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**THE ROLE OF LUDIC STRATEGIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF
SPEAKING SKILLS**

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ABSTRACT

The present study attempts to elucidate the role of ludic methodologies in the development of speaking skills when learning English as a foreign language. It also aims to corroborate the benefits of ludic activities in the learning and teaching methodologies of English classes. By analysing the effect that these types of activities have in enhancing and maintaining students' motivation and participation in primary school, particularly in the third and sixth grades, it is expected to improve their speaking skills. A previous survey collected detailed data about the motivation that students had in English classes, which determined that what teachers and students wanted for their English classes was not actually happening. Later, two to three ludic activities were implemented over a whole unit to assess the achievement of the speaking skill of the students, specifically, activities related to guessing and imagining situations. Finally, the same survey was applied to determine if the motivation and participation of the students increased due to the use of ludification. As a result, it was determined that the interventions not only improved the students' participation but also their motivation and feelings about using the language, which allowed them to practice it and relate to it in a more natural way.

This study provides an alternative that allows teachers to be more productive and proactive when planning lessons. Implementing engaging activities benefits students through the application of ludic tasks to complement the teaching and learning methodologies of the English subject. The ludic approach that appears in this

investigation may help teachers to adapt their activities and to complement their techniques to facilitate students' learning process, leading to the development of their motivation and confidence.

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INTRODUCTION

In order to achieve the learning of a foreign language, it is fundamental to master four skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) in an integrated way. When these skills are properly developed, effective communication occurs through comprehension and emission of messages. Within these abilities, the development of the speaking skill is considered one of the most important, since as Burns (2019) points out "speaking is a highly complex and dynamic skill that involves the use of several simultaneous processes... and a speaker's knowledge and skills have to be activated rapidly in real-time" (p.2) requiring the use of all aspects related to language. In this sense, a considerable deficit has been found in the development of speaking skills as there are numerous difficulties when using a foreign language in a spoken way. This skill is required to be appropriately developed to achieve the acquisition of a foreign language.

As mentioned, many difficulties and factors can influence the development of the speaking skill, such as lack of motivation, absence of practice instances, psychological factors, methods and strategies, among many others. This research project seeks to explore the relevance of ludic strategies to develop speaking skills accurately during the learning of English as a foreign language in primary school students, particularly in the third and sixth grades from Dreyse Belser, and Mercedes Marín del Solar schools respectively. In both schools, deficiency has been observed

in students' participation during the English classes which lead to noticing the lack of ludic elements that would encourage the participation and interaction of the students.

The focus of the present study is on young language learners. In order to ensure that students understand and acquire the language, Yolageldili and Arikan (2011) tells us that "games have a special role in any foreign language teaching programme because they facilitate foreign language learning especially for young learners" (p.1).

Consequently, it is necessary to consider and understand that the world of children is based on game-playing, they learn and give meaning through it, instinctively and naturally. In this way, play allows a better implication in knowledge and new information since higher motivation and interest can be noticed after applying the use of ludic strategies. Having pointed this out, as Halliwell (1992) expresses, the play is not relevant just because it is fun and engages students, but because "it creates the desire to communicate". In other words, communication plays an important part in our daily lives and above all, in the acquisition of a foreign language as it is its main objective. Even though it is inevitable to make mistakes, it takes part in the learning process. The goal here is to find ways to overcome the barriers that can be perceived as a foreign language learner.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Nowadays, English is considered one of the most widely spoken languages around the world, and due to the growing number of speakers as a second or third language, it is proposed as an international language (EIL). In this regard, Sharifian (2009) highlighted that EIL rejects the idea of choosing a particular variety as the lingua franca for international communication, on the contrary, it is emphasized that English, in its various forms, is a language of international communication and therefore multicultural. According to the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) determining English as an international language “characterizes its status as being the world’s major second language and the commonest language used for international communication” (p.196) while selecting it as the lingua franca implies its use as a “language of communication between two or more people who do not have English as a first language” (p.196). In terms of language teaching, these concepts are relevant because their selection will determine how classes will be configured and designed.

In this same sense, two other concepts that also play a relevant role in language teaching are determining English as a second or foreign language. This decision is made according to the context in which the language is being

taught-learned. Richards & Schmidt (2010) state that the term English as a Second Language (ESL) refers to when someone learns English in an environment where the use of the language is necessary for everyday life or in a country in which English plays an important role. While the term English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to when someone learns English in a formal classroom with limited opportunities to use it, in a country in which English does not play an important role (like in Chile).

In the context of teaching and learning a language, teachers must use different methodologies and strategies that allow students to truly learn the other language.

1.1 Influential elements

To determine which methodologies and strategies to use when teaching a foreign language, it is necessary to consider the present and influential elements in the learning process. Some of these elements are properly related to language, such as sounds, vocabulary, grammatical structures, and curriculum, among others; while the rest are more related to individuals who participate in the learning process, as the emotional and social dimensions.

Bland (2015, as mentioned in Lawrence, 2017) stated that by identifying with their language teaching, students can gain a positive mindset with emotional engagement. It is important to highlight the fact that the emotional state is important in the learning process because of the benefits that this can have.

According to Pinter (2017, quoted in Lawrence, 2017), the learning process can be influenced by the students' awareness about their own emotional states. It is important to know that the emotional process that occurs in students is predominant to work within the classroom. Some indispensable aspects to contribute to the emotional process are the classroom climate, positive reinforcements, using appropriate strategies to follow the content and motivation. As stated by Lawrence (2017), "as the classroom environment is a significant factor in motivation (Dörnyei, 2007, in Bland, 2015), and it can be considered that the foreign language classroom that has higher "risk" (speaking a foreign language, for example), having confidence could aid motivation" (p.16). To be able to teach another language, it is indispensable to motivate students in their learning process to obtain satisfactory results. Once we incorporate as many of these features as we can, we could allow effective teaching and meaningful learning to our students.

1.2 Skills

Teachers must use different methodologies and strategies that allow students to truly acquire a foreign language, since for some students it can be stimulating but for others, it can be challenging. Therefore, it is necessary to develop activities that can enable students to be successful in their own learning processes. By preparing dynamic classes and meaningful activities that contribute to a lighter process, a smooth learning environment and, at the

same time, satisfaction with their progress, we are assuring a great experience. As previously mentioned, the learning of the English language involves the development of four skills that are fundamental for effective communication. Within these skills reading and listening can be found, which are known as receptive skills, and also speaking and writing, which are known as productive skills. Because of the importance of these elements we need to be aware of the development of the very four of them.

1.2.1 Receptive skills

According to the British Council website, the receptive or passive skills allude to those in which the learners receive and understand information, such as reading a text or listening to audio. These skills are, as Al-Jawi (2010) points out, “the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or hear”(p.3). That is to say, in order to learn another language properly it is necessary to work with all the skills for a better understanding of it.

According to the British Council (n.d) “often in the process of learning new language, learners begin with receptive understanding of the new items, then later move on to productive use” (paragraph 2). This being said, it is known that starting the process by acquiring these types of skills first, allows the learner to develop a greater domain of the language and vocabulary.

1.2.1.1 Listening

The skill of listening is one of the most important parts of oral communication since when we listen we engage our minds actively. According to Zubair (2020), “there is a difference between listening and hearing. Listening is a conscious activity of the mind whereas hearing is an unconscious activity” (paragraph 2). According to this, the listening skill should be taken into account when we plan a lesson to be able to teach properly and also to understand better the use of another language. The importance of listening is huge because learners can acquire sounds and understand the correct pronunciation, as Listiyaningsih (2017) proposes, “Listening is important because listening helps students lay the foundations of speaking and writing. Through listening, students can acquire decent pronunciation and learn many useful words, phrases, and sentences” (p.36). It is fundamental to begin the teaching process by showing sounds if we want our students to learn properly, especially if we want them to produce them later on.

1.2.1.2 Reading

The second receptive skill is reading, this includes not only reading but also the development of comprehension, fluency and independence. Lestrud (2013) tells us that “reading skills lead a person to interact and gain meaning from written language” (paragraph 1). As we mentioned above, reading leads to the student independently comprehending the intended message being

relayed in the written content. And for this, we need to develop our reading comprehension skills, hopefully, from preschool and then continue with the other skills that will benefit from the learning already obtained through reading.

1.2.2 Productive skills

On the other hand, productive skills, as Rhalmi (2020) defines, are skills that enable the production of English in written or spoken forms, such as speaking and writing. The Oxford University Press ELT (2014) affirms that “there are strategies teachers can apply to make the task of writing easier, clearer and even enjoyable” (paragraph 8). Several strategies can be used with our students while preparing activities that engage and motivate them. Both of these skills need to be developed properly because here is when students have the opportunity to practice real-life situations which they will have to deal with someday.

1.2.2.1 Writing

According to Indeed Editorial Team (2021) writing skills “include all the knowledge and abilities related to expressing ideas through the written word” (paragraph 4). This ability is often the most challenging to teach and learn because it contains words that are not similar in every language, complex grammatical structures, and more. Even many native speakers of the English language find writing difficult, so the challenge is greater for our EFL and

ESL students. The strategies to teach writing requires concentration, effort and regular practice to improve.

1.2.2.2 Speaking

For this research, the speaking skill is the most important as it involves communication, which has no limit. The other skills mentioned are also important to improve speaking skills because it combines not only words to reflect thoughts, opinions and feelings but sounds and grammar structures that are previously acquired. According to Gillis (2013) “the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are all interconnected. Proficiency in each skill is necessary to become a well-rounded communicator, but the ability to speak skilfully provides the speaker with several distinct advantages.” (paragraph 2). The production of all the skills is centred in the speaking one, considered even as one of the most important because all the acquired knowledge is used here. As Djigunović (2006) mentions, “speakers need to use their knowledge of the language and activate their ability to do this under real constraints” (p.12). With this, it is possible to say that productive skills cannot be developed without previous knowledge in which the other skills are involved because although it is one of the most important, it depends on the other ones.

1.3 Teaching strategies

Understanding that teaching starts from the development of the essential concepts of the teaching-learning process, it also goes beyond the analysis of the mythology and the description of various activities that enter such a process. Teachers realized that they needed to do more research in relation to teaching and its various methodologies and strategies to improve it.

Furthermore, the teaching process does not only involve knowledge itself, but also the exhaustive analysis of the situation and the context that occurs in the classrooms. In other words, teachers must know what is addressed in the teaching-learning process as they are essential parts of the process.

In teaching, the learner is the core of the learning process, which means that everything is made and planned according to their learning situation and needs. They are the ones who receive instructions and information from the teacher and for this reason, teachers need to employ different strategies that suit both the context of the classroom and the students. Anilkumar (2021) says that teaching strategies “are methods and techniques that a teacher will use to support their pupils or students through the learning process; a teacher will choose the teaching strategy most suitable to the topic being studied, the level of expertise of the learner. and the stage in their learning journey” (paragraph 6). In short, teachers are required to use numerous strategies with diverse goals in every lesson as students will be different from each other.

It is crucial to understand the fact that teaching is a complex process that is divided into stages within the class, which are: warm-up, presentation, practice, production, and closure. Not all the classes are based on these stages, but most of them are. The teaching strategies mentioned before have to be considered during these stages, evaluating when they can be useful for the students, the context, and the class in general.

In terms of the most effective teaching strategies, we have the ones that are proven to work over large scale trials.

Within the teaching methods, we have two different approaches: teacher-centred and student-centred. The first one, according to Lathan (2020) is when “teachers serve as instructor/authority figures who deliver knowledge to their students through lectures and direct instruction, and aim to measure the results through testing and assessment” (paragraph 7). Having said that, it is possible to infer the fact that the teacher-centred approach is related to showing and explaining the content that students are expected to learn so they can repeat it after. However, Lathan (2020) expresses the idea that the student-centred approach refers to teachers being recognized as an authority, but they further operate as a facilitator of the process, students then have a more active role. As a consequence, students learn from teachers and are continually assessed by them on such activities as group projects, student portfolios and class participation. Correspondingly, the main focus of this research is in the

student-centred approach where the learning process becomes a shared experience between the teacher and the students, and among students. In brief, students are going to build their own knowledge as they are exposed to critical thinking, taking decisions, collaborative work, and other essential elements that make them capable of acquiring the content by facing real-life events.

Following the same pattern, this research hypothesizes that students are more likely to participate and be more involved in the learning process when they perform ludic activities due to the interests they develop when they become active participants in their learning process.

2. Ludic strategies in the EFL classroom

Teaching English as a foreign language to young learners is more challenging for teachers since they need to be more actively involved in the learning process. That is why English teachers should innovate in the classroom with the materials and the methodologies they use. Because of a way to innovate those methodologies and techniques, Andrade (2017) tells us that “the Ludic Methodology with more emphasis in games for teaching are mainly used as distractors but teachers do not seem to be aware of the fact that ludic strategies may contribute to the English Language teaching-learning process” (p.3). Following this idea, it is believed that using ludification within classrooms concedes students’ imagination to develop at a greater level, as well as helps to gain confidence and to have better relations with their

classmates. Jauneaux (2020) indicates that ludification is described as a technique whose purpose is adding fun in a learning context. As mentioned above, the use of these playful elements in the classroom is done for a purpose, not just for the sake of fun. For instance, some activities that could be included in the teaching of a foreign language are role-played games, the creation of rhymes inspired by a story, the creation of dialogues for a specific situation, and others. These elements can motivate students in the acquisition of a foreign language, leading their learning process, and helping them to get engaged with the topics expected to be seen. As well as help students experience the language in a more meaningful and useful context.

As has already been established, to achieve the learning of a foreign language it is proper to develop the four skills; reading-listening which are the receptive skills, and speaking-writing which are the productive skills. In this regard, ludic activities help to encourage students to practice their language skills, as Klimova (2015) states “if games are seen as meaningful practice of language, they can be exploited as follow-ups of the presented teaching material for practicing and reinforcing the required skills or knowledge; or for revising and recycling already acquired skills or knowledge; or as a testing mechanism in order to discover students weaknesses in their language proficiency.” (p.1159) reaffirming in this way, the use of ludic activities goes beyond fun and that it can have significant and relevant use in the development of skills.

2.1 Gamification and Ludification

Most of the time ludification is confused with gamification, two terms that we mix without understanding their definitions and the very important difference between them. According to Jauneaux (2020), “gamification by definition is: the use of video game mechanics in an unrelated area, in order to trigger specific behaviour on the part of a user”, whereas, “Ludification ... is: a system where you will only try to add fun to something that is not, for a purpose, for example, of learning” (paragraphs 4 and 5). In the same way, the notion of the game refers to a game system with specific objectives and rules. Even when the game is also an activity we need objectives set for a group of participants, otherwise, the game cannot start. Ludification, which is the matter of the investigation, is to use the game mechanics to make a task that is not tolerable for students at first, enjoyable.

2.2 Games

In the learning context, games can be used for multiple purposes, depending on the needs of students and the focus of the classes. However, during this research, the games picked are based primarily on the development of speaking and listening skills as these go hand in hand.

As mentioned by Hadfield (1998, as cited in Klimova, 2015), language games can be divided into two categories according to different principles. These are linguistic games that focus on accuracy, and communicative games that focus

on successful exchange of information, but the focus of this research is on the linguistic games which are: Pictionary, guessing and speculating games due to the students' level of English.

2.3 Previous studies

There are several previous studies regarding the same topic, and most of them confirm that with the use of ludification, there is a better understanding of the English language along with the improvement of the speaking skill. The English language acts as a tool to bridge the gap between the borders. Due to the increasing demand for the English language, we as teachers need to teach language skills to meet those demands which society looks for. Because of this, we need new teaching strategies that improve the development of certain skills such as speaking. As we already mentioned, the ludic strategies benefit students when allowing them to fully participate and actively discuss in the classroom, sharing their ideas and information with teachers and their classmates. And this is what this paper focuses on, on the use of strategies in the communicative activities that can be trained by students to participate effectively to accomplish the tasks.

Mubalat (2012) highlights the effectiveness of using games at the primary stages for language acquisition and the fact that it also increases students' attention. He also indicates that effective and interactive experiences in the

class are needed to motivate and actively engage our students in their learning process. As a result, ludic activities such as songs, role-playing, games and so on, increase students' motivation to pursue and fulfill an objective since they will be more interested in participating in the classroom activities and in their own learning experience.

In a previous study, Mubaslat (2012) points out that games should be a main activity while teaching a foreign language instead of being used in odd moments only. He also stated that the games should be used at all the stages of the class, as long as it is suitable and carefully chosen by the teacher for the students. On the whole, it is key to maintain the same environment during the entire class so students do not lose the focus of it.

Having checked the main rationale, the new section will focus on the research question and objectives of the study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Research questions

- Why is it important to focus on speaking skills while teaching a second language?
- How is the speaking skill developed in the learning process of a second language in the selected schools? Is it successful?
- What are the benefits of ludification in the acquisition of a second language?
- What is the extent to which Pictionary, Guessing and Speculation games can have an impact on the development of speaking ability in primary school students?

2. Objectives

General objective:

- To develop and improve the speaking ability and participation of primary school students (3rd and 6th grade) in two different schools through the use of ludic strategies.

Specific objectives:

- To analyze how the speaking ability is developed in primary education students by taking notes in a diary.

- To determine through theoretical and practical research what the best ludic strategies are for the development of speaking skills.
- To improve the use of speaking skills by the implementation of ludic techniques in the classroom.

METHOD

1. Type of research

This research relies on the type known as action-research, given that it allows self-reflection in educational practices. Action-research alludes to the practitioner's attempt to comprehend the learning environment carried out by practitioners supported in the name of their instruction (Cilliers, 2007).

Subsequently, an educational problem is diagnosed, and then an action plan to improve this practice, for this is necessary to collect evidence, observe it, reflect upon it, and discuss it with colleagues. Therefore, this method offers an instance of exploration against the theme of the role of ludic strategies in the development of speaking skills, giving a possible solution through this theoretical framework. It is proper to describe this investigation as a collaborative work, whose main focuses are interaction, dialogue, and reflection. And the primary purpose of this research, emphasizes problem-solving by integrating theory to enhance those instances.

2. Methodology

Regarding the type of methodology that will be used, this research will implement a qualitative methodology, since this allows the understanding of a phenomenon through the collection of information based on the observation of natural behaviours, discourses, and open responses from people for the

subsequent interpretation of meanings. Qualitative research implies data examination whether it be words or images, in order to better appreciate human experience in the natural world (Williams, 2013). This technique seems to be useful and appropriate since information will be collected by our own experiences in the classroom environment as teachers of English. In addition, we consider that this methodology allows us to identify the research problem raised previously in a deep way, providing flexibility and a holistic point of view. Finally, to provide adequate solutions and implement these corresponding strategies according to what is proposed by this.

The games that will be used during this study are more related to linguistic games than communicative games since the level of English that students have during this school period does not allow for effective communication and the focus is on the acquisition of vocabulary.

Three games have been selected to be developed during a complete unit with each of the courses, considering the context of both schools (online and hybrid classes). The first one is “Pictionary”, during this activity a drawing is created on the screen/whiteboard (first the teacher and then the students) where the rest of the classmates guess the drawing related to the contents of the class. The second activity is a guessing game where this time students recognize an object from a sentence. The third and final activity is a speculation game where students are given a situation and they are asked to select some items

seen during classes justifying their selection according to the situation presented.

3. Data collection

The improvements that will happen in action research will be based on the data, or information, collected by the teachers in a systematic way. The data for this research will be collected through a diary based on direct observations, a survey about motivation and ludic strategies, and the students' oral feedback. The present research follows a qualitative paradigm.

4. Participants and context

Two schools have been chosen, and both are located in Santiago de Chile. The first one is the Dreyse Belser School, located in Peñaflores borough. This institution is privately subsidized and offers kindergarten, primary and secondary levels. As mentioned above, our research will be based on investigating the use of a ludic methodology within one of the courses of this school, which is why the third grade B was selected. The course is made up of thirty-one students whose ages range between seven to eight. When it comes to conducting classes and sharing new approaches with the students, they are fully participative and active. Even though they have an English workshop which is an ungraded subject, as it is a curriculum proposal that is still in process.

The second school which we are going to work with, as said before, is the Mercedes Marin del Solar School. This school was named after Mercedes Marin, who is the first Chilean women poet. By now, this school is following a hybrid teaching, meaning that there are some students in synchronous classes from home whereas others are in class at school. It has courses from kindergarten to eighth grade, including a school integration program. However, this time we are focusing on the sixth grade B only. Within its students, multiple types of learners can be found, and from several South American countries. But despite that, most of them participate actively in the activities presented by the teacher. These activities are coming from the student's book, a book given by the MINEDUC.

As mentioned above, in order to achieve the purpose of this research, the selected activities will be implemented during a complete unit in both courses.

In the case of the third grade B, unit five which corresponds to "Nature park" has been selected. Throughout this unit students will see vocabulary about different animals and parts of the animals, such as *lion, elephant, squirrel, snake, spider, bear, eagle, wolf, fish, butterfly, monkey, tiger, cheetah, owl, shark, ears, tusks, legs, trunk, eyes, tail, claws*, etc. And vocabulary about the different nature parks such as the desert, sea, forest, mountains, etc. Apart from this, in terms of grammatical structures, we will see an introduction of the modal verb *can* and the content of *have/has*. While in the case of the sixth

grade B, they are currently working on unit three of the student's book which is called "Changing Habits". In this unit, they are expected to learn about actions to take care of our environment, specifically vocabulary such as reduce, reuse, recycle, pollution, plastic, glass, cans etc. They also get to learn the structure of "going to" to talk about future actions to take care of our planet.

5. Procedure

To put this research project into practice, the school boards, parents and students were informed of the purpose of this study. Therefore, a letter was written to the school boards to inform them about our intention and to ask for permission to conduct the research in their schools. Afterwards, parents were also informed, through a letter of consent, about the study in which their children would be involved. Children will also have a word to say since they will be asked to give consent about their participation in the activities and the project. The letters explained the aims of the study, the length, the way data would be collected and the purpose of the study. Samples of the consent letters of the two schools are added to the appendix section.

After getting all the necessary consent, three lessons will be given, in which at least one of the aforementioned activities will be carried out per lesson.

During the first lesson, evidence will be gathered through a survey that will

recollect information about the lack of motivation and ludic strategies of the two different courses.

6. Interventions

Regarding the interventions, there were between two and three ludic activities that were carried out in two different schools. It is substantial to remember that ludification refers to all use of playful activities in order to increase motivation and improve performance. The activities were selected for their dynamic and interactive nature as they allowed their implementation in the schools. All the activities were adapted according to each school's context.

6.1 Pictionary

In this activity the object was to identify multiple objects and animals according to the units of the two grades. As a general explanation, this ludic activity consists of a person drawing an object and others trying to guess what that object is, but without oral communication.

6.1.1 Mercedes Marín del Solar School

The intervention carried out in real time at the Mercedes Marín del Solar school in the sixth grade B was held in a hybrid educational model, since there were some students in the school and others at home through Google Classroom. This game was implemented in the third class of unit three called “changing habits”. This unit aims to learn about sustainability and the

importance of taking care of our environment through vocabulary related to it. So, the intervention was executed on November 11th, 2021 at the beginning of the class and its goal was to remember vocabulary learnt in the previous sessions. To achieve this, drawings were made on the whiteboard and students had to guess the name of the vocabulary drawn, for example: canvas bag, plastic, glass, cardboard, etc. There were about six objects and they successfully guessed them all correctly.

6.1.2 Dreyse Belser School

The intervention was implemented in the third grade of the Dreyse Belser School, composed of thirty students. The interventions were developed through Google Meet, an online platform, because of the pandemic situation. The unit used for the interventions was unit 5 called 'Nature Park' of the student's book, in which we study vocabulary about the different parts of animals, habitats, and the animals that coexist in these places. In terms of content, we started seeing an introduction of the verb tense "simple present", the modal verb "can" and the difference between "have" and "has". The first intervention called 'Pictionary' was applied on November 9th, 2021 as a final activity for the class. For this activity, the students started to see the difference between "have" and "has" and the modal verb "can", content that they already knew since it was seen in the previous classes. The activity was developed on Jamboard, an interactive and online app of the same

website where the classes were made. As the unit was about the world of the animals, in the activity the students had to identify an animal that they already knew according to the pictures that were provided for them, as well as, identify some characteristics about those animals. There were seven animals, and all of them were successfully guessed by the students.

6.2 Guessing Game

In this second activity, the intention was to guess an object, depending on the context of the different units, according to different clues and characteristics that were given to the students. For this, the content of the unit was used so that the students could continue to practice.

6.2.1 Mercedes Marín del Solar School

The second ludic activity was conducted the following week at the beginning of the class as well, the 18th in class time. The same unit was used and was held in a hybrid educational model through Google Classroom as well. This game was implemented in the fourth class of the same unit'. This time, the intervention was effectuated through an interactive website called Wordwall. Throughout this page, a set of clues were given in order to guess the object behind it. For example “it is a material, it has seven letters, you can find it in utensils, bags, bottles, etc.”, in this opportunity the answer was “plastic”. The same happened with six other exercises, where students had to follow the clues to finally get to the correct answer.

6.2.2. Dreyse Belser School

The second ludic activity was performed in the same course, third grade, and the same unit. This intervention was applied on November 16th, 2021 through the same platform of the first one, Google Meet. For this ludic activity, the same theme was used about animals, their habitats and characteristics. It was presented to the class through a PPT presentation. The class started with content, as usual, about the parts of the animals (such as; *claws, tail, paws, beak, wing, trunk, etc.*) and vocabulary about the name of the animals (*lion, cheetah, fish, whale, eagle, squirrel, spider, snake, etc.*). So this intervention was developed as a final activity, at the end of the class. Here the goal was to guess some animals according to the information provided to the students. The activity had a total of seven animals to guess, and all of the animals were correctly guessed by the students.

6.3 Speculation Game

This game was performed in the Dreyse Belser School only. Here the goal was to speculate about the different habitats that exist and that were seen in the classes, in order to locate different animal species in the correct habitats according to their characteristics and needs. For this, the students had to answer the question “where would you take these animals...?” (for example snake, elephant, rabbit, lion, eagle, fish).

6.3.1 Dreyse Belser School

The third ludic activity was performed on the same course as the previous one, third grade and the same unit. This intervention was applied on November 23rd, 2021 on the same platform, Google Meet. During the class, the content of the different habitats was revised again. For this intervention, the students had to analyze, speculate and choose which habitat would be more suitable for the different animals shown to them according to their characteristics and needs. The activity consisted of five animals to choose from.

RESULTS

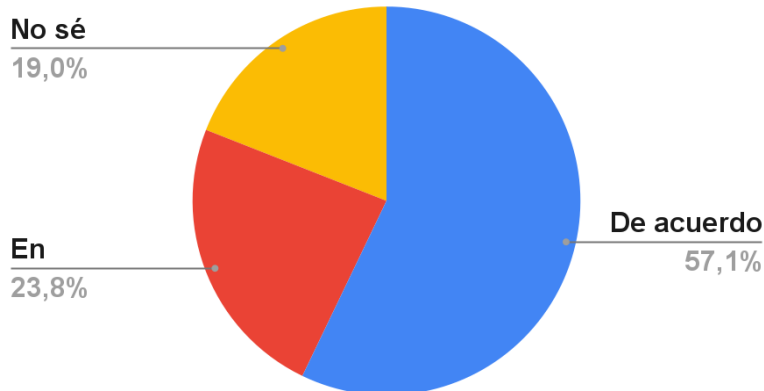
1. Survey results

The obtained results of the present study were collected through a survey that was implemented twice, the first one at the beginning of the interventions and the second one at the end of it. Now, it is necessary to analyze and compare the obtained results to understand the interventions made, and if it was successful or not.

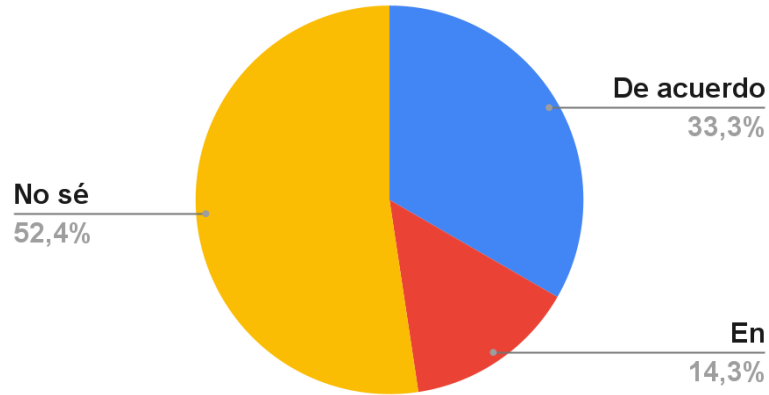
1.1 Mercedes Marín del Solar Survey

In the first survey, the students' answers showed that 57,1% of them felt attracted to the English classes and the 52,4% indicated that they do not feel the desire to participate in the class. Their answers also suggested that 61,9% of the students learn in the English classes and that the 38,1% have fun in the classes with the activities that the teacher does.

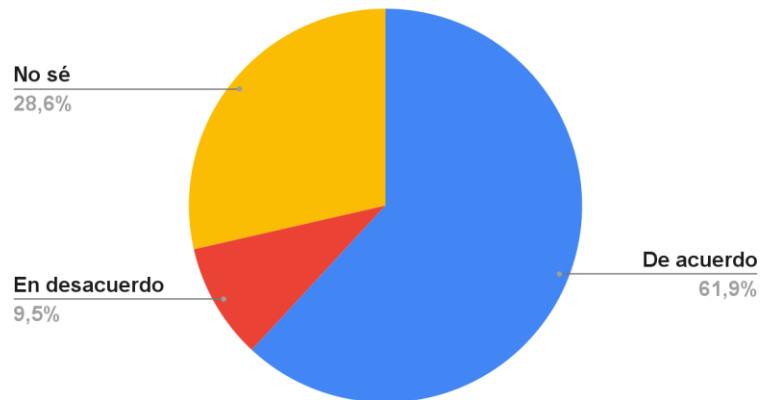
¿Me gusta la clase de inglés?



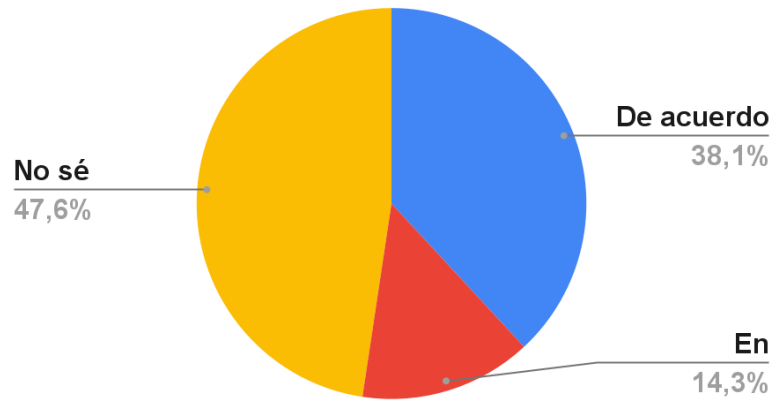
¿Me dan ganas de participar en las clases de



¿Aprendo en las clases de inglés?

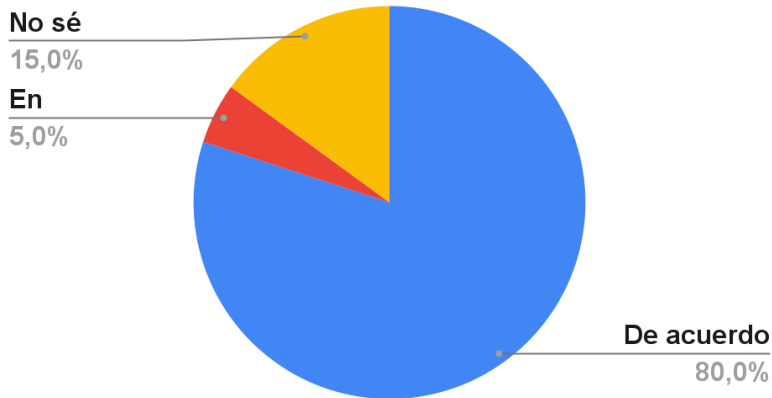


¿Me divierto en las clases de inglés?

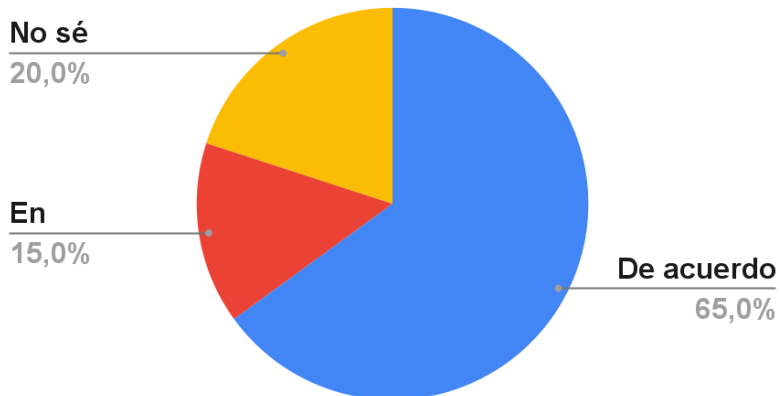


On the other hand, in the second survey, 80% of the students indicated they felt attracted to the English classes, meanwhile the 65% manifested that they liked to participate in the classes. Similarly, 75% of the students considered that they learn English during the classes and finally 70% have fun during the English classes.

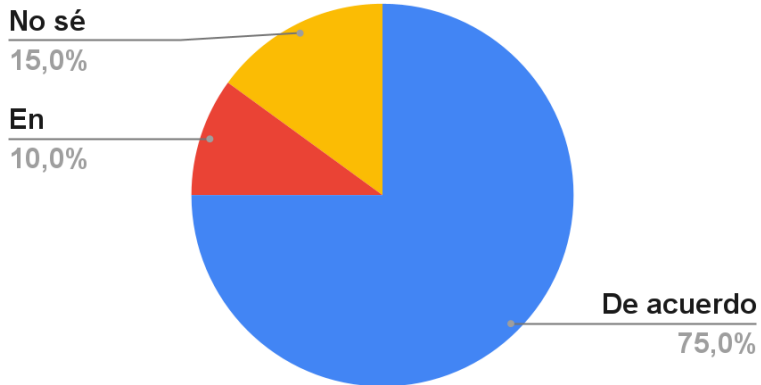
¿Me gusta la clase de inglés?



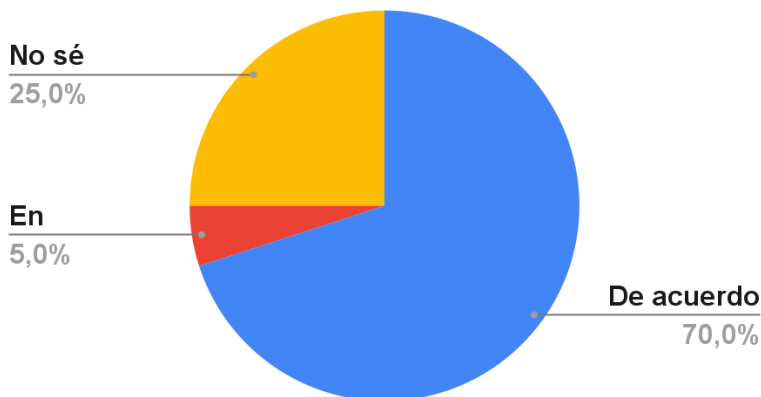
¿Me dan ganas de participar en las clases de



¿Aprendo en las clases de inglés?



¿Me divierto en las clases de inglés?

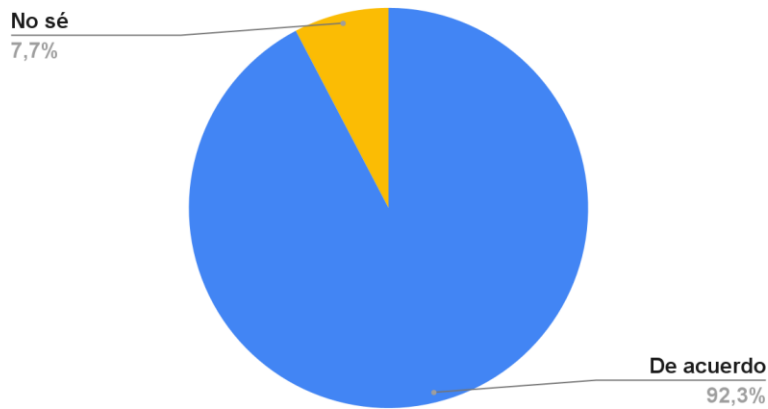


Additionally, during the second part of the survey, the students were asked about their opinion regarding the English class during the second semester of the year 2021, and the answers pointed out that they found the classes enjoyable and fun, and that they had fun during the classes although they often did not participate in them.

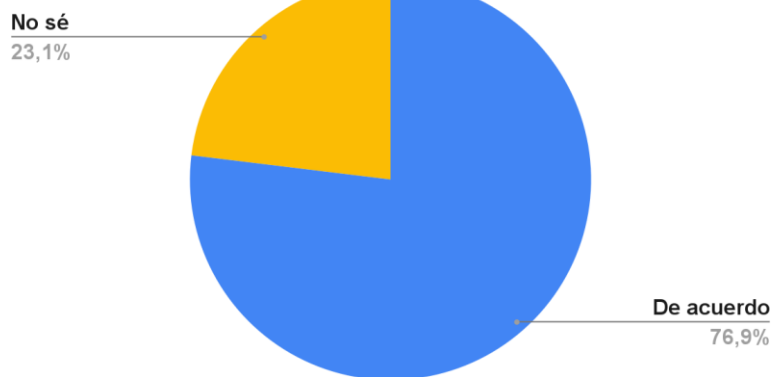
1.2 Dreyse Belser Survey

In the first survey, 92,3% of the students indicated that they liked the English class, whereas the 76,9% showed that they had fun and 76,9% learned during the classes. In addition, 61,5% of them indicated that they wanted to participate during the English classes.

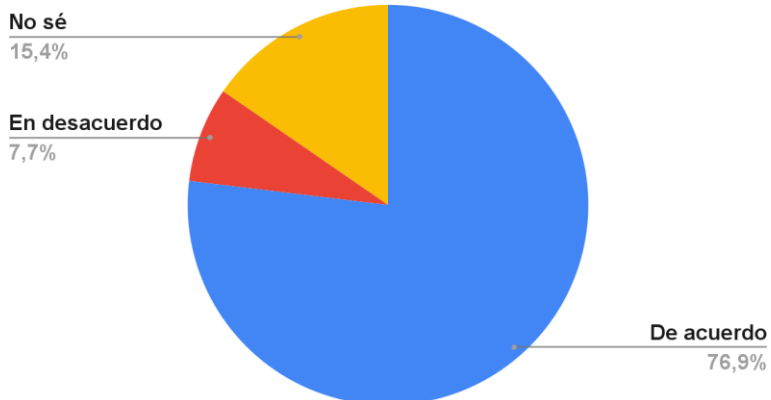
¿Me gusta la clase de inglés?



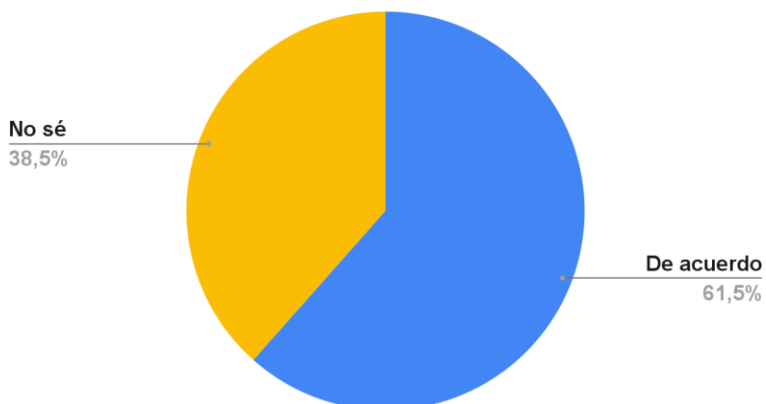
¿Me divierto en las clases de inglés?



¿Aprendo en las clases de inglés?

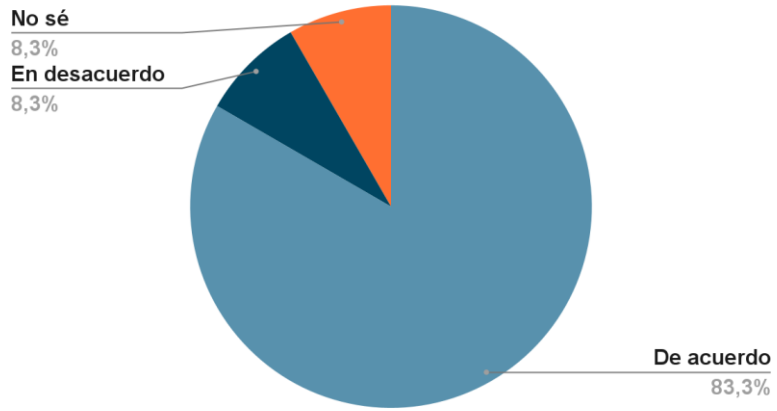


¿Me dan ganas de participar en las clases de inglés?

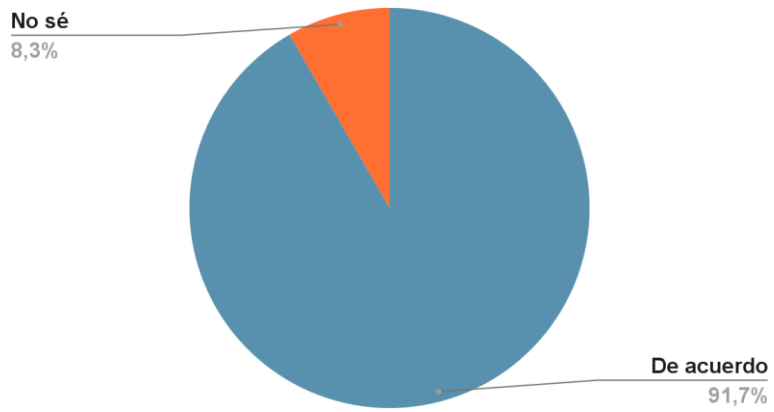


In the second survey, 83,3% of the students indicated that they liked the classes, 91,7% pointed out that they had fun and 62% of them liked to participate in class. Additionally, 83,3% of them evidenced that they learned and 75% of them wanted to participate during the English classes.

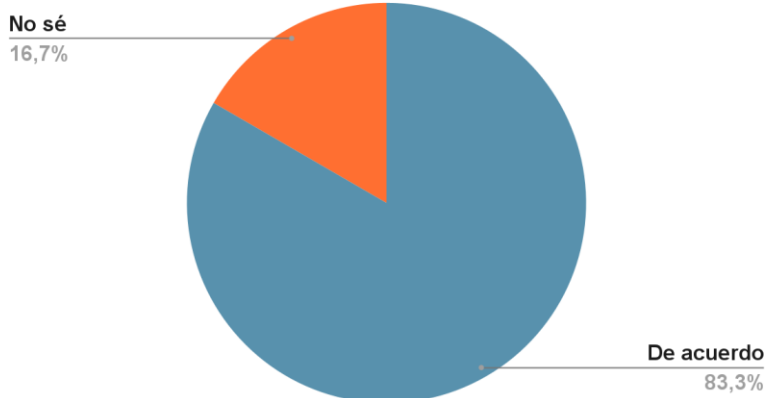
¿Me gusta la clase de inglés?



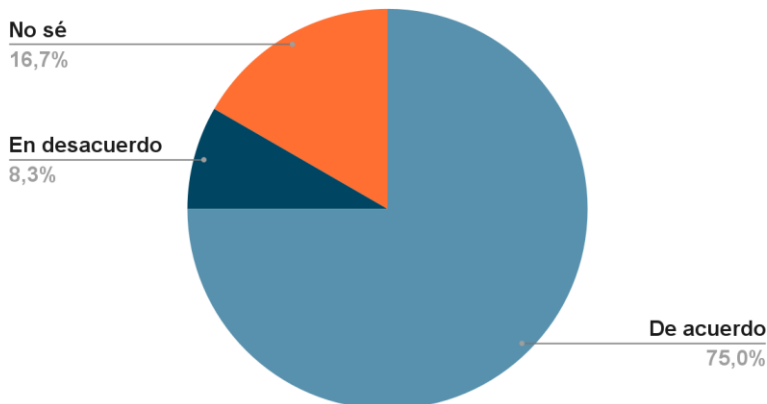
¿Me divierto en las clases de inglés?



¿Aprendo en las clases de inglés?



¿Me dan ganas de participar en las clases de inglés?



During the second part of the survey, students were asked to answer what they thought about the English classes during the second semester of the year 2021 and the answers demonstrated that the classes were fun and they liked the incorporation of games during the classes.

2. Observations

Before starting the classroom interventions, an observation guide was used to analyze how the speaking ability was developed during the classes and how students reacted to the activities and methodologies used by the teacher in charge. According to this observation guide, it was possible to determine the issues presented and work out a solution to such problems.

2.1 Checklist Dreyse Belser School

INDICATORS	HIGH	REGULAR	LOW / NOT OBSERVED
Speaking Activities			✓
Use of Didactic Material		✓	
Use of Ludic Activities			✓
Participation in Class			✓
Use of Techniques to motivate Students		✓	
Class Environment			✓

2.1.1 Speaking Activities

The English teacher of the third grade did not use proper speaking activities to develop the oral production since the classes were mainly focused on written production. This aspect was mentioned beforehand since it was the most important issue to take into consideration with both grades. As mentioned above, third graders had problems with the development of their speaking skills and the observation during pre-intervention classes demonstrated a low implementation of speaking activities during the English classes.

2.1.2 Use of Didactic Material

During the classes prior to the interventions, it was evident that the use of didactic material was not the most optimal either for the development of speaking skills or to increase the students' motivation. The material was not appropriate for the level of the students, which led them to have difficulties understanding the contents and completing the activities.

2.1.3 Use of Ludic Activities

The use of ludic activities during the English classes to develop the speaking skills was very low. This was a big problem because students had greater reach and understanding with multimedia and interactive material which included not only images but also sounds, videos and games.

2.1.4 Participation in Class

There was low student participation, not only in terms of asking questions but also in wanting to learn the contents that were presented in classes. Because of this, the English classes became monotonous and boring for the students and for the teacher.

2.1.5 Use of Techniques to motivate Students

The lack of techniques to motivate students had a serious impact on the classroom and in the classes since the teacher did not motivate his students enough. The teacher presented the contents without making a warm up before the activities.

2.1.6 Class Environment

Although the classroom was in optimal condition to teach the students, the class environment was most of the time boring without motivation or participation on the part of the students, which caused an increase of frustration on the part of the teacher and the students themselves.

2.2 Checklist Mercedes Marin del Solar School

INDICATORS	HIGH	REGULAR	LOW / NOT OBSERVED
Speaking Activities			✓

Use of Didactic Material			✓
Use of Ludic Activities			✓
Participation in Class		✓	
Use of Techniques to motivate Students		✓	
Class Environment		✓	

2.2.1 Speaking Activities

The teacher of the sixth grade did not design activities focused on speaking skills, the most similar that could be related to this were vocabulary repetition activities. As in the previous grade, this poses a problem because if students do not have the opportunity to use the language they will hardly be able to develop this skill.

2.2.2 Use of Didactic Material

The material designed by the teacher was not didactic at all. Everything was flat and did not catch students' attention as it was not colourful. Every class was the same, the activities did not have any type of didactic material. The lack of use of these damages students' performance as they are not

entertained. Students need to be exposed to this kind of content since they are more motivated and enthusiastic to learn another language.

2.2.3 Use of Ludic Activities

During the classes, there was no use of ludic activities. Activities presented did not have any sort of play either so that made them non interesting for students. This led to reduced participation in class time, because students were not motivated nor interested anymore.

2.2.4 Participation in Class

There was regular participation during classes, students used to participate only to answer direct questions. They rarely participated in class activities, and when they did, it was always the same three students.

2.2.5 Use of Techniques to motivate Students

The teacher used diverse techniques to try to motivate students, however all of them did not seem to be working. It was seen that there was not a correct implementation of techniques, since students were acting the same. It is crucial to remember that it is needed to apply the proper methods to teach students, satisfying their needs and preferences.

2.2.6 Class Environment

There was a regular environment in the classroom, nevertheless it was required to change that and turn it into a comfortable and friendly one. To

fulfil that it was essential to address students' needs and provide them quality class time by building a great setting. Employing activities that involve games is also a good way to keep a nice atmosphere.

3. Analysis

The results obtained from the survey indicated that the perception of the classes in the third and sixth grades showed an improvement in terms of participation in the English classes. It was noticed that these interventions enhanced not only the students' participation, but also their motivation to learn which allowed them to use their speaking skill, which was not the case before. During the observations, it was evident that the students relaxed considerably at the beginning of the interventions, since by using games, they participated and looked more confident while using the oral language.

The students' contribution previous to the interventions was low taking into account the number of students that participated during the classes over the traditional activities, but once the interventions started, they began to participate more actively, providing clear and complete answers and ideas to the class. Thanks to the ludic activities implemented through the classes, the students were eager to share their thoughts and questions, as well as experience a different kind of methodology and environment, in terms of the classroom.

DISCUSSION

1. Obtained results

The obtained results indicated that the investigation was successful concerning the specific objectives of the investigation. It was possible to analyze the way that the speaking ability was developed during the interventions, which mostly improved with the use of ludic strategies. The students were able to expand their vocabulary by speaking more frequently and also participate actively during the classes, which led us to the conclusion that this development was accomplished.

In order to improve the students' speaking skill, a number of ludic strategies were selected to achieve the proposed goal, which were: Pictionary, guessing and speculation games. The first one was selected due to the expected short answers to begin with the development of the productive skill, to move on to the second game which was chosen in view of the fact that it was more challenging to the students because a description was needed, so the production was longer than the previous one, and the last game was selected for the reason that it was more complex than the others, challenging the students to recall specific things that were mentioned related to the unit. Respecting the general objective, it is concluded that it was effectively fulfilled considering the obtained results after applying all of the chosen ludic

strategies in the classroom. Besides increasing students' participation, there was a clear improvement in the speaking ability. Participation got higher once the students felt motivated with the ludic activities that were presented. This could be perceived in the three interventions with all of them wanting to answer at the same time. The speaking skill strengthened due to the use of ludic activities that caught students' attention as the content was presented and practiced in a more dynamic way. Considering the contexts where the intervention was performed and the current worldwide situation, the use of the ludic strategies allowed students to acquire vocabulary in a prosperous way. Students showed more confidence and motivation to talk out loud expressing their thoughts and ideas that contributed to the class enormously. It was noticed that they felt fearless when participating in the activities as they also perceived their classmates with the same attitude, considering that in an atmosphere where students feel comfortable, there will always be favorable results as well. Furthermore, students' pronunciation and fluency also improved in view of the fact that they used the language continuously. The past instances were really helpful for these third and sixth grade students by virtue of their constant participation in classes where the ludic activities were the main focus.

2. Studies comparison

The comparison that can be mentioned from the perspective of the results obtained in this research and other similar investigations¹ showed the importance and relevance of using didactic materials within the classroom, according to Sarasti and Moran (2017) “the material should be focused and personalized according to students’ preferences in order to elicit their best effort in oral production” (p. 78). When the teacher applies ludic activities in classes, students feel that it facilitates the acquisition, not only of vocabulary, but also of the application of the oral skills. It is important to motivate students to speak in English, however, the more the teacher wants their students to speak the language, the less they get it and it is only because of the lack of these ludic elements. If teachers start implementing diverse and dynamic activities for their classes, the performance of the students will improve, and most importantly the speaking skills will be improved as well.

At the same time, the investigations agree that learners increase their confidence in speaking English during the implementation and development of ludic strategies. Students feel motivated by the games and playing activities because they promote a stress-free environment in class that encourages them

¹ Espinoza C. (2018). Arcos, E. & Guisamano, C. (2016). Yagual, S. & Figueroa, A. (2017).

to learn. Because of this, teachers should have a guide with ludic activities and strategies that help students with the acquisition of the language.

3. Problems during the investigation

Although the interventions were successful and it was possible to obtain the necessary results, there were things that hindered the investigation and might be useful to mention in order to obtain better results in future investigations in the field. One of the most important things was the time given by the school. As it was mentioned, in order to carry out the interventions, it was necessary to ask for the schools approval, which took more time than expected and it was not possible to complete the three interventions in one school. Another important thing was the time of the classes, which consisted of 45 minutes and ended up making the interventions very brief, not allowing the participation of all the students. Likewise, there were also problems with the hybrid classes regarding the quality of the camera for the online students to understand the activities properly, which was not an impediment to participate during the interventions but made it difficult for the ones that were not in the classroom. Having difficulty with the control of the students was also arduous work, the impossibility to maintain order in the classroom made confusing the answers provided by them when wanting to participate, which made the interventions difficult to effectuate.

4. Conclusion

The broad implication of the present research is that, it could be affirmed that ludic strategies play an important role in the development and improvement of speaking skills and participation of primary school students since as can be seen from the qualitative data analysis presented in the previous section, the interventions carried out in the selected grades were successful and evidenced a significant change in them. However, it should be highlighted that although we had these results, they may vary according to the different students that a teacher faces. The activities picked to be carried out in this research were chosen according to the context of the students, the modality of the classes and the level of English they had. What is relevant to keep in mind in this research, are the benefits that using ludic strategies can have in the learning process. Students feel more attracted to the content to be seen, as they find it easy and enjoyable to learn it by play. The contents are presented in a way that students increase their motivation, wanting to learn and participate more actively. Moreover, self-confidence is enhanced to a greater level as well. As all of the class seem to be extra encouraged, students find it easier to stick with them and to be a contributing member in the English class. Clearly, one of the major findings of this study was that the real contribution of ludic activities lies in the fact that these kinds of activities can keep students motivated and increase their interest in learning a language. For us, the results

obtained in this research convince us that it is up to the teacher, when working with young learners, to implement activities which can promote teaching and learning in a funnier and more pleasurable way, helping students to feel more at ease. Since both characteristics, fun and play, have an important role in early childhood as a part of children's cognitive and social development.

Consequently, it will be of great value to the student's learning process to take advantage of these instincts. As a personal opinion, using ludic activities becomes more important when teaching children who are starting their educational journey, especially if it is the first contact with the school environment. The students should play a more active role and their learning process, which is why one way to do that is through the use of materials and activities that engage and help students to assimilate the input that they received in the classes in a relaxed way. This topic of research helps us to improve our practices to provide better opportunities for our students, and the results of our study have contributed to our development as English teachers. Since we had the opportunity to be more proactive when planning lessons by organizing engaging activities and creating our own ludic resources to supplement the course. It is important to mention that this experience was also a learning process for us, because we have a more comprehensive understanding of what ludicity is and came to realize that some of our activities were not as ludic as they could have been. It is not only

implemented a song, or a story for our classes but is the way we set up the activity that makes it ludic. After doing the research and the analysis of this investigation, we are equipped with more tools that allow us to become a better teacher and to create more opportunities for our students. Ludic strategies can create a more relaxed environment and engage students in learning and having fun at the same time while learning English as a second language. The same happens with the speaking skills, since students are more eager and encouraged to speak without fear. The relevance of this study for other teachers is in providing a concise definition of lucidity together with the realization that a game, story, or song may not necessarily be ludic. It is the way we set up the activity that makes it ludic and the response we require from the students, as we already said above.

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ANNEX

1. Carta de consentimiento (Formulario de google)

<p>Estimados apoderados:</p> <p>Esperando se encuentren muy bien en sus hogares, hago envío del siguiente formulario de consentimiento para realizar un estudio de investigación sobre estrategias lúdicas (actividades sobre juegos para la clase de inglés: pictionary, adivina el objeto, ¿Qué escogerías...?) a cargo de la estudiante en práctica de la carrera Pedagogía en Inglés Alison Guzmán Gajardo (alisonguzman@colegiodreyse.com/aguzmang@miucsh.cl) y Tamara Bravo Castillo (tabravo@miucsh.cl/practica35@docente.edupro.cl) de la universidad Católica Silva Henríquez. A continuación tendrán que agregar el nombre de sus hijos/as junto al nombre del apoderado del pupilo, y tendrán que marcar la alternativa que escojan SI o No ante la autorización de este estudio.</p>
<p>Nombre del Apoderado del Estudiante:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Nombre del Estudiante:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>¿Autoriza que su hijo/a participe del estudio de investigación de la docente en práctica Alison Guzmán Gajardo/Tamara Bravo Castillo sobre "estrategias lúdicas para la clase de inglés"?</p> <p>_____ SI</p> <p>_____ NO</p>

2. Cuestionario de Percepción sobre las Clases de Inglés para Estudiantes de Tercero y Sexto Básico (Formulario de google y físico)

<p align="center">Cuestionario de Percepción sobre las Clases de Inglés para Estudiantes de Tercero y Sexto Básico</p>			
<p>La siguiente encuesta sirve como un instrumento para evaluar la motivación, y la percepción que los estudiantes de tercero básico del colegio Dreyse Belser y sexto básico del colegio Mercedes Marín del Solar tienen sobre las clases de inglés.</p>			
<p>Nombre del Estudiante:</p> <p>_____</p>			
<p>Curso y Colegio del Estudiante :</p> <p>____ Tercero Básico Colegio Dreyse Belser.</p> <p>____ Sexto Básico Colegio Mercedes del Marín del Solar.</p>			
	<p>(De acuerdo)</p> 	<p>(No lo sé)</p> 	<p>(En desacuerdo)</p> 
¿Me gusta la clase de inglés?			
<p>¿Cómo me siento en las clases de inglés?</p> <p>_____</p>			
¿Creo que el inglés es importante?			

¿Me divierto en las clases de inglés?			
¿Aprendo en las clases de inglés?			
¿Me gustaría que las clases de inglés tuvieran más actividades lúdicas (llámese a todas las actividades relacionadas con el juego)?			
¿Me gustaría seguir aprendiendo inglés?			
¿Me dan ganas de participar en las clases de inglés?			