous knowledge about medias to be informed and the students' familiarity with news (all kind)	65 minutes	Whole group
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Description: In order to activate the students' previous knowledge about the media where students can find news, the teachers will present some news in different forms: news from facebook, video news from the internet, digital newspapers, real newspapers, a news recorded from a radio, etc.

The students will be in contact with these elements (watch, touch, listen and skim the content) and they will answer the following questions from the experience:

Instruction:

After exploring the different media provided by the teachers, answer the following questions.

1. Do you think news are important? Why?
2. Do you think it is useful to be informed about things that happen around the world?
Why?
3. Do you watch news? How often?
4. What is your favorite media to be informed? Why?
5. What topics do you like when watching, reading or hearing news? (Sports, entertainment, politics, science, technology, etc.)

To answer these questions the teachers will ask the students to pick up a question from a bag and answer it on their notebooks. Limit time will be given for writing (10 minutes). After answering the questions, the students will share their thoughts with the whole group. Some students will have the same questions.

Product: At the end of this activity, students will have activated their previous knowledge about media and news. They will have written and shared their ideas about this topic.

Session 2 (2 hours)

Sensitization time (10 minutes)

Before starting with the activities, the teachers will present the objective of the class: to identify the characteristics of different media and will explain students what is expected from them, the rules and the dynamic for the session.

At the end of the session, the students will be able to list the characteristics of media and will have a chart in which they classify the different type of media where news might be exposed. Also, they will create a new tool to practice vocabulary in the classroom.

Activity 3 Listing the Characteristics of Media

Activity 3 Listing the Characteristics of Media	Duration	Modality
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Objective: To identify the characteristics of different types of media.	50 minutes	Pair Work
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Description: Taking into account the previous activity, the students will share their ideas about the characteristics of the media they have explored. To do this, the teachers will present them an example of the analysis of a piece of news, taken from *facebook*. In this analysis, the teachers will have into account the following aspects:

-Images

-Form (written or oral)

-Font

-Colors

-Other

Example of the analysis of media	
Name of the media analyzed	Aspects for the analysis (characteristics)
1. News taken from facebook	-Images: This media uses an image to complement the news. This image presents the principal character of the news, which is Donald Trump. It has also numbers and words that are possibly related to content of the news



even though they are the same (1040 U.S individual...)

-Form (written or oral): This media is presented in a written form accompanied by images to capture the attention of the reader. It also uses in the first part a complete text while in the lower part of the image uses only key words.

-Font: This media uses different type of fonts to separate the first part that is like a short introduction of the lower part that are only keywords. The keywords are bigger than the others.

- Colors:

The image is colorful but just in blue, black, white and grey. The grey, white and black colors are used for picture of the man and the blue color is used in the backside of him.

-Other: This media show how many people interacted with the news and how many liked it shows some reactions in form of comments.

On the bases of the sample, the students will analyze the media that teachers present in the session and will complete an information chart.

Instruction:

Taking into account the media analysis sample, presented previously, analyze the different types of media and complete the information required in the chart.

Product:

A chart, which presents the aspects that characterize the different types of media.

Activity 4: Creating Vocabulary Tree

Activity 4	Duration	Modality
Objective: To activate and review vocabulary about instructions, news and media.	50 minutes	Pair Work

Description: As a strategy to review the vocabulary, presented during the session, the students will create a tree to be pasted on the wall. The tree will be built with branches off words belonging to the different categories of vocabulary (media, news and instructions). These categories might be increase in number, depending on new vocabulary that might show up during the coming sessions and activities.

Teachers will present at the end of the session those clue words that students do not mention.

Teachers will make sure that words are illustrated with images to assure comprehension.

Instruction:

Based on the characteristics of the different types media, identified in the previous activity, write some words you learnt in relation to news, media and instructions; for example: journalist, radio, match. Illustrate each word with an image.

Product: A tree pasted on the wall with new words learnt through the activities.

WHILE-TASK

Session 3 (1 hour)

Sensitization time (10 min): the teachers will introduce the topic by making a short review about the previous activities.

At the end of the session, the students will have identified the sections of a newspaper and their characteristics.

Activity 5: Exploring Newspapers

Activity 5	Duration	Modality
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Objective: To identify the sections which constitute a newspaper.	35 minutes	Whole group.
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Description: Teachers will provide students with an updated newspaper in English. Students will identify sections that constitute a newspaper and will define the type of information one can find in each section.

Paper Section	Content
Entertainment	This section contains information about activities people carried out for enjoyment.
Health	

Instruction: According to the newspaper teachers brought to the class, classify the sections that are in it and define each one.

Product: A chart with the sections of a newspaper and their characteristics.

Session 4 (2 hours)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teacher will explain the students the methodology for this session and will make sure students understand the importance of a good behaviour during the activities.

At the end of the session the will have created a questionnaire for collecting information about the news at the school and will have started to apply the questionnaire to some volunteers around the school.

Activity 6: Creating a questionnaire

Activity 6	Duration	Modality
Objective: To create a questionnaire useful to collect information about news at school	40 min	pair work

Description: The teachers will review the structure of questions by writing two questions on the board “What do you think about....? What is.....?” In pairs, the students will create questions they consider will help us to collect information about the news at school.

We will socialize the questions, make some corrections (if necessary) and select the best ones to create the questionnaires.

Instruction: Write two questions that will help us to find information about the news at school.

Product: A questionnaire created by the students.

Activity 7 Part 1: Looking for news at school

Activity 7 (part 1)	Duration	Modality
Objective: To collect the main news in the school.	50 min	6-7 work together. 8 work together.

Description: The students will go around the school looking for news, which might be relevant and interesting for the school community. To help the information gathering, students will have a questionnaire, prepared in advance by the teachers and the students. They will work in pairs, one will pretend to be an English speaker and the other will pretend to be a Spanish translator, in order to mediate communication. The other student listen and take notes.

Instruction: Search somebody in the institution, ask the following question and report his or her opinions and news. If they do not answer in English copy the answer in spanish.

Product: Information collected by the students, which represents the news for the newspaper.

Session 5 (2 hours)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teachers will explain again the dynamic for the class and the importance of good behavior for developing the activities proposed.

At the end of the session, students will have finished the interviews and will try to translate the information they found.

Activity 7 Part 2: Looking for news at school

Activity 7 (part 2)	Duration	Modality
Objective: To collect the main news in the school.	40 min	6-7 work together. 8 work together.

Description: The students will go around the school looking for news, which might be relevant and interesting for the school community. To help the information gathering, students will have a questionnaire, prepared in advance by the teachers and the students. They will work in pairs, one will pretend to be an English speaker and the other will pretend to be a Spanish translator, in order to mediate communication. The other student listens and takes notes.

Instruction: Search somebody in the institution, ask the following question and report their opinions and news. If they do not answer in English copy the answer in Spanish.

Product: The collected information represent the news for the newspaper.

Activity 8: Translation time

Activity 8	Duration	Modality
Objective: To practice translation as a tool to learn vocabulary and be familiarized with vocabulary related to the topic.	40 min	6-7 work together. 8 work together.

Description: As most of the people interviewed are not

Instruction: In the same groups you work the interview, try to translate into English what people said. Use dictionaries to help yourself and ask the teacher when having doubts.

Product: Students' translations of the information collected around the school.

Session 6 (2 hours)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teachers will explain again the dynamic of the class and the importance of good behavior for developing the activities proposed.

At the end of the session, the students will have classified the information they found, according to the newspaper sections and they will have compared their translations from the previous session with the ones proposed by the teachers.

Activity 9: Checking translation

Activity 9	Duration	Modality
Objective: To check and compare the news they translated.	40 min	Pair work.

Description: The students will have to do a matching activity in which the teachers will have translated the news collected in different pieces of paper to paste on the wall; the same news will be pasted in Spanish. Students will read and match one piece of news with the corresponding translation. Once they have found the pairs, they must organize them on the board according to the question they asked interviewee (teachers, coordinators, students, etc.). After the students match the information, they will socialize the differences they found with their own translations and what they have learned during the activities.

Instruction: Read the news on the wall and find the corresponding translation. Compare teacher's translations with the translations you previously did.

Product: List of news with the corresponding translation.

Activity 10: Classifying news

Activity 10	Duration	Modality
Objective: To classify the news found in the newspaper sections previously studied in class.	40 min	Pair work.

Description: According to the previous analysis of the structure of a newspaper, the students will classify the news they found. This will help organization when creating the newspaper.

Instruction: Read the information collected and classify it according to parts of a newspaper.

Product: The students will have a chart with the classification of the news they found.

List of news	Related section.
Example: Nurse said “I need help with Jose Manuel because he is heavy.”	Health.

Session 7 (1 Hour)**Activity 11: Main headlines in my school.**

Activity 11	Duration	Modality
Objectives: To identify keywords in news and create the main headlines for the newspaper.	40 minutes.	6 -7 work together. 8 work together.

Description: Teachers will explain what a keyword is and how to identify it in a text. So, after reading the news found in English, students will highlight the keywords in them. Based on these keywords, students are going to create the headlines for the newspaper.

Teachers will explain that a keyword is mainly an action or a noun not an adjective neither an example. Numbers can be also taken as keywords. For amplifying the explanation, teachers will show the following headline and will mark the keywords in it. At the end of the session, students will socialize what they did and will vote for the headlines that should be on the newspaper.



Instruction: Based on the previous example read the news and use colors to highlight the words you consider keywords. Use those keywords to create a headline for each news. Finally, socialize them with your classmates and teacher.

Product: List of headlines for the newspaper.

Session 8 and 9 (3 hours)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teachers will explain the students they will learn some reading strategies, useful to comprehend texts and the importance of reading comprehension in real life.

At the end of the sessions, the students will have learned some reading strategies that will help them to improve their reading comprehension.

Activity 12: Learning Reading strategies

Activity 12	Duration	Modality
Objective: To learn different reading strategies for comprehending texts (in this case, news)	4 hours	All together (for explanation) Divided Groups (for reading activity)

Description: The teachers will guide a conversation about the way we must approach a text, in order to comprehend the information in it. According to the student's ideas, the teacher will explain the importance of applying reading strategies for improving reading comprehension. After students understand the importance of this exercise, the teachers will lead the activity and help students find the answers. In this activity, all students will use a chart structure and they will take into account the text “**Trip to Paris - Student Article**”

Instruction: Complete the chart according to the explanation teachers give in the class.

Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
1. Take note of the title, author, and any headings in the text. Title _____ _____	1. Read the first two and the last paragraphs of text to get an overview of the text content (skimming) 2. Read the text a second time	1. Reread the text's introduction and conclusion. 2. Talk aloud or write about the material. Use your own words to review the material.

Session 10 (2 hours)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teachers will explain students they will learn some useful reading strategies to comprehend texts and the importance of reading comprehension in real life.

At the end of the session, the students will have applied some reading strategies that will help them to improve their reading comprehension.

Activity 13: Applying Reading strategies

Activity 13	Duration	Modality
Objective: To apply the reading strategies learned for comprehending text (in this case, news)	2 hours	Groups by grades.

Description: After explaining the strategies and working with them, the students are going to read the text “**Student Report: Paris Trip**”. The idea is to have a second opportunity of practice, in which they can continue applying the reading strategies. They will work in groups, according to grades. Each grade will work with three differentiated groups of strategies, before, during and after the reading. Each group is going to have a worksheet with the specific activities to apply each strategy. With this differentiated task, they will analyze the text. “**Student Report: Paris Trip**”

Instruction: Complete the following chart according to the reading of the news: “**Student Report: Paris Trip**”.

Product: Charts, completed with the differentiated reading strategies and activities for each group.

Session 11 (2 hours)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teachers will explain the students how to write a news report.

At the end of the session, the students will have written the news about the school that is going to be included in the newspaper.

Activity 14: Writing my news report.

Activity 14	Duration	Modality
Objectives: To learn how to write a news report based on information from the daily life at school.	2 hours.	6 -7 work together. 8 work together.

Description: After reading the previous examples of news report related to topics from schools, the teachers are going to explain the students how to write a news report; its characteristics and structure.

The students are going to write the news. To do this, sixth grade is going to start writing key words and ideas for the reports; they start with one of the news and, when they finish they give their ideas to seventh grade to complement the ideas and write small paragraphs and, finally, they pass the paper to eighth grade they are going to complete the news with the introduction paragraph and the last paragraph of the news.

While sixth grade is writing, the other groups are creating the big newspaper. When they finish, they go and help in the creation process so, all of the students participate in both activities.

Product: At the end of the session the students will have created the news from the school and the big newspaper.

POST TASK

Session 12 (1 hour)

Sensitization time (10 min): The teachers will explain the final part of the project and will close it.

At the end of the session, the students will have answered the same diagnostic test in order to know if they improved their reading comprehension skill or not and they will share their feelings and thoughts about the project.

Activity 15: Reading Comprehension Test

Activity 15	Duration	Modality
Objective: To diagnose students reading comprehension skill	30 minutes	Individual Work

Description: The objective of this activity is to diagnose students reading comprehension skill, after the work teachers implemented in the classroom to compare these results with the results of the pre-test teachers did in the first session.

Students will be given a test, which requires from them to follow instructions and answer some comprehension questions about a news.

Instruction: Read the text, applying the reading strategies learned in class, and answer the questions.

Product: A test to check improvement of students in terms of reading comprehension.

Materials: copies of the test

Activity 16: Focus group

Activity 16	Duration	Modality
Objective: To compile the main feelings of the students according to work carried out.	30 minutes	Individual Work

Description: The objective of this activity is to learn about the students' feelings and ideas in relation to the experience.

The students will be organized in groups and the teachers will ask some questions about the project. The students are allowed to answer freely in the language they feel more comfortable.

Instruction: Try to answer the questions as honest as you can be.

Product: Student's feelings and thoughts about the project.

Differentiated task

Taking into account students reaction and performance in the sessions 8 & 9, for activity 12, we decided that the best way to help them to improve reading comprehension was through different strategies and instructions implemented in different guides for each grade.

Table 3: Differentiated guide

Table 3 Differentiated guide

	6° Grade	7° grade	8° grade
Before reading	Before Reading: 1. Take note of the title, author, and any headings in the text. Title Author Headings 2. Based on the title, author, pictures, and	Before Reading: 1. Take note of the title, author, and any headings in the text. Title Author Headings 2. Based on the title, author, pictures, and	Before Reading: 1. Take note of the title, author, and any headings in the text. Title Author Headings 2. Based on the title, author, pictures, and

	headings, what might this text be about? What clues lead you to make this prediction?	headings, what might this text be about? What clues lead you to make this prediction? 3. What do you know about the theme of the text?	headings, what might this text be about? What clues lead you to make this prediction? 3. What do you know about the heme of the text? 4. What do you expect to find in the text?_____
During reading	During Reading: 1. Skimming: Read the first and the last paragraph of the text and write the first idea that comes to	During Reading: 1. Skimming: Read the first and the last paragraph of the text and write the first idea that comes to	During Reading: 1. Skimming: Read the first and the last paragraph of the text and write the first idea that comes to

	your mind about the content of the text. _____ _____ _____	your mind about the content of the text. _____ _____ _____	your mind about the content of the text. _____ _____ _____
	2. Scanning: Read the text again and highlight numbers, proper names and dates. Look at the dictionary for the unknown words.	2. Scanning: Read the text again and highlight numbers, proper names and dates. Look at the dictionary for the unknown words.	2. Scanning: Read the text again and highlight numbers, proper names and dates. Look at the dictionary for the unknown words.
	3. Choose the correct answer:	3. Look at the text and find the meaning of the words in bold.	3. What is the author's intention? _____ _____
	3.1 What was the first landmark the students saw when they arrived: A) The Eiffel tower B) The cathedral of Notre Dame	3.1 In the first paragraph, second line what does the word It refers to? _____ _____	To whom is the text written? _____ _____

	C) Montmartre the highest hill of Paris D) The louvre museum 3.2 What was the first impression students had when they were at a French school A) That French students do not use Uniform B) That the school was small, in comparison to their school C) That the cruise on the river Seine was awesome D) That the Eiffel tower was impressive	3.2 In the last paragraph, twelfth line (in the text) who does the word they refer to? _____ _____ _____ 3.3 In the third paragraph, tenth line (in the text) who does the word they refers to? _____ _____	
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After reading	After Reading: 1. Based on the previous activities write the main idea of the text. 	After Reading: 1. Based on the previous activities do the summary of the text 	After Reading: 1. Based on the previous activities write your opinion about the text 2. Compare and write the contrast of this experience with one you have lived in your school.
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Analysis of the information

To consolidate the results of our intervention and the project we categorized manually, using colors, all the phenomena that was written in the observation in the classroom. We also took

into account the frequency of appearance for each category. After, we tabulated information as shown in the tables that illustrate each analyze aspect.

Table 4 Colors which identify categories in the analysis

Category / Aspect to analyzed	Color
Student's language level.	Yellow
Motivation.	Pink
Reading strategies application.	Brown
Reading comprehension improvement.	Turquoise
Reading comprehension difficulties	Magenta
Students - teacher interaction.	Gray
Positive attitude in the classroom.	Green
Negative attitude in the classroom.	Blue
Multigrade differences	Red
Use of the foreign language in the classroom	Purple
Use of the mother tongue in the classroom	Orange
Instruction difficulties	Aqua marine
Instruction comprehension	Peach

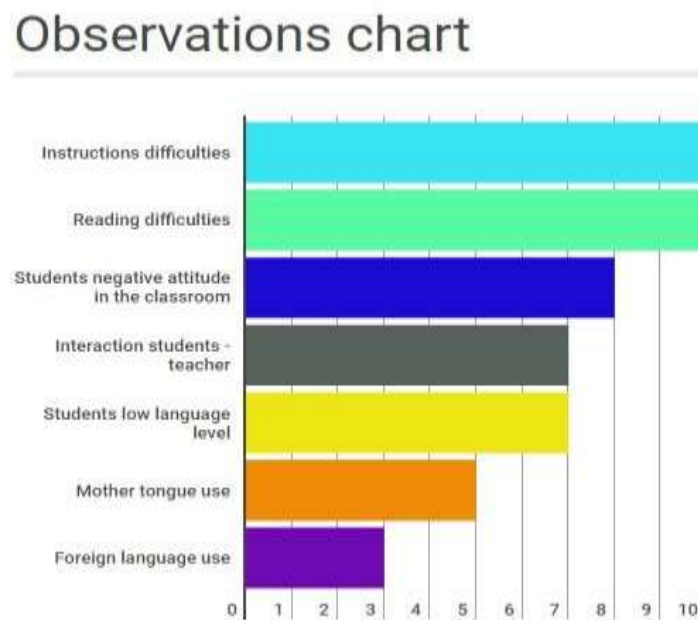
Analysis by instruments

The analysis we present in this section is divided into the different instruments and stages we followed to collect data. A table with a summary of the information is at the beginning of the analysis of each aspect.

First: Observations for characterizing the class and the students

Through initial observations made in the classroom, we analyzed some phenomena that occur in the classroom. To do the above, we compare frequency of appearance with phenomena repetition. These phenomena are summarized in the following chart:

Figure 1 First Observations chart



According to the chart the most representative categories were instruction difficulties and reading comprehension difficulties because most of the students did not recognize what they had to do. They sometimes expressed they did not know what they had to do as their English level was low. The only idea they had about the class was the number of pages from the book written in the lesson plan on the board; “ni siquiera sabemos lo que tenemos que hacer porque aquí nadie sabe inglés y lo único que sabemos es que tenemos que hacer otra vez libro porque está en el plan de clase”². We can say that the first three categories have a strong relationship among them because if the students do not understand what they are reading, they will not

² Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán

understand the instruction and they will not behave properly or show good attitude in the class. In addition, as they do not understand what the teacher is doing or explaining, the most immediate solution is to translate everything by guessing in the mother tongue. This is represented in the low use of the foreign language in the classroom.

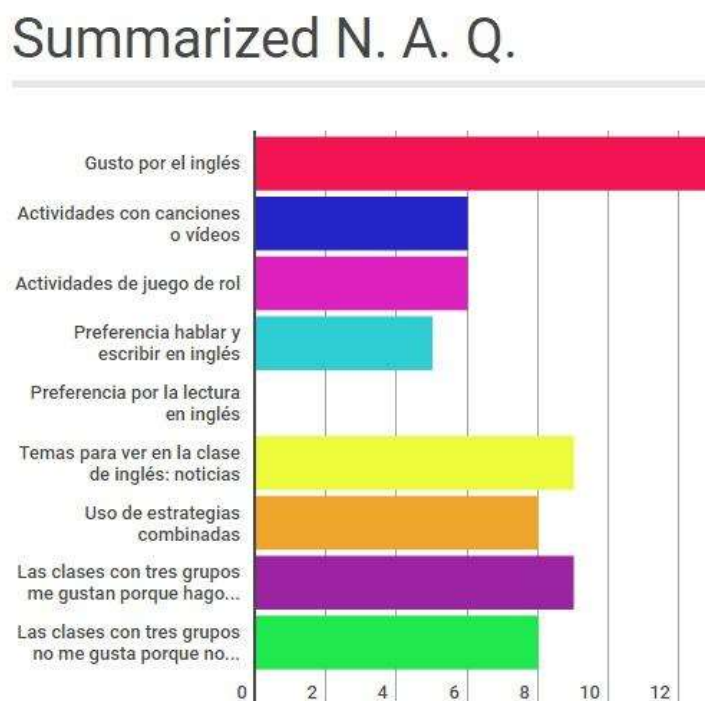
Finally, it is important to consider that students are conscious of the low English language level they have. Some students during the classes tried to do the activities proposed but expressed not understanding when the activity has to do with something written in the foreign language; for example, “La pareja de estudiantes se presentó en español y comenzaron a leer lo que tenían preparado en una hoja. Dos niños sostienen la cartelera; los que estaban en la primera fila trataron de leer pero manifestaban no saber lo que allí decía.”³ For us, this is directly proportional to the use of the mother tongue in the class and to the category of interaction because if the interaction continues in the foreign language, at some point students will get used to it and they will develop it easily. However, as they always complain and the teacher tends to translate explanations in class, they do not learn because there is not meaningful learning. It is also important to highlight that motivation, which is a very important category, did not appear in this first moment of research.

Second: Needs Analysis questionnaire

After collecting the first impressions and identifying the phenomena, we decided to design and apply a *needs analysis questionnaire* to picture students in relation to their learning and perception toward English class. These results are summarized in the following chart:

³ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán, Student 10)

Figure 2 Summarized N.A.Q



Through this need analysis, we observed that most of the students like the English language. This was a surprise for us because according to their negative attitude in class we thought the opposite. We found that their favorite activities were to listen to songs or to act out. Also, we found that they prefer to speak and to write in English and that they do not pay attention to the reading activities. According to this, we decided to raise the interest in reading because it is a very important skill for understanding and approaching the language. In addition, the results of this questionnaire were the starting point to our intervention, due to fact that we found that their preferences were also to learn about what happens in the class and in the school.

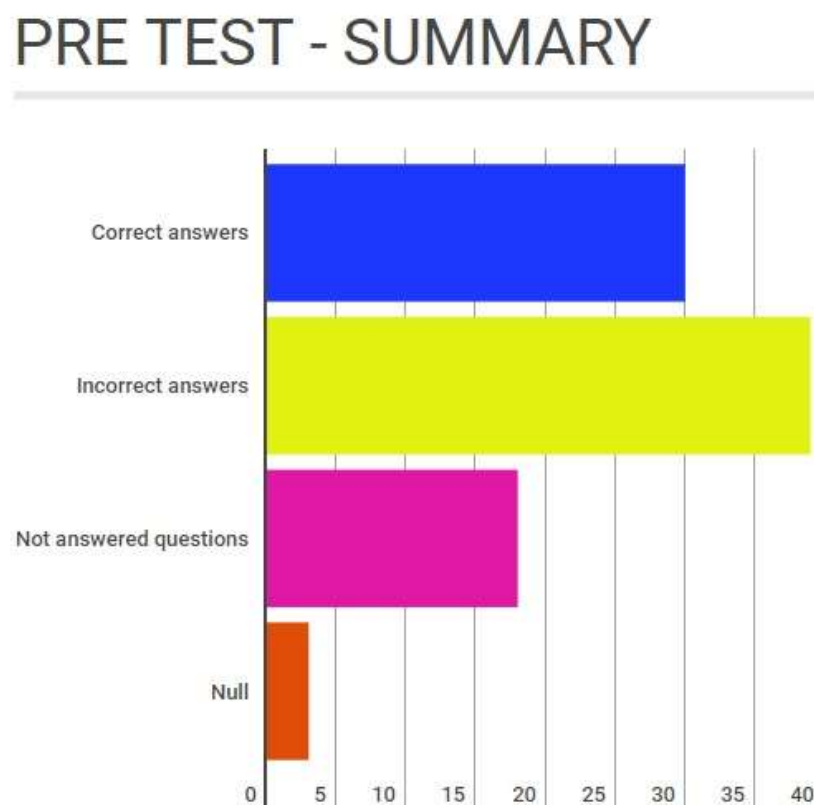
As a complement, the questionnaire helped us to learn about their opinions in relation to the learning conditions: being a class with classmates from different grades. We found that for seven students this was nice because they felt they could meet friends from other classrooms and they could expand their social networks. On the contrary, fifteen students did not like it, they did not feel this was an appropriate environment to learn a foreign language; they felt they

got distracted with the rest of the people and, as a result, they did not understand what was happening in the class. In this case we consider this situation is against to what Hess (2002) stated about the importance of raising interest in multigrade classes by taking into account students' interests and levels and giving priority to activities where the differences do not become an obstacle to the students learning process.

Third: Pre diagnostic test

This test was applied to ten students and each test had nine questions. So, in summary we took the ninety answers and compared among them the number of correct answers, the incorrect answers, the questions they did not answer and the null answers.

Figure 3 Pre-test summary



The results of the pre-test were very interesting, due to most of them did not answer correctly

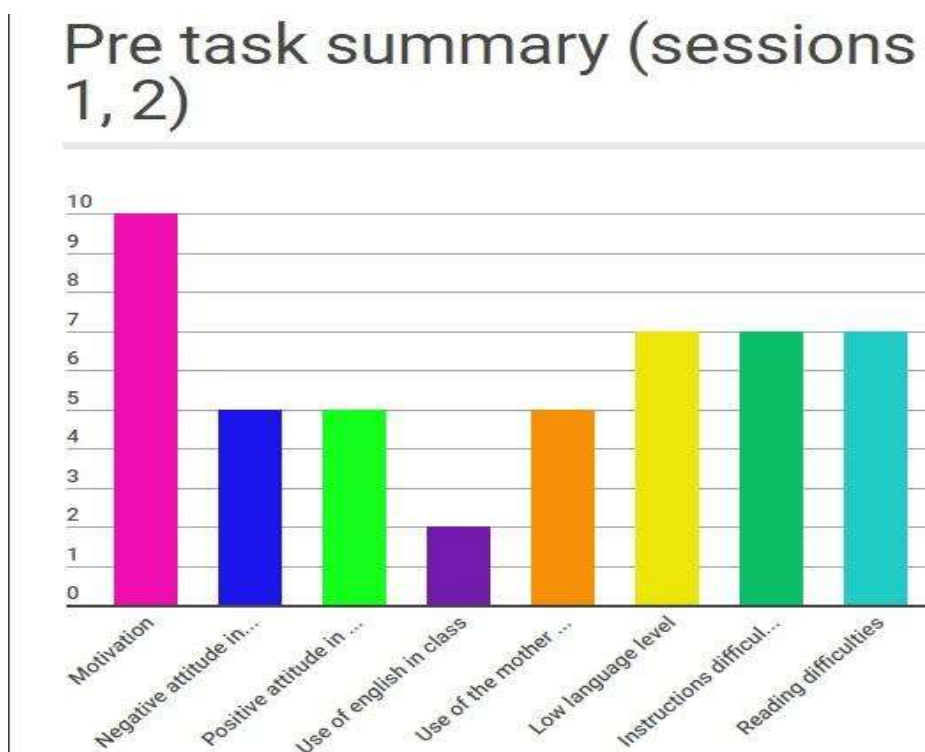
but also there were lots of questions without an answer. There were questions that implied inferring things from the text and most of them did not answer them or marked the incorrect option.

Also, the instruction was clear and specified they only could choose one correct answer but, there were some students that marked three or more answers in just one question. This projected more our investigation because confirmed that they were having problems with reading comprehension and analysis but also with instructions.

Fourth: Observations during the intervention process

This phase of the research was developed through a task with its three parts; pre-task, while/during task and post task. At the same time, these task moments were divided into sessions that sometimes were different in time. The pre-task stage goes from the session number one to the session two; the while task goes from the session three to the session eleven and the post task is the session twelve. To keep track of the process and analyze what was happening we wrote class observations, in which we reported all the situations occurred in the classroom. The following charts show a summary of the process.

Figure 4 Pre-task summary (sessions 1,2)



In this first part of the intervention, we can see that the most noticeable bar corresponds to motivation. Students were motivated because they were doing a different activity that was about news; the topic they chose in the need analysis. Also, they were doing some handcraft that seems to be for them the most motivating activity from all “Se les dio material para crear el árbol del vocabulario y ahí si todos estuvieron motivados. Esto demostró que les gusta mucho el trabajo creativo que tenga que ver con manualidades.”⁴ This is the vocabulary three activity of the intervention.

It is important to say that motivation was variable in this first part of the intervention; for example, we observed that when students had to take test their motivation decreased as there was tension in the classroom; “En este momento se vivió algo de tensión en el salón y además la motivación bajó”⁵. However, it was at this moment when bars about reading comprehension and instruction difficulties increased because the students started to share their doubts about

⁴ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

⁵ Observation Register # 1. Oct 25 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

what they had to do in the activities; “¿Profe qué debo hacer aquí? ¡Es que ni siquiera entiendo la pregunta!”⁶ “Cabe resaltar que después de esperar treinta minutos a que ellos resolvieran el test, muchos apenas iban como en la pregunta tres.”⁷ As we said before, instructions and reading comprehension are connected because if they do not understand the questions or the things they are expected to do with a text, they will not answer correctly a reading activity; for example. The reading process will be affected as the purpose of the reading will not be clear from the beginning. Also with the despair of taking a test their mother tongue appears with expressions related to their feelings against the activities; “¡noooo! ¡Que pereza!”⁸ and with it their low English language level “Profe, ¿lo puedo entregar en blanco y no pasa nada? es que no sé”⁹. Nevertheless, they tried to use the few English commands that they knew by heart for example “teacher, how do you say...”¹⁰ and that is something remarkable because they did not do it before.

Finally, it is important to say something about the attitude of the students in the classroom. The negative attitude comes mostly from the students that belong to eighth grade while the rest of the students show a positive attitude. This is something surprising because the teachers consider these students are supposed to be the model for the younger students; “estudiantes de grado 8; los que se supone tienen un mayor nivel y deberían trabajar con mayor facilidad a diferencia de sus compañeros.”¹¹ In addition, this may have to do with the multigrade difference classrooms. According to Bustos (2010), inside the classroom the knowledge circulates freely among the students and this represent a benefit to the students with low language levels as they receive input from their partners. In this case, the students from sixth

⁶ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Viviana Jaramillo. Student 3.

⁷ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

⁸ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán, Student 9.

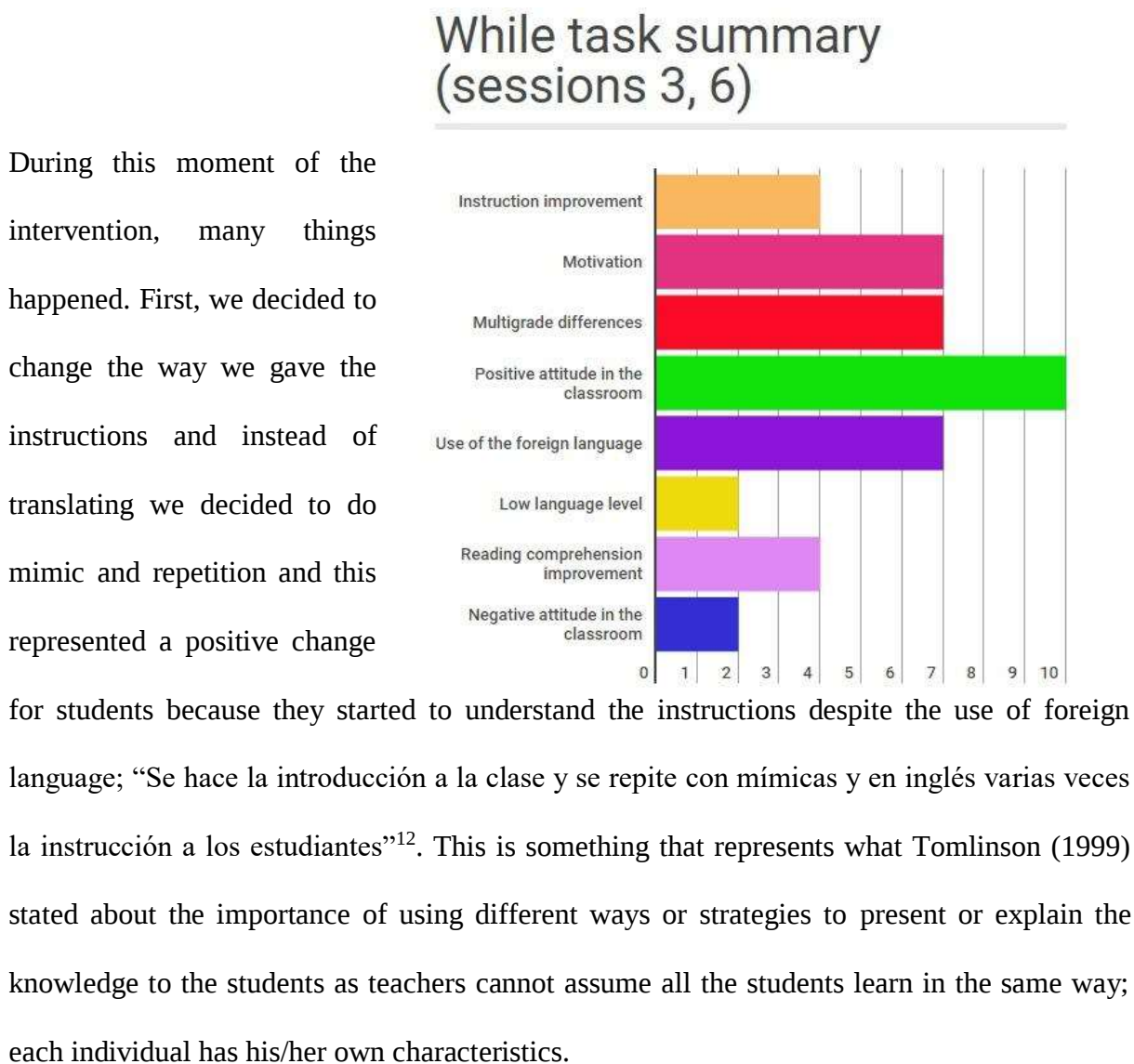
⁹ Observation Register # 1. Oct 25 2017. Viviana Jaramillo. Student 4.

¹⁰ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán, Student 7.

¹¹ Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán.

and seventh grade are not receiving the input expected from their eighth-grade partners, so this multigrade classroom methodology is not working for all the students, as it should be.

Figure 5 While task summary 1 (sessions 3, 6)



Then, at this moment of the intervention, students knew that some of the activities were in differentiated groups. This was also a positive change that was worthwhile for us and for them as they showed they liked this way of working; “Se les explica que trabajarán separados

¹² Observation Register # 2. Nov 2 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán.

por grados y ellos demuestran agrado por esta metodología.”¹³ In addition, this helped us a lot with the improvement of the positive attitude in the class, here is a clear example in which both categories converge together: the whole group created a questionnaire, then worked separated by grades in the pronunciation of the questions for the interview and they participated with a very good attitude; “Luego de crear el cuestionario se dividieron los grupos, se explicó la metodología de la actividad y se practicó varias veces la pronunciación y la entonación de las preguntas. Los estudiantes participaron con muy buena actitud”.¹⁴ The aforementioned demonstrates what Tomlinson (2014) explained about the importance of having flexibility and constant change on the content, the process and the product of tasks in differentiated instruction. In this case, the change was based on the way the teachers gave students the instructions to work; group work. As the groups worked separated, each with a specific instruction, the organization criteria, given by the teachers, represented flexibility in the process.

Through the activity number 7 “Looking for news in our school” students had a lot of fun and also a lot of motivation, but the most important thing is that they could feel that learning English is meaningful for exploring new environments. They felt that instead of their low language level they could produce something in English and they were learning something meaningful; “Con esta actividad sintieron que el aprendizaje fue significativo, ya que pudieron usar su inglés en su entorno inmediato. Los estudiantes demostraron que al tener actividades lúdicas su interés y motivación cambia para bien.”¹⁵

Another activity consisted of translating news and it was at this moment when their low English level appeared again, but this time was something that really surprised us because the students did not know even how to use a dictionary. At the end their translations did not have sense as the texts were translated word by word; “Esta actividad para ellos fue difícil porque

¹³ Observation Register # 4. Nov 10 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán,

¹⁴ Observation Register # 4. Nov 10 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán

¹⁵ Observation Register # 5. Nov 16 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

no sabían utilizar el diccionario y al final se dieron cuenta que aunque tradujeron palabra por palabra el texto carecía de sentido.”¹⁶ What we can say here is that at this point students were worried about using English language and using it accurately.

Finally, with the next activity teachers helped the students to correct their translations through a matching activity. They were motivated and they participated in the activity with a positive attitude because they recognized some of the words that teachers wrote, but also because they saw that some of the words they consulted before were the same teachers used; this represented an improvement in their English learning for them. “Mientras ellos leían y encontraban las parejas sintieron mucho interés y estaban felices porque pudieron reconocer el vocabulario y las traducciones.”¹⁷

Therefore, at the end of all these activities we, as researchers, could identify four main categories (motivation, reading comprehension improvement, positive attitude and use of English in the classroom) converge in a positive way all together. Nevertheless, this only happens after comprehension of the instructions improves. Here is a clear example of the above “Este ejercicio fue muy productivo porque los estudiantes estuvieron muy motivados y porque se sintieron bien al ver que, en algunas frases y palabras, sus traducciones eran parecidas a las de las profesoras. Ellos mismos fueron comparando ambas traducciones y afirmaron que fueron parecidas. Esto hizo que los estudiantes tuvieran mayor confianza en sí mismos en relación con el uso de la lengua extranjera.”¹⁸

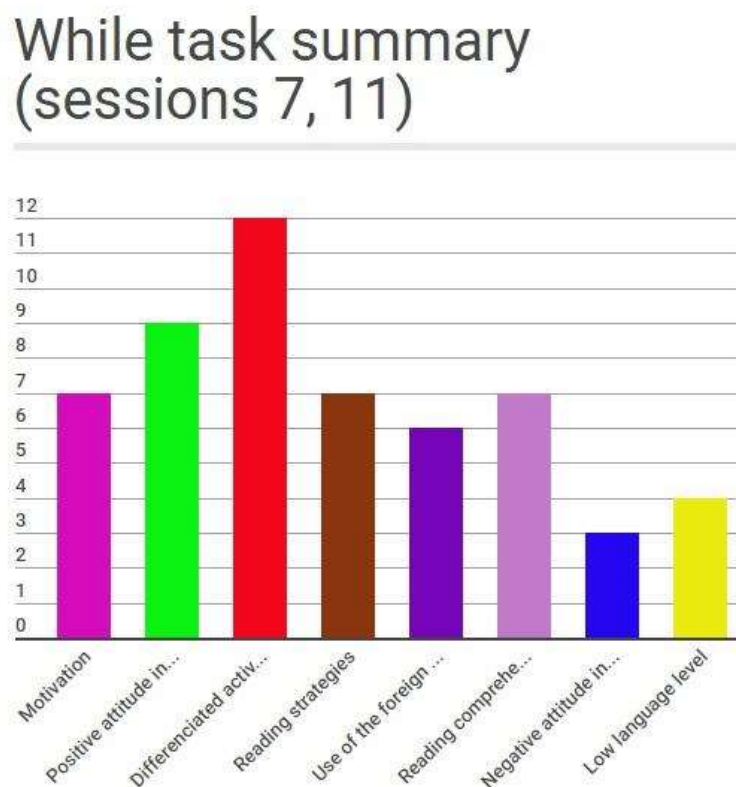
It is important to emphasize the effort that students made to accomplish all the activities teachers proposed. It is also important that teachers worked with students and recognized their products during the activities, this was meaningful for them.

¹⁶ Observation Register # 5. Nov 16 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

¹⁷ Observation Register # 9. Dec 12 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

¹⁸ Observation Register # 6. Nov 21 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán

Figure 6 While task summary (sessions 7,11)



This part of the intervention was very different because students started the first contact with the reading strategies. In the beginning, some of them were not comfortable with the activity and they expressed their bad feelings in Spanish “que pereza leer.”¹⁹ We were expecting reactions like this one based on the analysis of the responses in the need analysis questionnaire; also, we found a strong relationship between that emotion and their level of language “Esto puede ser debido al bajo nivel de comprensión y de vocabulario de los estudiantes, pues puede ser que los bajos resultados los desmotiven.”²⁰ It may happen that they remember the initial test results and they caused demotivation because of their low reading comprehension level.

This part of the intervention is divided in four main parts. The first part consisted of the presentation of the reading strategies. After doing this, we continued with the implementation of the reading strategies in the classroom and it was at that moment when we identified the need

¹⁹ Observation Register # 8. Nov 30 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán

²⁰ Observation Register # 8. Nov 30 2017. Angie Katherine Perafán

to work with differentiated handouts, which developed different activities and strategies in each group of students because, for example, sixth graders students tried to do the activity but they could not accomplish it as their level was not the same than the seventh or eighth grade. Also, the same happened with the other grades, “...cuando se cae en cuenta de que a los estudiantes de sexto les está costando mucha dificultad trabajar a pesar de su esfuerzo, los de séptimo trabajan aunque con dificultades y los de octavo logran terminar muy rápido.”²¹ This was the turning point of our research because we noticed the need of differentiated activities adapted for each grade: “Es aquí cuando se ve la necesidad de crear una guía diferenciada de trabajo que se adapte a las necesidades de los diferentes estudiantes que tenemos en el salón de clase.”²² In this case, we totally agree with Tomlinson’s (1999) statement about the teachers’ job, providing students with specific and individual ways of learning and not assuming that all students learn in the same way. It is not possible to ask a sixth- grade student to have the same level, with the same activities as one from the eighth grade, who has been in the same classroom at least three years in a row.

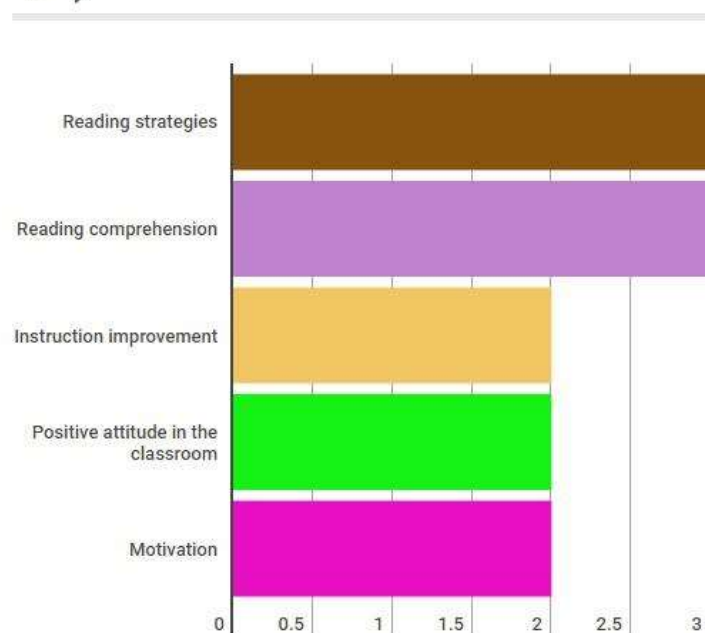
After this stage, we decided to design the differentiated handouts and with them, we improved the work in the whole class. Students started to work with more attention and less disruption peacefully in groups; they felt they also started to work on activities, which were more consistent with their level of English. Also, with this high category we noticed the improvement of other different aspects, such as, positive attitude, use of the foreign language, reading comprehension and motivation. There are multiple examples in which this improvement can be evidenced. They are shown in the annexes.

²¹ Observation Register # 9. Dec 12 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

²² Observation Register # 9. Dec 12 2017. Viviana Jaramillo

Figure 7 Post task summary (session 12)

Post task summary (session 12)



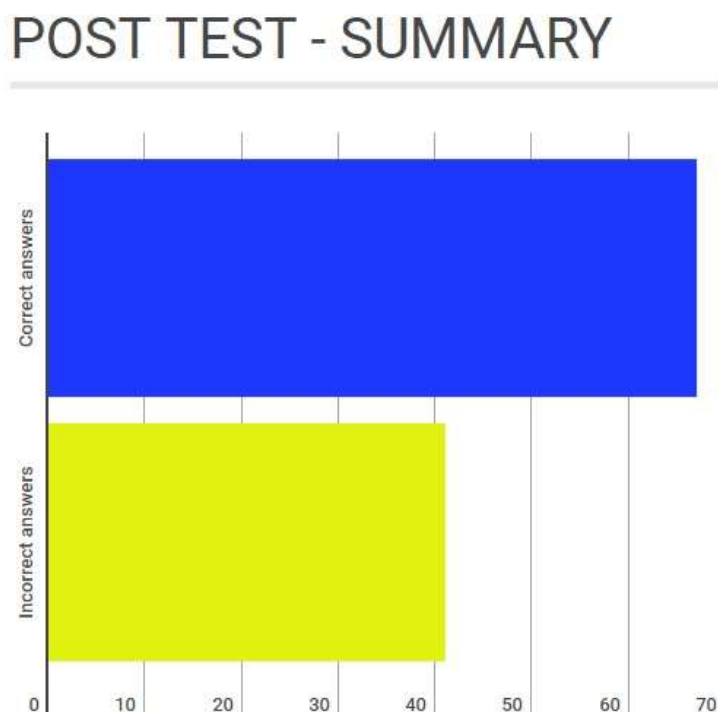
In this final session, we did again the reading test but this time they were conscious about what they were doing. They applied the reading strategies worked in class (before, during and after the reading). That was evidenced when we collected the post test because they have underlined some words and some of the students, after the test, expressed that they did skimming and scanning. In addition, they practiced searching referent words to understand the test and they answered easily some of the questions, plus they did not waste a lot of time doing the test. The principal atmosphere in the classroom was that they had learned something very important not only for English but also for their academic live.

This time, reading comprehension, motivation, positive attitude were the categories that appear plenty of times in the analysis. Students were really happy and thankful for all the work they had accomplished and they expressed these feelings in the focus group.

Fifth: Post diagnostic test

This time twelve students presented the test. Each test had nine questions. So, in summary we took the hundred and eight questions to compare among them the categories presented.

Figure 8 Post test summary



For this final test, two categories disappeared (not answered and null answers). We found an improvement in the reading comprehension skill of the students, since this time most of the questions were correct. Not only that, but also we could prove that they underlined unknown vocabulary and in some cases, main ideas.

As I said before, two categories disappeared and, due to those were related to instruction comprehension, we perceived an improvement in that aspect. Finally the students were not motivated for taking a test but they were calm in comparison with the first time.

Sixth: Focus group

With this last part of the project, students' perceptions about the task, intervention, learning and motivation feelings were collected.

After analyzing the students' opinions in the focal group, we found some relevant feelings and perceptions related to the intervention.

Table 5 Focus Group Categories

Color used	Name of the category	Frequency
What the students liked the most		
Yellow	Learning of new vocabulary	1
Green	Teachers' support and accompaniment	1
Blue	Creating the news reports (written production)	3
Fucsia	Language improvement	1
Purple	Reading strategies	5
Activity students liked the most		
Green	Newspaper creation (manual art)	3
Blue	Vocabulary Tree	7
Yellow	Effort and support from the teachers	2
What the students did not like so much		
Yellow	Project duration	2
Orange	Length of the texts	2
How students felt during the project		
Blue	Good, because of the socialization processes	1
Fucsia	Good, because of the group work	2
What motivated the students		
Green	The teachers' energy and support	2

Orange	Learning something new	1
Purple	The vocabulary tree	2
What students learned during the intervention		
Yellow	Writing Skill	2
Orange	Strengthening of the reading comprehension through the use of reading strategies	5
How students felt working in the same classroom but with differentiated activities		
Fucsia	Good, because of the organization	4
Purple	Strengthened the union of the group	1
Green	Favorite Group work	2
What they liked about the methodology		
Orange	Teachers accompaniment	3
Green	Everything was good	2
Blue	Teachers' attitude	1
Possible future use of the reading strategies		
Yellow	Maybe	3
Activity students would like to have again in classes		
Blue	The newspaper with more recent news	2
What the teachers should improve in a next opportunity		
Yellow	Funnier classes	2
Fucsia	Going out	1
Blue	Competitions	4

The students expressed their feelings in terms of the things they liked the most with the experience of the creation of a school newspaper. We found that what they enjoyed the most was the use of the reading strategies to understand a text, “aprendimos a leer textos”, las

estrategias de lectura!”²³. This is something we consider remarkable, as at the beginning of the intervention, they did not like reading activities; we think this was a response to their low reading comprehension level. In this sense, these results highlight the importance of developing reading strategies in classes in order to help students not only to improve their reading comprehension levels but also their language level itself. As Mc Namara et al (2009) express, the implementation of reading strategies is useful for those students with low reading skill and for those who show lack of knowledge.

As a parallel result, the students stated they also liked the writing part of the news reports because they learned new vocabulary and this helped when writing; “aprendimos bastante vocabulario y eso nos ayudó a escribir oraciones, textos”²⁴. This is interesting because we considered their English level was a barrier, but they showed this difficulty can be overcome. Even at moment when it was difficult, they tried their best; this can be connected to the improvement of the reading comprehension skill, as they had a better comprehension of the texts that represented the bases of the writing activities.

Through the process students also liked they learned new vocabulary, which represented an improvement in their language learning for them. They also liked the accompaniment and commitment of the teachers involved in the process.

The activities they liked the most were mainly the Vocabulary Tree and the creation of the physical newspaper. The Vocabulary Tree is extremely connected to the fact they enjoyed learning new vocabulary, which is equivalent to the improvement of the reading and writing skills; “el árbol porque siempre estábamos preguntado qué palabras, que yo no se qué y ya con el árbol ya nos explicaban que significaba cada palabra y ya sabíamos cómo se escribe”²⁵.

On the other hand, what they did not like so much was the duration of the project as it took

²³ Focus group transcription. Students 2 and 7. See in annexes.

²⁴ Focus group transcription. Student 8. See in annexes.

²⁵ Focus group transcription. Student 10. See in annexes.

so much time; “no me gustó que hiciéramos este periódico tan tarde, tan largo”,²⁶ neither the length of the texts used in the sessions. The first aspect was related to the time we invested in the intervention; unfortunately, it took more time than we expected due to multiple administrative difficulties. It is recommendable to develop a faster process in order to come to final product with still recent news. The second aspect is represented in the apathy students have for reading activities. This apathy is not justified in the length of the texts as they did not exceed half page long. However, they expressed they felt good during the project because of the socialization processes within the classroom and because of the group work implemented in some activities; “bien porque compartimos todos”, “bien porque trabajamos en equipo, porque hubo un día de que primero sexto hacía una cosa, luego nosotros se la pasábamos a séptimo, si y ahí luego octavo terminaba.”²⁷. This last aspect was based on the characteristics of a multigrade classroom and the implemented differentiated instruction. As Tomlinson (2014 in Levy 2008) expresses, the importance of giving instructions in different ways (group work, individual work, pair work, etc.) is part of differentiation of the learning process.

As an important result, the students expressed they felt motivated because of the energy and the support provided by the teachers, same as the Vocabulary Tree and the idea of learning something new. This new learning was focused on three different aspects; the strengthening of the reading comprehension skill through the use of reading strategies, new vocabulary acquisition and writing. As we said before, we consider reading and writing connected skills and vocabulary is probably the bridge between the abilities.

In relation to methodology they expressed that this methodology helped them feel good because of the organization of the activities. They felt that it also helped to strengthen group relations. They started to be more respectful with the answers and the levels of their classmates;

²⁶ Focus group transcription. Student 10. See in annexes.

²⁷ Focal group transcription. Students 1 and 5. See in annexes.

“yo creo que se fortaleció la unión del grupo ya que como que cada uno separado y así pero no; aprendimos a trabajar más en equipo porque todos aportábamos una idea y al final todos pudimos sacar una idea en la que todos estuvimos de acuerdo”²⁸. This situation was in line with the benefits of multigrade schools stated by EMI (2003) as they can offer educational alternatives that allow diversity and respect to the individual learning rhythms, facilitating the transit of the knowledge in the classroom.

However, there are some aspects the students consider were not so good during the intervention. They were not sure of using the reading strategies in their future and they suggested having more dynamic activities, activities which demand from them to go outside the classroom: “como de hacer grupos y el grupo que pierda la profesora le dice haga una oración en pasado simple, un ejemplo”²⁹.

Discussion of the Results

In this section, we will discuss the results found during the analysis phase.

Institutional Documents.

Language Teaching.

Institutional documents state English teaching and learning inside the institution is a process under the communicative approach where the students are expected to develop their communicative skill with a proper level. However, the methodology inside the classroom is mainly traditional based on a grammar book and the assessment is based on grammar written quizzes or oral presentations which evaluate grammar.

²⁸ Focal group transcription. Student 8. See in annexes.

²⁹ Focus group transcription. Student 8. See in annexes.

Language learning.

The students have a passive role in this process as they are receptors and it is the teacher who selects the topics, resources, and activities; students “must” follow instructions, based on the pre-established contents from the book and the standards, without taking into account the students’ real interests or needs. In this sense, learning English becomes a process based on memorization process of grammatical contents.

Needs Analysis, Observation Registers and Focus Group.

The analysis of the information, collected through these instruments allowed us to determine the impact of working with differentiated learning tasks for improving reading comprehension skill in a multigrade group of students. We determined that students do not have the best attitude or motivation towards English classes, also that they use their mother tongue all the time. Besides, to give answer to all requirements in the English class, they use translation.

Then, a Needs Analysis is necessary to take decisions about is needed in a classroom, to design an intervention. In our case the development of reading ability was the decision, although students expressed they did not like to read. Research from different authors improved reading comprehension through reading strategies development. Finally, with the differentiated activities and instruction students felt that their learning level is considered when designing activities.

We found a strong connection between instruction difficulties, reading comprehension difficulties and negative attitude, as if students do not understand an instruction they will not be able to do what is expected and results will generate frustration. In turn, frustrating results also generate low motivation, and that was what students showed in the beginning of the process.

The implementation of the differentiated activities gave good results: students raised motivation toward the activities and they started to find meaningful the process; they felt their interests were taken into account. This change in the attitude and the increase in the levels of motivation had a great impact in the students' learning process; they started paying attention, working in class and learning how to apply the reading strategies.

On the other hand, this project allowed us to approach to diverse teaching practices of foreign languages through different types of tasks with varied products each one. In addition, it showed us how to interact with a multigrade classroom and how to take advantage of having three groups with different levels in the same place, at the same time. This diversity enriched our process of learning as teachers and fostered us to find the way of interacting with different types of learners.

Pre and post diagnostic reading test.

Through this instrument we could measure the improvement and the effectiveness of our practice and our intervention. Finally, we reached what we expected to accomplish from the beginning that was to improve students reading skill and instruction comprehension.

The pre test allowed us to know students initial level and the post test helped us to reveal if the intervention cause some effect in students, in this case positive.

Conclusions

This section presents the main results of the analysis and aims at giving response to the formulated objectives. Firstly, we introduce the identified characteristics of the multigrade classroom, based on observation and a needs analysis. Secondly, we present the most relevant aspects taken into account in the designing and implementation of the differentiated task, which

aimed at giving response to the different students' needs. Lastly, we share our way of measuring the impact of the instruction in terms of language learning and students' perceptions towards learning English at school.

First, based on the needs analysis and the observation sessions, the multigrade classroom, where this project was implemented, has its specific characteristics connected, for example, with different language levels, low interest towards reading activities and barriers to interact in the classroom. Though according to language diagnosis, all students were in a basic level, practice showed differences, mostly related to schooling grades. Differentiated levels working with the same activities generate frustration in students, as many times activities require higher language level for some of the students and vice versa. This working condition also triggers a feeling of apathy students show toward, for example, reading activities. This apathy affects, necessarily, language learning in the class. On the other hand, the division in levels and grades create a sense of distance among the students and turns difficult to build groups to work with the whole group and this affects the development of activities.

Second, the implementation of differentiated task is important to consider in this context. This work makes possible to take into account the students' needs and interest and this represents a meaningful part of the success of the work in class. Differentiated activities give answer to students' interests and needs and, undoubtedly, it produces a change in the classroom. Through this methodology, classes were stimulated and turned into more dynamic and more communicative; this orientation increases students' motivation and generates a more positive attitude towards the language class. In addition, it helps to show that English is useful in real life environments, as they use English as a tool to learn about pertinent and real aspects in life.

Having clear what to work on, the development of reading strategies, the characteristics of the group of students, a multigrade classroom, and their needs and interest makes easier to

decide on what to do to approach learning of the foreign language. The development of reading strategies helps students to use the language in real life situations, understand the usefulness of the process, and as a result improve comprehension and language levels. In summary, working on reading strategies development in this type of context through tasks is worthy.

Lastly, we have to say that measuring the impact of an instruction in terms of language learning and students' perceptions towards learning English is necessary in all contexts. We need to keep track of the development of an instruction and reflect about it. It is important to categorize information to identify the aspects which show up and characterize the doing of the teacher in the classroom. However, we found that it is also very important to check frequency of appearance of the categories, as this helps to guide the process of planning instruction; it helps to test effects in each phase of the research. This element helped this work to approach the differentiated instruction, which turned into the clue aspect to improve language learning and develop positive attitudes in the classroom.

We certainly hope that this work could serve as a model for future researchers who are likely to face similar difficult pedagogical contexts. We, confidently, suggest working on the development of reading abilities through the implementation of differentiated tasks in the EFL classrooms. This work gives response to a group of students with particular needs, to an institution that needs to follow national parameters and present results on the framework of a really communicative approach, and also to a teacher who is always on the search of good practices. This means, that this approach gives answer to the required world demands for the foreign language teaching and learning.

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Annexes

Annexe 1 Observation register (observation phase)

Registro de intervención n°	3	Institución	Santa María de Pance
Fecha	Marzo 23 de 2017	Número de estudiantes	15
Grado	G2	Tiempo de Observación	7:50 a 9:20 (1 hora y 30 min)

Tiempo	Descripción	Interpretación y análisis
7:50 am	Para comenzar, la profesora saluda a los estudiantes en inglés, pocos estudiantes contestan y la mayoría muestra gestos de desagrado por la profesora. La profesora le explica a los estudiantes que el día de hoy los estudiantes encargados harían sus presentaciones y, que si quedaba tiempo, trabajarían las actividades de superación y/o profundización. Esto lo hace primero en inglés pero todos comienzan a hacer gestos que demuestran que no entendieron nada y comienzan a preguntar repetidamente ¿Qué?. Después de varios intentos por que los estudiantes comprendieran, la profesora decide repetir la explicación en español. Cuando por fin la explicación quedó clara, la maestra debe ausentarse del aula por unos minutos pues es requerida	¿Por qué los estudiantes se ponen molestos cuando la profesora llega al aula de clase? Algunos estudiantes, en las observaciones previas, se molestan con la actitud de la maestra al llamarles mucho la atención. Quizás este desagrado se deba a que, en repetidas ocasiones, la maestra debe recurrir a los gritos para llamar la atención de los estudiantes y que estos continúen trabajando. La traducción dentro de la clase parece ser una herramienta constante para garantizar que los estudiantes comprendan los mensajes pues, cuando se hacen en inglés, ellos parecen no entender nada. Sin embargo, considero que este aspecto es un poco negativo puesto que los estudiantes se acostumbran y luego pueden no hacer el intento por comprender.

8:15 am	en una de las oficinas. Cuando la profesora regresó, pidió al primer grupo que comenzara la presentación. La pareja de estudiantes se presentó en español y comenzaron a leer lo que tenían preparado en una hoja. Dos niños sostienen la cartelera; los que estaban en la primera fila trataron de leer pero manifestaban no saber lo que allí decía. Por un momento, nadie estaba prestando atención; unos estudiantes estaban rayando el cuaderno, mirando el celular o charlando con los otros. La profesora intervino para ver si todos los estudiantes prestaban atención, pero se dio cuenta que no; así que, en español, les explicó que todos debían prestar atención y tomar nota de lo que sus compañeros explicaran pues serían ellos los encargados de dar la nota al grupo expositor. Los niños comenzaron, de nuevo, la lectura de su tema y, esta vez, la gran mayoría prestó atención. La profesora hace varias preguntas a los estudiantes <i>"What is a superlative? What do we use a superlative for? Can you use a superlative in a sentence, please?"</i> Cuando la profesora hace las preguntas, la mayoría se distrae nuevamente y dejan de prestar atención. Al ver que los estudiantes estaban un poco indisciplinados pues hablaban duro, se reían, tiraban papeles y no prestaban atención, la profesora decidió hacer un quiz sobre el tema expuesto. Muchos estudiantes se molestan y comienzan a gritar. Algunos	No comprender lo que estaba en la cartelera fue algo que me llamó mucho la atención pues era solo el título "Superlatives" y algunos ejemplos. El vocabulario empleado por los expositores fue muy sencillo (She is the <i>best</i> student, Carlos is the <i>most</i> intelligent in the classroom). Considero que el lenguaje era muy sencillo y los estudiantes deberían comprenderlo; pero ellos no lograban comprender lo que las oraciones significaban. Esta vez la profesora tuvo una actitud más tranquila para llamar la atención y los estudiantes respondieron de una mejor manera. Esto demuestra que la actitud dentro de la clase depende de ambas partes pero el maestro tiene, quizás, mayor influencia; lo que transmite el maestro se ve reflejado en los estudiantes. Creo que los estudiantes se distraeron porque fueron muchas preguntas juntas. Quizás hubiera sido mejor si la profesora hubiera hecho una pregunta a la vez. Si los estudiantes no responden voluntariamente se puede hacer las preguntas a varios estudiantes al azar. Considero que utilizar quizes como herramienta de autoridad no es lo más apropiado para crear compromiso en los estudiantes. Al contrario, las amenazas con quizes
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8:40 am	afirmaron que no es posible comprender el tema con una presentación corta cuando tampoco lo pudieron comprender durante todo el período. Durante el quiz se presentó un inconveniente; una de las niñas le pasa su examen a otra para que pueda copiar. cuando la profesora se entera, una de las niñas reacciona con mucha agresividad e insulta a la profesora quien decide ir por las carpetas de las estudiantes y documentar lo que acababa de pasar. Una de las 3 niñas involucradas afirmó que ella no tenía nada que ver en el suceso, que la profesora debía comparar los 3 exámenes y darse cuenta que ella no había copiado, que era consciente que algunos puntos le habían quedado malos porque no comprendía la instrucción de lo que debía hacer. Efectivamente, la niña no había copiado. Se llenan las anotaciones correspondientes por el delito de fraude. Después de solucionar el inconveniente, la profesora pidió a los estudiantes que realizaran las actividades de la página 61 del <i>student's book</i>. Para lo anterior, pide que el grupo se organice en 2 grupos, un grupo se iría con ella y el otro con la observadora pero no explica lo que deben hacer; no muestra las actividades ni hace ninguna aclaración respecto a ellas. La observadora se dispone a trabajar con el grupo de estudiantes que quiso ir con ella. La actividad consistía en leer un texto y responder las preguntas. Al inicio, ellos se mostraban indispuestos porque no sabía qué era lo que debían hacer y no comprendían ni el texto, ni las preguntas a resolver. La observadora trata de explicarles en inglés lo que debían hacer. Algunos estudiantes comprendieron rápidamente y explicaron a los otros, en español, la actividad. Se fue leyendo el texto parte por parte para aclarar dudas y asegurar la comprensión.	hacen que los estudiantes pierdan aún más interés y ya no hagan caso a lo que el maestro les proponga. Se resalta que la actitud de las estudiantes no fue la apropiada. La maestra hizo lo correcto al no continuar la pelea con la estudiante que la insultó pero queda claro que la poca comprensión de la instrucción es un problema dentro del aula de clase y lleva a que algunos estudiantes elijan la peor manera de solucionar las cosas por el miedo a las malas notas que pueda conllevar el hecho de no comprender lo que hay que hacer. Considero que es necesario que el profesor encargado se asegure de que todos hayan comprendido, antes de comenzar cualquier tipo de evaluación, para evitar futuros inconvenientes de este tipo. Es comprensible que la disposición de la profesora haya cambiado con el inconveniente pero, no por esto, se debe dejar a los estudiantes un poco a la deriva sin explicación de lo que deben hacer. Se evidencia que los niveles de lengua son demasiado bajos y por esto necesitan aún más acompañamiento. Después de ver cómo los estudiantes reaccionaron a la actividad de lectura en grupos pequeños, puedo afirmar que estos estudiantes necesitan un mayor acompañamiento y trabajo conjunto supervisado. La habilidad de comprensión de lectura no mejora por sí sola. Debe haber trabajo continuo y el docente debe
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	Algunas veces adivinaban o relacionaban las imágenes con lo que iban leyendo, otras veces quien comprendía explicaba a los otros. Los estudiantes estuvieron muy emocionados porque iban comprendiendo y pudieron resolver las preguntas con mayor facilidad. La clase terminó con esta actividad.	proporcionar a los estudiantes la mayor cantidad de estrategias y herramientas posibles para que se vea un incremento en sus niveles de comprensión. Los estudiantes ya utilizan algunas estrategias por sí solos, pero estas son empíricas; necesitan más información sobre estas para que puedan utilizarlas a la hora de enfrentarse a actividades de comprensión de lectura.
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Diario 11

Annexe 2 Intervention observation register

Descripción	Interpretación y análisis
Para esta clase los estudiantes venían con otra actitud pues apenas entraron al salón vieron los materiales para construir el periódico escolar y esto los emocionó muchísimo. También vieron los números correspondientes a los grados en las paredes y así mismo se fueron ubicando. Por grados separados. Después de haber leído y entendido los dos textos anteriores y que en los dos trataran noticias que ocurrían al interior de una institución, era el momento para que los estudiantes escribieran su propio texto sobre la institución. Los estudiantes iban a escribir sus noticias y la dinámica de la clase iba a ser bien diferente pues además se iba a crear el periódico gigante para todos en la institución. La dinámica explicada por las profesoras fue la siguiente: sexto iniciaría escribiendo las ideas principales de cada una de las noticias, después séptimo pondría ideas secundarias o complementaria la información que los estudiantes de sexto habían ya escrito, es decir, séptimo haría los párrafos de las noticias y octavo tendría la tarea de escribir el párrafo introductorio y el final. Para los estudiantes al inicio fue difícil entender la dinámica, razón por la que una	Nuevamente se ve la importancia de un buen material de trabajo pues ayuda a mejorar su motivación y disposición para trabajar. Ya comienzan a interiorizar que en clase de inglés con tres grados diferentes, lo mejor es trabajar lejos de los otros grados si se quiere aprender. Este fue un momento crucial en la práctica pues era la puesta en marcha de todos los conocimientos que los estudiantes ya habían adquirido.

profesora explicó en un lenguaje más sencillo a unos grado y la otra en uno más elaborado a los otros. Mientras que los estudiantes de sexto escribían los demás ayudaban con la creación del periódico gigante, así como después ellos también ellos se ocuparían de la lectura y escritura de las noticias. Al final se pudo ver que les agradó la dinámica pues por ejemplo, ya los de sexto trabajaban más tranquilos porque con su nivel de inglés sentían que podían producir algo y los de octavo también estaban contentos porque se sentían importantes al ser los que revisaban finalmente como quedaban las noticias, corregían errores, etc. Se sentían como unos profesores más. A todos les gusto tener que ayudar en la elaboración del periódico grande y trabajar con diferentes materiales para ponerlo bonito.	Es importante resaltar que las actividades diferenciadas son importantes tanto en la comprensión como también en la producción de lengua extranjera y que esto a la vez representa una innovación y una motivación para cada uno de los estudiantes porque sienten que son capaces e importantes al momento de desarrollar cualquier ejercicio planteado en clase. Para ellos también fue importante la creación del periódico pues todos se preocupaban porque quedara bien y quedara bonito.
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Annexe 3 Needs Analysis Report

Encuesta para análisis de necesidades (Needs Analysis)

Esta encuesta tiene el propósito de explorar los intereses y necesidades del grupo G2 del Colegio Santa María de Pance. Este trabajo se lleva a cabo en el marco del desarrollo de nuestro Trabajo De Grado del programa *Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras* de la Universidad del Valle. La información se utilizará solamente con fines académicos.

I. Información Personal

1. Género: Masculino ____ Femenino ____
2. Edad: Entre 10 y 12 ____ Entre 13 y 15 ____ Más de 15 ____
3. Estrato Socioeconómico: ____

II. Relación y motivación frente a la lengua inglesa

4. Para ti aprender inglés es:
 - a. Fácil

- b.** Interesante
- c.** Difícil
- d.** Aburrido
- e.** No me interesa aprender inglés
- f.** Otra? ¿Cuál? _____

5. ¿Te gusta el inglés? Sí _____ No _____

6. ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta hacer en las clases para aprender inglés?

- a.** Ejercicios de gramática
- b.** Talleres de lectura o escritura
- c.** Juegos o juegos de roles
- d.** Actividades con canciones o videos
- e.** ¿Otras actividades? ¿Cuáles? _____

7. ¿Tienes algún acercamiento al inglés fuera del aula? Sí _____ No _____

8. ¿En qué actividad?

- a.** Recibo clases particulares _____
- b.** Tomo clases en un instituto _____
- c.** Tengo amigos angloparlantes _____
- d.** Otros. ¿Cuál? _____

III. Preferencia metodológica y de contenido

9. ¿Qué te gustaría aprender en tus clases de inglés?

- a.** Aprender a escribir mejor en inglés
- b.** Aprender a comunicar oralmente mejor en inglés
- c.** Aprender a comprender mejor lo que otros hablan en inglés
- d.** Aprender a comprender mejor lo que otros escriben en inglés

10. ¿Qué temáticas te gustaría abordar en la lectura en inglés?

- a.** Historias de ciencia ficción
- b.** Cuentos infantiles
- c.** Temas de actualidad como música, farándula, otros.
- d.** Otros. ¿Cuál? _____

11. ¿Cómo te gusta leer?

- a.** Digital
- b.** Impreso
- c.** Lectura silenciosa
- d.** Lectura en voz alta

IV. Aspectos relacionados con la habilidad de lectura

12. ¿Comprendes las lecturas que la profesora trae a clase? Sí _____ No _____

13. ¿Te ayudas con las imágenes para entender lo que dicen los textos?
Sí _____ No _____

14. Entiendes con mayor facilidad cuando las lecturas se realizan

- a.** En voz alta
- b.** Mentalmente
- c.** No entiendo de ninguna forma

15. Qué estrategias utilizas para intentar comprender mejor un texto en inglés?

- a. Busco todas las palabras desconocidas en el diccionario
- b. Relaciono el título con las imágenes
- c. Leo cada párrafo y me pregunto ¿qué entendí?
- d. Pregunto a otra persona
- e. No hago ningún intento por comprender el texto
- f. Otra ¿Cuál? _____

16. ¿Cuál es tu opinión sobre la manera como está organizado el grupo de inglés con estudiantes de diversos niveles de escolaridad (grados)?

¡UFF! Lo lograste!
 Gracias por participar en esta encuesta.
 ¡Ahora podremos conocer tu opinión!



Link to graphics: <https://infogr.am/app/#/edit/eb11a044-15de-409f-bc71-23dbe925dc58>

Needs Analysis Report

With the purpose of exploring the students' interests and needs related to reading comprehension skill, a questionnaire was applied. The information obtained is used just with academic purposes.

This questionnaire was divided into four main parts *Personal Information, Relationships and Motivation with the English Language, Methodological and Content Preferences* and, *Aspects Related to Reading Comprehension Skill*.

In the first part, the results showed that the majority of the students are boys (12), while there are just 5 girls in the classroom. Most of these students are between 13 and 15 years old (11 students), there are 5 students between 10 and 12 years old and, there is just one student that exceed 15 years old. Apparently, they belong to social strata between 4, 5, 6 (3 students each strata), but there are 6 students that do not know their strata; as well as there are 2 students belonging to strata 3 and just one student in strata 7.

In the second part, *Relationships and Motivations with the English Language*, results showed that for most of the students English is interesting (5 students); however, for some others it is boring (4 students). For the other students, English is difficult or easy (3

students for each item). Not a single student feels is not interested on learning English; most of them like it (13 students) and just 4 of them do not like it.

Most of the students do not have an approach with the language (13 students). For those who have it, it is based on particular classes or classes in institutions (2 for each item).

In terms of likes, most of the students prefer role plays or activities with songs and videos to learn English (6 students for each item). Just 2 students prefer reading or writing).

In the third part that corresponds to *Methodological and Content Preferences*, the majority of the students would like to speak in the English class (7 students), some others would like to improve both speaking and writing skills (5 students), just one student want to improve writing. Four answers were annulled.

According to the topics they would like to work on in reading activities, they prefer topical issues like music or entertainment world (9 students). The rest of the students prefer science fictions stories (8 students). The reading modalities they prefer vary; most of the students prefer high voice reading (6 students), digital reading (5 students), printed reading (4 students) and, silent reading (2 students).

The final part of the questionnaire showed the following results Most of the students affirm they comprehend the texts the teacher uses in class (10 students), others affirm they do not understand (6 students), while there is just one student that sometimes understands, sometimes does not. To understand those texts, almost each student analyses the images; one student does not. They understand better when they read in high voice (10 students) and 3 students do it when reading mentally. Four students do not understand neither mentally nor in high voice.

The strategies they use to understand the texts are also so varied; to use of dictionary (1 student), to connect the title with the images (3 students), to read and ask themselves about what they understood (4 students), to ask to another person (1 student) and, they combine all of the previous strategies (8 students). All of the use, at least, one strategie.

Finally, according to organisation of the classroom, nine students like it, five students do not like it and three students do not care. Those who like it affirm it is because of socialisation; they feel good making friends from different grades, while those who do not like it say it is because of the distraction; as the group is divided into different groups, these groups talk aloud and make difficult the concentration process for some students

Annexe 4 Focal Group Transcription and analysis

Transcripción audio grupo focal:

AK: Bueno chicos, con esta última sesión queremos darle cierre al proyecto del periódico; lo que hemos venido trabajando durante este periodo y nos gustaría recoger todas sus impresiones; cómo se sintieron, qué les gustó, que no les gustó, sus ideas acerca de cómo podríamos mejorar el proyecto, todo lo que ustedes nos quieran contar acerca de esta experiencia.

Vv: Qué tanto aprendieron, si lo volverían a hacer, si no, si lo aplicarían en otras clases, lo que aprendieron o no, y si más adelante creen ustedes que eso les va a servir para algo.

AK: Bueno, la primera pregunta es **¿qué fue lo que más les gustó del proyecto?**

ST1: que aprendimos nuevo vocabulario

St2: aprendimos a leer textos y que las profesoras siempre estuvieron allí para apoyarnos

St3: a crear news reports

St4: psss, nos ayuda a la mentalidad de inglés

St5: a aprender a crear headlines

St6: a crear el periódico

St7: las pistas para aprender a leer

St8: las estrategias de lectura!

St9: lo de skimming y scanning

St10: también lo de subrayar

AK: bueno chicos, y qué fue lo que menos les gustó?

St2: que fueron muchos días de trabajo, pues que nos demoramos mucho tiempo en terminarlo

St9: no pues a mi todo me gustó!

St3: no pues, casi más o menos no me gustó los textos largos, esos que uno tenía que leer y sacar los resúmenes

St2: mucho texto

St4: mucha lectura

St10: no me gustó que hiciéramos este periódico tan tarde, tan largo

Vv: quicieran haberlo terminado antes? Sino que teníamos que: antes para poder escribir, hay que leer, y hay que leer bien, y esa era nuestra idea. Ehhh y **cómo se sintieron haciendo el proyecto?**

St1: bien porque compartimos todos.

St5: bien porque trabajamos en equipo, porque hubo un día de que primero sexto hacía una cosa, luego nosotros se la pasábamos a séptimo, si y ahí luego octavo terminaba

St7: porque trabajamos mucho en equipo

Vv: y qué los motivó a llevar todo esto hasta el final?

St1: la buena energía que no dan las profesoras

St7: pues también poder aprender algo nuevo

St9: el apoyo de las profesoras

St2: lo del árbol del vocabulario

St8: sii lo del arbolito

Vv: cuál fue la actividad que más les gustó?

St4: el árbol

St6: el árbol

St1: el árbol

St4: el periódico

St10: el árbol porque siempre estábamos preguntado que palabras, que yo no se que y ya con el árbol ya nos explicaban que significaba cada palabra y ya sabíamos cómo se escribe

St9: y ya las aprendíamos más rápido

St3: además fue una bonita decoración para el salón

St4: y además con eso aprendimos nuevo vocabulario

St7: pues a mi me gustó el periódico

AK: la parte de la manualidad o qué?

St7: si, y que las profesoras se esforzaron mucho

St1: y que siempre nos apoyaron

AK: qué sienten ustedes que aprendieron, que se pueda recoger de tooodas esas clases, de todo el proyecto, que ustedes digan “ahh es que con ese periódico aprendí a hacer tal cosa”?

St2: fortalecer la lectura

AK: y cómo fortaleció la lectura “pepito”?

St4: pues uno leyendo practica

St9: no, pues para mi la escritura

St8: que pues aprendimos bastante vocabulario y eso nos ayudó a escribir oraciones, textos

St2: no y con lo que ustedes nos enseñaron del vocabulario y las estrategias

Ak: y como con las estrategias?

St!: pues cuando ustedes nos daban unas estrategias de cómo uno tenía que leer y como cuando aprendimos cómo era que se tenía que hacer el news report

St3: los tips para comprender mejor el texto

AK: ustedes sienten que de pronto más adelante ustedes van a utilizar esas estrategias?

St10: sii de pronto

AK: las ven útiles o no?

St10: de pronto

St5: de pronto que estemos por allá y tengamos 30 años y queramos ser periodistas

Vv cuando quieran ser periodistas?

AK: pero no era solo para periodistas. Recuerden que las estrategias se pueden aplicar en todos los textos. Por ejemplo usted tiene que hacer un trabajo de sociales y tiene un texto y no

sabe como por dónde empezar, entonces usted ya comienza ahhh a analizar las imágenes, después a analizar el texto y todo eso que le va a ayudar a comprenderlo mejor. O sea no es solo para periodistas.

Vv: y qué otra actividad les gustaría que aplicáramos de nuevo en las clases? O cómo se sintieron más bien trabajando seto, séptimo, octavo separados?

St3: bien

St1: bien porque las profesoras supieron cómo organizar todo y nos pusieron a trabajar a todos en equipo.

St4: si pero también la primera pregunta de que qué actividad quisieran volver a repetir, pues a mi me gustaría volver a repetir el periódico pero con más noticias, como con noticias de la semana.

St2: más recientes

AK: como que seamos más ágiles y podamos sacar semanalmente una publicación

St8: yo creo que se fortaleció la unión del grupo ya que como que cada uno separado y así pero no; aprendimos a trabajar más en equipo porque todos aportabamos una idea y al final todos pudimos sacar una idea en la que todos estuvimos de acuerdo.

Vv: cómo se sintieron en esa actividad en la que eran periodistas y uno traducía y el otro tenía que hablar?

St10: bien porque hubo organización, no estuvimos como locos de que hay yo hago estoy yo hago esto, hubo bastante organización y no peleamos ni nada.

St6: chévere porque empezaba uno a hablar y el otro era el traductor

Vv: que les gustaría que mejoráramos en otra oportunidad haciendo no solo el periódico sino otra clase así?

St3: más divertidas

Vv: más divertidas cómo?

St3: más creativas y recreativas

St8: como de hacer grupos y el grupo que pierda la profesora le dice haga una oración en pasado simple, un ejemplo.

St10: y de verbos

Vv: como competencias?

St9: o por ejemplo como que no todo sea juego sino que también aprendamos mientras hacemos eso

St6: o salir

St4: o una vez vi una película donde había un juego donde que ponían ahí en una mesa y eran esas grapadoras y hacían una pregunta y el que primero la tuviera salía a correr y la hundía

AK: “Antonio “ tu quieres decir algo?

St6: mmm no pues me gustaron las clases

AK: chicos y de la metodología que les llamó la atención?

St1: que cuando empezamos a hacer el periódico como habían dos profesoras, digamos en un grupo podía estar una profesora y en otro grupo otra, ya que es como más personalizado y podemos aprender mejor que en vez de una sola profesora que estuviera en todo el salón así corriendo de pa un lado y pa otro

Ak: y qué no les gustó de esa metodología? O estuvo chévere así con dos profes?

St3: sii todo estuvo bien

St10: estuvo chévere

St9: si porque ambas profesoras estuvieron apoyando todo el tiempo

St6: una estaba pendiente de un lado y la otra del otro

St2: y siempre con el motivismo y la energía de querer ayudarnos a comprender mejor

Ak: bueno chicos, pues como ya estamos cerrando queremos darles las gracias de todo corazón por haber hecho parte de este proyecto sabemos que los cambios a veces generan algún sentimiento de malestar; “hay que pereza, que maluco esto”. La idea era que pudiéramos hacer algo diferente a siempre lo del libro y que pudiéramos aprender a través de otro tipo de actividades y recuerden que la lectura es muy importante por todo lo que ustedes necesitan en su proceso académico y en la vida. Aprender a leer es algo de vital importancia

Vv: desde ahora hasta la universidad y más adelante

Ak: va recordar que algún día van a necesitar de esas estrategias de lectura

St4: profe tu eres un apoyo en mi vida

St5: que tal que nos toque lo mismo que ustedes cuando estemos grandes

Ak: claro!. Entonces pues muchas gracias por todo, por su participación. Sin su colaboración este proyecto no hubiera podido ser llevado a cabo

St1: gracias a usted profe, a las dos.

Vv: Gracias!

Ak: Gracias!

Annexe 5 Task attachments and Materials**Activity 1**

Materials: copies of the attachment 1 (diagnosing my reading comprehension), pencil or pen.

Attachment 1: Diagnosing my Reading Comprehension

Diagnostic Test – News about the discovery of caves in France

Instruction:

Read the text and answer the questions below.

When another old cave is discovered in the south of France, it is not usually news. Rather, it is an ordinary event. Such discoveries are so frequent these days that hardly anybody pays heed to them. However, when the Lascaux cave complex was discovered in 1940, the world was amazed. Painted directly on its walls were hundreds of scenes showing how people lived thousands of years ago. The scenes show people hunting animals, such as bison or wild cats. Other images depict birds and, most noticeably, horses, which appear in more than 300 wall images, by far outnumbering all other animals. Early artists drawing these animals accomplished a monumental and difficult task. They did not limit themselves to the easily accessible walls but carried their painting materials to spaces that required climbing steep walls or crawling into narrow passages in the Lascaux complex. Unfortunately, the paintings have been exposed to the destructive action of water and temperature changes, which easily wear the images away. Because the Lascaux caves have many entrances, air movement has also damaged the images inside. Although they are not out in the open air, where natural light would have destroyed them long ago, many of the images have deteriorated and are barely recognizable. To prevent further damage, the site was closed to tourists in 1963, 23 years after it was discovered.



1. Which title best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
 1. Wild Animals in Art
 2. Hidden Prehistoric Paintings
 3. Exploring Caves Respectfully

4. Determining the Age of French Caves
2. In line 3, the words pays heed to are closest in meaning to _____.
 1. discovers
 2. watches
 3. notices
 4. buys
3. Based on the passage, what is probably true about the south of France?
 1. It is home to rare animals.
 2. It has a large number of caves.
 3. It is known for horse-racing events.
 4. It has attracted many famous artists.
4. According to the passage, which animals appear most often on the cave walls?
 1. Birds
 2. Bison
 3. Horses
 4. Wild cats
5. In line 8, the word depict is closest in meaning to _____.
 1. show
 2. hunt
 3. count
 4. draw
6. Why was painting inside the Lascaux complex a difficult task?
 1. It was completely dark inside.
 2. The caves were full of wild animals.
 3. Painting materials were hard to find.
 4. Many painting spaces were difficult to reach.
7. In line 12, the word **They** refers to _____.
 1. walls
 2. artists
 3. animals
 4. materials
8. According to the passage, all of the following have caused damage to the paintings EXCEPT _____.
 1. temperature changes
 2. air movement
 3. water
 4. light
9. What does the passage say happened at the Lascaux caves in 1963?
 1. Visitors were prohibited from entering.
 2. A new lighting system was installed.
 3. Another part was discovered.

4. A new entrance was created.

Activity 2

Materials

a) News taken from facebook



b) News taken from an online channel

1. <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/23/politics/trump-taxes/index.html?sr=fbCNN102317trump-taxes0510PMStory>
2. <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/23/football/fifa-best-awards-2017/index.html?sr=fbCNN102317fifa-best-awards-20170516PMStoryGal>

c) Digital Newspaper: El País

1. https://elpais.com/elpais/2017/10/05/inenglish/1507190381_684984.html

d) Online radio

1. <http://en.rfi.fr/>

e) BBC TV News

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6-ehUzruDc>

Activity 3

Materials:

Use the same documents presented in the previous activity (News taken from facebook, from an online channel, Digital Newspaper: El País, Online radio recording, BBC TV News) and attachment 2 (Characteristics of media)

Activity 4

Materials: Cardboard, colors, internet, pencils.

Activity 5

Materials: newspaper for the example, paper, pencils, colors.

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of the class the students will have 10 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 6

Materials: Pencils, paper, board and markers.

Activity 7

Materials: the questions previously prepared

Questions for the teachers and coordinators	Questions for the students	Questions for the nurse
- What have happened in the school during this week?	- What have happened in the school during this week? - What do you think about the ludic courses in the school? - What is the product students like the most in the cafeteria?	- What have happened in the school during this week? - What are the most common illnesses that affect the students?

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of the class the students will have 10 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 7

Materials: the questions previously prepared

(same as the previous session)

Activity 8

Materials: paper, pencils, dictionaries.

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of the class the students will have 20 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 9

Materials: Paper, pencil, tape, answers of the interviews.

Activity 10

Materials: Papers with the translations of the news. For the explanation teachers will use the following image of an online newspaper. Then they will explain the different sections and its content.



VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of the class the students will have 20 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 11

Materials: Paper, colors, pencils.

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of the class the students will have 10 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 12

Materials: Worksheets for each group; attachment 3 (Reading strategies).

<http://www.theurswickschool.co.uk/28/latest-news/article/38/student-report-paris-trip>

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of each class the students will have 20 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 13

Materials: copies of the attachment 4(applying reading strategies)

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of each class the students will have 10 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 14

Materials: Paper, markers, glue, colors...

VOCABULARY TREE: At the end of each class the students will have 10 minutes to create a leaf with a new word they learned during the session. The leaves will be pasted on the vocabulary tree depending on branches: news, media, instruction.

Activity 15

Materials: Cellphone to record the students' voices and the video.