

**Systematization of the implementation of communicative language strategies to strengthen the oral production of early-age students (“preparatorio”) from the bilingualism area at the Liceo Montessori Palmira of the school year 2021-2022**

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**2021-2022**

## **Acknowledgments**

I thank God for allowing me to achieve my objectives and goals in my professional career.

I thank my parents for their support and accompaniment at all times, which has been essential for the completion of my studies at the university.

To my tutor Mg. Héctor Fabio Bianchá Ramírez, who has guided me in my professional development as a teacher with his recommendations, guidelines, and teachings.

To my students of the “preparatorio” grade for allowing me to learn from them and to be able to develop what I applied in my educational practices.

To Dr. María Claudia Valencia Romero, for allowing me to do my teaching practices at Liceo Montessori Palmira.

## **Abstract**

This research article presents the results of a systematization of educational experiences at the Liceo Montessori of Palmira, for the 2021-2022 school year in which the participants are students of the “preparatorio” grade. Montessori prepares students to be highly competitive in the globalized work and business environment of the 21st century. Besides following these approaches, the school has a bilingual approach in which students are oriented to academic excellence, in a bilingual and multicultural environment, which favors the development of critical thinking as a superior skill. The main objective of this systematization is to collect the results of a school year full of proposals, strategies, and analyses of the activities presented to strengthen the oral production of early-age students from the area of Bilingualism in content subjects such as social studies. In addition, the following article will expose some of the most significant strategies that have given positive results in students from the listening part and the speaking part in the school year. Above all, the idea is to carry out an investigation that integrates results and strategies that are effective to enhance oral skills in children at an early age of the Liceo Montessori.

**Key words:** Systematization, English teaching, bilingualism, strengthening oral skills, meaningful strategies, primary education.

**Type of research:** Systematization of educational practices

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## **Phase 1**

### **1. Identification and delimitation of the systematization**

#### **1.1 Tempo-spatial delimitation of systematization and the educational practice**

My internship process began in September 2021, at the beginning of the 2021-2022 year at Liceo Montessori Bilingüe Palmira, as a social studies English teacher, and a member of the bilingualism department. Within my responsibilities, I am in charge of teaching the preschool courses: Nursery, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and “Preparatorio”. In elementary school, I teach in first grade, and in high school, I teach in eighth grade.

My systematization is focused on “preparatorio” grade, which goes before the elementary first grade, here the objectives are mostly focused on strengthening oral production. In order to systematize this process, I started from the beginning of the school year in September until the end of my degree project, which is approximately at the end of May. However, my teaching practice ends at the end of the school year in June. During this process, a record will be taken of all the important moments that occur during the practice, the context, activities and strategies will be analyzed, as well as the strengthening that each student will have in oral production in subjects that involve the English language and learning.

## **1.2 Description of the historical and sociocultural context**

It is important to highlight that the systematization process is framed in Palmira, a municipality in the department of Valle del Cauca in Colombia; located in the department's southern region. It is known as La Villa de las Palmas. It is located on the eastern bank of the Cauca River, is part of the Metropolitan Area of Cali, and is also the center of large sugar mills, constituting one of the most important commercial, industrial, and agricultural centers of Valle del Cauca.

The Liceo Montessori Bilingue Nacional is a private educational institution founded in October 1960 by Rosalba Ortiz de Valencia and Lucía Romero de Valencia. The founders took as a reference the fundamental principles of Dr. María Montessori, which are based on knowledge of child psychology and aimed at strengthening children's self-esteem.

The school began its academic process more than 60 years ago with preschool education, then with the basic primary education until 1994, when the implementation of bilingualism began and the opening of high school education, which allowed numerous promotions of high school graduates who stand out for their academic and comprehensive excellence, with values and commitment to their community.

Currently, it is a mixed and bilingual school that serves a population made up of 457 students from socioeconomic strata 4 and 5. It is distributed in five levels of preschool education, five levels of basic primary education, four of high school education, and two of academic average, aged between 2 and 18 years old. The school is located north of the city in Las Mercedes urbanization, it occupies an area of 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> and has facilities focused on education guided by ICT, it has a systems area, classrooms with computers, video beams, computers for teachers and students, and also has green areas for activities and recreation.

At the Montessori, the Institutional Educational project seeks an education where learning and managing English as a foreign language and Mandarin as a third language prepares students to be highly competitive in the globalized world and the business environment of the century XXI. Currently, the Liceo Montessori is the number 1 bilingual school in Palmira according to the results of the "Saber ICFES" test of the year 2020, with a very high level in the English area.

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused changes at a global level economically, culturally, socially, and in the education field. It has transformed the face-to-face classrooms of the schools into computers to have several meetings every day with the teachers and with each subject. Until last year, education at the Liceo Montessori Bilingüe Palmira was carried out alternately, some days the students would go to school in person and the others would see their classes through digital platforms and Google Classroom. Despite living in times where technology is the best ally of the human being, this transition from face-to-face to virtual teaching had great changes in the teaching-learning processes, due to several factors.



### **1.3 Key actors in the systematization**

The actors that were part of the systematization process are:

The teachers who are part of the bilingualism department, the principal and directors, the parents, and the students. In the first instance, the teachers of the bilingualism department emphasize the teaching and learning processes provided during the 2021-2022 school year in the area of bilingualism with subjects such as English as a second language, social studies, and natural sciences, religion, and mathematics, among others. In addition, an immersion program has been implemented in which students are in constant contact with the second language that includes international events, celebrations for typical days that are celebrated worldwide, and everyday elements such as commands, greetings, farewells, permits, and exits to the bathroom, names of each classroom, bathrooms, and others.

The principal and directives have the remaining challenge of educating young people as integral beings who will be highly competitive in the labor, cultural and social spheres. In the same way, emphasis is placed on preparing for the ICFES tests from an early age. The directives have provided all their support and resources, availability of time for advice, and support from external entities to enhance the English language learning to be effective and satisfactory.

Parents are an important factor in the development and construction of the student's identity and personality, they are the pillar to provide support at home, and continue motivating students to continue studying hard to achieve all their goals. Finally, the students are the fundamental piece, all this work, all the tools, resources, and activities that are carried out are aimed at learning the second language. As a bilingual school, the commitment is to have an advanced level of English at the end of their studies. As for the main actors involved in the systematization, are the students of the “preparatorio” grade. Each of the groups is divided, “preparatorio” has two grades, and there are 34 students. In their academic process, they can produce short answers, and they are very motivated and willing to learn. However, they have many difficulties in asking their questions and that makes them repeat a lot in their mother tongue (Spanish). In terms of comprehensive development, they are very affectionate, attentive, kind, and respectful children, who seek to understand the topics taught and carried out the activities effectively.

### **Description of the educational practice**

The beginning of the teaching practice at the Liceo Montessori generated many challenges to be achieved. The English area has been one of the areas that has been characterized by standing out in the institution, due to its great academic merits at the departmental and national levels. It is important to highlight that the English language has allowed its teaching to be restructured and everyday new innovative, modern and effective learning strategies are generated that depends on various factors such as the context, motivation and teaching methods of each teacher.

The first month was vital for the characterization of the environment and the school context, thus allowing to recognize the degree in which I would develop my degree work. For this, there was a time of adaptation, of knowing the needs of the students according to the guidelines and content that is planned in the areas that I teach. On the other hand, the elements that represent the student context, the resources available for the development of various didactic strategies, considering that English is an area that requires many didactic and pedagogical actions for the learning process.

Month after month, the classes and learning moments provided the opportunity to analyze the skills, deficiencies, expectations, desires and motivations of the children to learn English, from their different abilities. Through the teaching experience at the school, it is important to emphasize that the students of the “preparatorio” grade, which is the group chosen to carry out the degree project, began the school year with great desires and expectations to learn English, showing interest, listening attentively to the teacher's instructions, asking when they have doubts, and always trying to learn new vocabulary. However, the students were not able to reproduce these thoughts, doubts and comments in English, despite their writing level being good and their listening level as well.

It is vital that oral skills are strengthened since it is beneficial for people's cognitive development, and improves flexibility, memory, and brain ability. In addition, it is important to encourage the development of communication from a second language to early learners, as an experience and stimulation that will help children to their cognitive development. Moreover, this will prepare students in their continuity of learning a second language from a bilingual school. On the other hand, I have noticed that when I speak to

students in English, they get the idea and understand what I want them to do. However, they repeat what I ask them to do in Spanish so they finally confirm what I want them to do.

Considering the aforementioned, one of the main motivations of this degree project begins at the moment of detecting opportunities to enrich and improve the process of oral production of “preparatorio” grade students through communicative language strategies. It is an interesting proposal for observation, execution and to be able to collect the processes that are carried out with the students during a certain time during the teaching practice, since the young people have an immense motivation and interest in learning the English language, which favors the development of the learning and promotes the ease of having more innovative and creative proposals when implementing learning strategies focused on oral production skills.

## **Problem statement**

According to the results of the EF English Proficiency Index Indicator (EF EPI) carried out in 2020, which analyzes the data of 2.3 million non-native English speakers in 100 countries and regions, which is carried out by the educational firm EF (Education First), Colombia is ranked 77 among the 100 countries measured in the ranking and is one of the worst performing countries in Latin America. In addition, it also shows a decline compared to last year's measurement, when the country was in 68th place. Given these results, in 2015 the Ministry of National Education (MEN) decided to replace this implemented program that was planned from 2004 to 2019, by the “National English Program - Colombia Very Well”, which aims to strengthen bilingualism processes in Colombia with observable results by 2025. Due to the results and changes, it is allowed to question the effectiveness of the methodologies and strategies that are being used for the development of the program.

First of all, in order to acquire an L2, it is necessary to have enough exposure to it. As Lightbown & Spada (1999) suggest as a result of extensive research, “one or two hours a week - even for seven or eight years - will not produce very advanced second language speakers. Indeed, in addition to being necessary to promote language acquisition from an early age, it is very important that students are in constant interaction and exposure of the language, so bilingualism is an area that fully provides the necessary elements to motivate students to acquire the language.

However, contextualizing in Palmira, Valle del Cauca, the Liceo Montessori has a pedagogical proposal where the learning and English management as a foreign language prepare students to be highly competitive in the globalized work and business environment of the XXI century. Currently, it is the number 1 bilingual school in Palmira according to the results of the "Saber ICFES" tests of the year 2020, with a much higher level in the area of English as a foreign language. Through my current experience at the Montessori High School (doing my professional teaching practice), I have been able to conclude that early-age students, specifically “preparatorio” students show immense interest and motivation in learning to communicate in a second language. Indeed, students always listen carefully to the teachers' instructions, ask when they have doubts and constantly ask teachers to use

English language only to communicate in class. I think it is vital and necessary that oral skills are strengthened since it is beneficial for people's cognitive development, improves flexibility, memory and brain ability. In addition, it is important to encourage the development of communication from a second language to early learners, as an experience and stimulation that will help children to their cognitive development. Moreover, this will prepare students in their continuity of learning a second language from a bilingual school. On the other hand, I have noticed that when I speak to students in English, they get the idea and understand what I want them to do. However, they repeat what I ask them to do in Spanish so they finally confirm what I want them to do.

All in all, the main question for my research is: How to enhance the oral skills of students at an early age of the “preparatorio” grade through classes using communicative language strategies?

**Systematization Question**

How to enhance the oral skills of students at an early age of the “preparatorio” grade through the use of communicative language strategies?

## **Justification**

As a current teacher of the bilingualism department, I am interested in investigating specific factors, moments, activities and those strategies that are significant and how and what to do to guide these students in an always lasting bilingual approach that prepares them for their lives. I would like to focus on the oral production skills, so I will seek through the systematization the different ways to strengthen and enhance oral skills in classes that are part of English classes, such as social studies and religion, in early age students. I am interested in working on oral skills because they are students who show an immense interest in understanding words, ideas, and actions in a second language. In fact, in addition to showing interest, they are highly motivated and as a teacher, in the bilingualism department, it is vital for me to strengthen their oral skills because although the vast majority understand when I explain the topics, they still have difficulties when it comes to producing the ideas or ask questions about anything.

My main motivation comes from the impact I had when I was a primary school student, and I did not have the opportunity to learn from a bilingual school. For my future learners, the opportunity to face the particularities of learning from areas covered by bilingualism allows them to be more competent, competitive and prepared for their professional life. In addition, I firmly believe that applying systematization is the appropriate way to understand what is happening in the educational field while developing and improving the working strategies. It will also engage students as they continue to learn about the different activities implemented in class. As a beginner teacher and becoming aware of which strategies are the most effective, I will be able to reflect during the process on the methodologies that will strengthen my teaching development. Finally, this will enhance the cognitive capacity of the students and promote an enhancement in the second language learning process, in addition to that step by step they will be appropriating and getting to know the importance of understanding another language.

The opportunity to analyze oral communicative strategies and their effectiveness allows teachers to discover ways to reinforce and improve students' oral skills, thus enhancing the fluency of children's communicative competencies.

The “preparatorio” grade is a class with approximately 20 students per group and has been selected to implement the process of construction and reconstruction of the most important and remarkable moments of the educational process because this grade presents very positive aspects regarding the continuous desire to learn the English language. In fact, the motivation of the children in this grade allows the strategies used to work in class to work in most cases wonderfully, because every time a different strategy is presented, the children are enthusiastic and participate actively knowing that they are interacting and learning in a guided and active way.



**Objective**

To analyze the use of communicative language strategies to enhance “preparatorio” students’ oral skills.

**Systematization Axes**

**Axe no.1.** Meaning-focused Listening for strengthening the oral production.

**Sub.Axe:** Effectiveness of the activities for Meaning-focused Listening for strengthening the oral production.

**Axe.no.2.** Learning through Task-focused Interaction.

**Sub.Axe:** What are some of the activities used with Learning through Task-focused Interaction methodology that enhance oral skills?

**Axe.no.3.** Language-focused Learning.

**Sub.Axe:** How can language-focused learning improve the oral skills?

## **Methodological Design**

### **1. Identify the context in which the teaching practice takes place, knowing the essential elements that distinguish the school, social and economic environment**

The first step for the realization of an educational systematization is to recognize the environment in which the educational practice is being carried out, in order to determine the cultural, social, economic aspects and other components that directly influence the characteristics of the actors that will be evaluated. Indeed, it is also necessary to define the participants that characterize the systematization process, in order to bear in mind their main needs and to know their behaviors in relation to the academic areas that will be taught during the 2021-2022 school year. Finally, it is vital to know the context of the school, the educational proposal, the mission, vision and institutional values that are promoted in order to recognize which are the academic and disciplinary processes that are forming the students.

For this phase, it was necessary to ask a set of questions to other co-workers and to the secretary about the socio-economic status of the families requesting a spot for their children in the institution. In addition, by asking the students about the neighborhoods where they live, it is possible to analyze that they are children who live in high social strata neighborhoods in Palmira or Cali.

From the beginning, I decided that the specific group to work with would be the "preparatorio" grade. This course begins in elementary education, it is before the first grade and the reason for selecting this group for the systematization was because of the immense interest that was reflected on their part to improve, learn and strengthen the area of oral competencies. This phase took about two weeks, at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year in September.

## **2. Identification of the problem to be addressed**

The second step begins at the moment of entering the classroom or at any time during the school day, in which we seek to identify the problem to be addressed, which in this case, after analyzing the previous elements and the characteristics that define the students of the “preparatorio” grade, in this systematization, the problem covers mainly the strengthening of the oral production of students in “preparatorio”, young students who face the challenges of a bilingual school, where half of the subjects are studied in English.

This phase took place in September when the diagnoses were made. The method of analysis to identify the problem was the diagnosis that covered the topics seen in the previous grade. In fact, these diagnoses had a written component, and when they were reviewed and socialized, it became clear that the students were anxious about wanting to express themselves in English and not being able to do so, so they resorted to Spanish.

However, even though the students did not have the ability to express their thoughts and opinions in English, they were enthusiastic and eager to learn to do so.

## **3. Define the systematization axes consisting mainly of evaluating and collecting information based on the different main communication strategies**

The third vital step is to define the systematization axes to start working under those principles and guidelines. Having the axes, it is possible to have a common point of reference from which to frame the research, the reconstruction process, the critical guidelines to be treated in the work, and the ordering of the essential components of the same. For this process, different texts that presented valuable communication strategies were studied and the axes under which they would be worked were selected. This took place between September and October. The teacher in charge of this step was in charge of the systematization process.

These would be the axes for the systematization.

**Axe no.1.** Meaning-focused Listening for strengthening the oral production.

**Sub.Axe:** Effectiveness of the activities for Meaning-focused Listening for strengthening the oral production.

**Axe.no.2.** Learning through Task-focused Interaction.

**Sub.Axe:** What are some of the activities used with Learning through Task-focused Interaction methodology that enhance oral skills?

**Axe.no.3.** Language-focused Learning.

**Sub.Axe:** How can language-focused learning improve oral skills?

Now, to be able to reconstruct the time in which the systematization was carried out, it is necessary to measure how the activities and communication strategies will be evaluated. The important question is, how will I realize if they work adequately or not? For this, the attitude, and disposition will be important factors and through the critical analysis of the teacher, the student's behaviors, and how they respond to the different communicative strategies of the language, will help determine if the strategies carried out work favorably in the "Preparatorio" grade or not.

In order to identify the usefulness of each of the communicative strategies of language, it was necessary to make a continuous record in the classes, for which it was necessary to use some collection tools that allowed to save the experiences. First, through daily observation, it was possible to note the usefulness of each of the strategies that would be implemented on a daily basis. Second, a daily record that would be made during and after each class was very important because this allowed not only to keep the memory of each of the experiences, but also to take into account which of these strategies would need to be modified or could not be used again, because they did not allow valid learning for the objectives of the classes. This daily record would be kept by means of a written document in Word.

#### **4. Reconstruction of the lived process from a critical and descriptive way**

The fourth step is to register a reconstruction of the lived process from a critical and descriptive point of view, mentioning the most important events in a chronological way. At this point, the information will be classified by actions, results, and then an analysis of the whole process will be made. For this, the actions will be highlighted and the process of each month of the school year will be reconstructed up to a certain month to have bases and evidence of the whole process, with the objective of determining which have been the

important moments that have marked the process of teaching practice with the children of the “preparatorio” grade. This process will take place from September until March.

After this process, a feedback and an analysis were made taking into account the activities, oral strategies, and the components that strengthened the oral production of the students, in order to present conclusions that demonstrate the process that has been carried out with the “preparatorio” students during the school year, and thus, deliver a product that allows analyzing the needs, behaviors, and learning of the children regarding oral production and its improvement.

## **5. Conclusions and experiences of the most important learning and moments**

From the month of March, after having recorded the key moments of the process of improvement of oral production in students, an analysis will be made to determine the communicative strategies that caused more effect and more impact on students, also, which did not have a greater impact, explaining the way in which these were carried out, taking into account the context of the institution, taking into account the attitude of students, resources and of course, if the topics seen at that time favored the management of such communicative strategies of language.

In addition, this will allow us to consider whether the implementation of these strategies is possible in other grades, at other times or school years, and whether they should be implemented in other types of contexts. This will be the final stage and will be carried out during the data collection process and will be finalized once all the communicative strategies have been implemented by the month of March.

## State of Art

After finishing documentary research related to the most relevant aspects of bilingualism, I found out two important elements: First, at the national and international level, there is a lot of useful information to reflect about the context of my research and second, with this information I will be able to guide myself with data or aspects that are significant in order to find out some of the most effective strategies implemented in bilingualism classes. Being said this, I will mention some of the most relevant research articles that I found and from my point of view, the most useful that refer to the development of bilingualism, while being framed in different contexts, which allow me to differentiate certain key elements in my teaching strategies.

Andrés Mauricio Sánchez, presented a study in 2013, called “Bilingüismo en Colombia” in which he analyzes bilingualism in the educational field. Indeed, He uses the Common European Framework as a reference to reach the conclusion of the very low levels that Colombia shows in the English language development. This was measured by different international exams that looked for different language skills. The document is very useful because Sánchez presents important elements such as the performance levels of students who took the ICFES tests, which demonstrate poor performance, the level of English of Colombian teachers, the offer to hire teachers, the contrast of Colombia with other Latin American countries, that reflect the little fulfillment of the goals to be achieved by the MEN's bilingualism project in Colombia. In addition, the article explains that in order to increase the levels of English the program is required to have a greater impact and reach, and although it has gathered important efforts, the advances in the subject of bilingualism are quite limited, reflecting the low performance of the students in the English test.

On the other hand, the authors Yeimmy Gisela Trujillo Escobar,, Yuly Carolina Galindo Gamba, Yulied Carolina Caicedo González & Pablo Andrés Chaparro Chacón, presented a supremely interesting implementation in 2010. Their work named: “Implementación de una propuesta de bilingüismo para el colegio Guimarc en su proceso de institución monolingüe a bilingüe” aimed to promote the development of the English foreign language in a monolingual context that was in the process of adapting to bilingualism. This work seems fundamental to my research, since the method and processes that these authors used for

their development of the proposal includes observation stages of the context, where they found many shortcomings and realizing there was no proper process for students to begin appropriating English (foreign language) and not covering the needs of the students to learning a foreign language. In addition to that, the proposal they carried out was with first grade students, which is one of my main research groups. After reading and reviewed the authors' proposals, I can affirm that their implementation in the educational institution was successful, since the commitment they had with the educational community, the strategies implemented and the hourly intensity that they adapted to their proposal, allowed them to gather successful results, with important strategies such as posters with basic vocabulary, double signage, implementation of booklets.

Claudia Lucía Ordóñez in 2011, published her article called “Education for Bilingualism: Connecting Spanish and English from the Curriculum, into the Classroom, and beyond “. This article is captivating for my research since it presents a qualitative vision of the curriculum impact that connects learning moments in Spanish and English in authentic communicative performances in a private school in a Colombian city. One of the aspects that call my attention the most is that the analysis made by the author not only integrates the voice of the student, but also includes the experiences of the teacher, where there are positive changes in the learning environments of the institution.

Among these learnings, the communication skills of students and their ways of learning, the ways in which teachers adapted their strategies to complement new learning. Finally, I selected this topic because the author presents a very interesting contrast that may or may not be reflected in my work that talks about a change in bilingualism education in Colombia, and begins to work with the concept of education for bilingualism, as opposed to that of bilingual education that we use in Colombia, whose practices she finds inappropriate for our context, which is mostly monolingual, like classes where the teacher is the only main author of the learning process and classes that are not contextualized, downplaying the importance of learning.

Despite having some articles that mostly frame the educational components related to my personal interest that are the most effective strategies for classes implemented in a potentially bilingual context, I have not gotten enough information about the social,

political and cultural aspects that implies adapting bilingualism to a country. While we know, Europe currently has thousands of bilingual education programs in major languages and they are becoming more and more popular in France. However, the bilingualism of migrant children continues to be overlooked and many believe that it delays the acquisition of French. In the same sense, there are various aspects about the linguistic hierarchy and language policies for primary schools, while trying to develop the foreign language learning from early childhood. That is why in 2002, Christine Helot and Andrea Young published an article that allows me to reflect on how languages of unequal status can be placed in a under equal conditions in a school context, how can children be educated, the cultural variety and the teachers awareness of the linguistic and cultural richness. Indeed, it is important to highlight not only the pedagogical aspects but also the influences that the development and learning of these foreign languages have in these contexts and that of each of the foreign languages. The article is named “Bilingualism and Language Education in French Primary Schools: Why and How Should Migrant Languages be Valued?” It is important to note that several main thematic axes emerge from this article: languages and cultures, tolerance and the fight against racism and expanding teachers' knowledge and understanding of multilingual and multicultural issues.

In another research, Enlli Môn Thomas, Dafydd Apolloni and Nia Mererid Parryin published in 2018, a top-quality booklet called “Bilingual Teaching Methods”. I decided to take a booklet as an investigative reference due to its graphic utility and the elements that it has. The main purpose of this guide is to provide a brief overview of international literature related to teaching and pedagogical methods in the context of bilingual education educational and bilingual classrooms, relating the practices to the educational context in Wales.

Some of the most interesting aspects about this document is its content, since within its main elements are: Main bilingual learning / teaching models, Methods of interaction, Language correction: Targeting the appropriate use of Welsh. Discourse strategies. Teacher input - child output: ensuring opportunities to create extended language, Translanguaging Native speaker models, Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Task-based Learning. I had the opportunity to learn some of these methods in college and I find them



great for developing and implementing strategies in my own classes. All in all, this document will be supremely effective in my search for pedagogical tools.

Furthermore, many members of the school staff pursue the goal of developing the English language and literacy of English Language Learners skills efficiently and this is often implemented to the exclusion of supporting, developing and maintaining student skills inheritance language skills. However, there is significant evidence that the promotion of bilingualism and biliteracy may be possible contributing significantly to the effect that many school staff members desire, that students can function and thrive in multilingual settings. Debra A. Giambo and Tunde Szecsi in 2015, made a publication called:

“Promoting and Maintaining Bilingualism and Biliteracy: Cognitive and Biliteracy Benefits & Strategies for Monolingual Teachers”. In this article, the authors present research-based evidence in support of the development and maintenance of bilingualism and biliteracy, and that empirical research support for the benefits of bilingualism and bilingual literacy should change language and literacy instruction, especially teachers who do not speak their students' inherited language, are provided and can be implemented to promote bilingual reading, writing, and language skills development.

I decided to choose this article because although all the articles that I have implemented speak about the most effective strategies, about the socio-cultural context of bilingualism, I feel that it is necessary to emphasize a little in the benefits that being part of an educational community where bilingualism is promoted. At its finest. In this research article, we talk about the development of the foreign language in certain skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing.

## **Referential framework**

This section is designed to collect the concepts and theoretical definitions of the elements that will be covered during my research. Furthermore, the purpose is to develop the essential theories and studies of the context in which my research is taking place. Since this is a bilingual school, it is necessary to investigate the foundations of bilingualism, how it works at a global and national level. In addition, it is important to know about the pedagogy, methodologies and strategies used during the research in the school year.

### **1. Bilingualism**

A classical definition of bilingualism is defined as "the native control of two or more languages" (Bloomfield, 1933). This perspective seems to be maximalist ("based on the message that relates to comparing native people with people that has learned the language itself") (Behrens, 2009). On the other hand, there is a minimalist definition, as in Diebold's (1964) concept of incipient bilingualism. This term allows people with minimal competence in a second language to be included in the bilingual category. In addition to these two different conceptions, there are more categories that help define the way bilingualism is structured in our daily lives. Colin Baker, in his book *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (2006) exposes the different bilingualism definitions and distinctions, the languages in society while the bilingualism is developed. He also explains the importance of the second language acquisition and learning for cognitive processes. In addition to that, he introduces bilingual education, the effectiveness of teaching with a bilingual and biliteracy approach, and also the issues, assessment and needs. The previously mentioned concepts are very useful for my research. Indeed, his text studies bilingualism from various stages and dimensions that explore the main components of learning such as writing, reading, listening and speaking and how different social processes are managed that go hand in hand with the fight against racism and inequalities.

A concept that is directly related to bilingualism is immersion. Immersion in bilingual education is an approach to foreign language instruction in which the usual curricular activities are conducted in foreign language. This means that the new language is the medium of instruction as well as the object of instruction. Immersion students acquire the necessary language skills to understand and communicate about the subject matter set out

in the school's program of instruction. They follow the same curricula, and in some instances, use the same materials (translated into the target language) as those used in the non-immersion schools of their district (Snow, 1986) According to the previous definition, I am almost sure that the application of immersion is evident in the Liceo Montessori Palmira, since through the different courses English is the medium used for teaching the academic content. Among the subjects are math, social studies, religion, science, and others. Therefore, this concept is very useful for my research, since I will be able to analyze how it is applied and executed from different contexts.

### **1.1 Bilingualism across the world**

Cummins (1980, 1981) and Grosjean (1985) have shown that negative perceptions of bilingualism come from having a monolingual view of what it is to function in two or more languages. For example, most teachers still believe that speaking a ML at home delays the acquisition of French (and consequently integration into French society). They are not aware of the research on cognitive theories of bilingualism and the curriculum which has demonstrated the importance of maintaining the home language for the development of the school language (Cummins, 1976, 1978; Touko maa & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977). The negative perception of speaking the mother tongue at home is a vision that occurs in many bilingual schools. Indeed, many people and teachers consider that speaking the mother tongue is delaying the process of learning the second language, which makes its result less noticeable. It is interesting to make this type of contrasts with other countries such as France, since they are countries that are not monolingual. On the other hand, in Colombia, a country that is monolingual tries to adjust different English language development plans to train people in today's globalized world, where the English language is necessary for greater communication and easy access to contacts from different parts of the world. , taking into account that English is the universal language.

Hence teachers are not aware that languages are in contact not only in society at large, but in the classroom, as well as within individual bilingual or trilingual children, and that as stated by Cummins (2000, p. 34): Students' identities are affirmed and academic achievement promoted when teachers express respect for the language and cultural knowledge that the children bring to the classroom and when the instruction is focused on

helping students generate new knowledge, create literature and art and act on social realities that affect their lives. They do not realize either that ignoring the home language and culture of a child at school also has consequences on her affective development and consequently on her ability to learn. If learning is interpreting and understanding the world around us, including clues from cultural input (Donaldson, 1978). In the case of Colombia, we generally do not encounter this type of culture shock. At the Liceo Montessori, there have been some cases in which there are students from other countries. However, as teachers in the bilingualism department, aware of how important it is to promote culture, there is not the same difficulty that has been seen in the case of French schools. Although it is not one hundred percent the same case, the case of France helps us to understand the importance of respecting different cultures, ways of learning and learning from them and not just avoiding them.

Christine Helot and Andrea Young, in 2002 presents *Bilingualism and Language Education in French Primary Schools: Why and How Should Migrant Languages be Valued?* The text presented is important because it provides information that can be compared with the Colombian context. In addition, it presents a look that talks about the importance of language awareness. Through my teaching pedagogical practice, I have realized that many times students do not know the importance of learning the second language, and through the academic content, the learning of it is being strengthened so that young learners at the end of their academic stages are trained to be integral people with a globalized thinking.

Teachers in immersion schools act as both content teachers and language teachers and they attempt to create naturalistic conditions similar to those in which L1 learning takes place. (Ó Duibhir, 2018, p. 55) The Liceo Montessori has a variety of events that are organized and carried out by the department of bilingualism. These events help in the process of the students of awareness of another culture, another language and different traditions. Indeed, transformations are not only carried out from the academic side, but also from the social and cultural panorama.

Enlli Môn Thomas has written a booklet called “Bilingual Teaching Methods” in 2018, and it contains vital information for the conduct of my research and, in fact, includes different reflections, methods and aspects that speak about the interaction between student and

teacher, trans-linguaging, Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and Task-based learning. It seems important to me to evaluate bilingualism from the perspective of other countries, since different comparisons, contrasts, similarities can be made and thus it is possible to take some of the premises, conclusions and even strategies to be applied in bilingualism classes with my students.

## **1.2 Bilingualism in Colombia**

Everyone can learn one or several languages; and second, the success of this learning depends on the real need or wish to use the new language(s) in authentic communication (Snow, 2007) This is why the main problem we face in Colombia (when teaching foreign languages like English that we accept as necessary in today's life) is that our socio-linguistic context is mostly monolingual in Spanish. This means that we do not need to use English to function in society, which makes it especially difficult for us to motivate our children to learn it. (Ordoñez, 2011) Indeed, being a country where only Spanish is spoken, students do not see the need to learn English and that explains one of the reasons why Colombia is one of the countries with the worst levels of English according to the evaluations made by EF (Education First). To start my research, it is important to know the motivations of students to learn English, because the more motivation a person has to learn something, the greater the effectiveness of their learning. Therefore, I consider it a necessity to promote and emphasize the need to learn English, for all the benefits worldwide that it brings with it in the social, cultural and working aspects.

In our limited experience in international languages and with school bilingualism, we see that the institutions perceived as most successful are the schools we call bilingual. These are mostly elite private schools located in our large cities. They have adopted bilingual education models developed for contexts alien to ours (Ordóñez, 2008). Many follow the programs and practices of Canadian immersion and even programs, policies, and accreditation systems used by and for monolingual schools in Europe or the United States (De Mejía, Ordóñez & Fonseca, 2006). As the author explains, since there is no need to speak English, since we are in a monolingual country, we create the need and adjust the motivations to promote language learning. For this, and putting the example of the institution where I am doing the teaching practice, the members of the bilingualism

department coordinate and direct different celebrations from all over the world with the sense of instilling culture about society and different traditions, but at the same time of creating a need to know the language and thus be able to communicate effectively. It's all about the cross-cultural exchange, which makes most students interested and understand the need of cultural learning. The school not only teaches English as a foreign language, but also, being bilingual, the immersion program is used to learn the academic content of other subjects in English, such as natural sciences, social studies, religion, mathematics, among other.

The study conducted by Claudia Ordoñez in 2011, called *Education for Bilingualism: Connecting Spanish and English from the curriculum, in the classroom and beyond*, is very useful for my research for several reasons. First, it talks about the realities of teaching from bilingualism in different institutions throughout the country, the opportunities, the weaknesses and how the socio-cultural aspects of the country influence the same teaching. Second, the author makes use of different concepts that have already been applied in the Liceo Montessori, such as immersion, a practice that I have already been doing for a couple of months. Finally, the text offers students and teachers' reflections on the quality of learning of academic content from bilingualism, it also gives me the opportunity to analyze the components of the curriculum and adjustments made, which facilitates the design of strategies or the evaluation of certain learning strategies and their effectiveness.

Colombia has been characterized as a country that has made different proposals over the years to develop national plans for bilingualism and thus favor students in times of globalization, where speaking a foreign language becomes a fundamental need. To carry out these government plans that seek to guarantee job competitiveness through learning English, the Common European Framework was the reference used.

Being bilingual is essential in a globalized world. The use of a second language means being able to communicate better, open borders, understand other contexts, appropriate knowledge and make it circulate, understand and make ourselves understood, enrich ourselves and play a decisive role in the development of the country. To be bilingual is to have more knowledge and opportunities to be more competent and competitive, and to improve the quality of life of all citizens. (MEN, 2004) Despite the government's intentions

to carry out a bilingualism program that allows the development of various linguistic-communicative skills, they have not been executed in the best way. The previous idea explains the reasons why different plans have been proposed, with adjustments for their proper execution:

- National Bilingualism Program (PNB) 2004-2019
- Program for the Strengthening of Foreign Languages (PFDCLE) 2010-2014
- Law 1651 of 2013, Bilingualism Law
- National English Program (PNI) 2015-2025

One of the main goals of Colombia is that by the year 2025, we will be the country with the best skills and language management of the English language in South America. It is essential to carry out a contrast of what has been proposed and what has been carried out, and that is why I contemplate all the documents provided by the Ministry of Education that provide information about the national plans for Bilingualism are vital for my research because, in addition to making different proposals, Goals, and guidelines, it is also possible to analyze whether these goals have been achieved by the current date or not, and what is currently being done so that these goals are met.

## **2. Pedagogical strategy and communicative language strategies**

A pedagogical strategy is understood as “A series of principles that serve as the basis for specific phases of action that must allow a certain innovation to be installed with a lasting character” (Huberman, 1973). Furthermore, "it is an adaptive procedure - a set of them - by which we sequentially organize the action in order to achieve the planned goals." (Huberman, 1973). The previous definitions help to reinforce the concept of pedagogical strategy, which is the action carried out by teachers to achieve learning through different activities, or a sequence of actions that seek to achieve certain objectives in the same way. Through these strategies, methods, materials, and resources are brought together that guide the path to student learning. The text of Sierra Salcedo, R. called “the pedagogical strategy. Its adequacy predictors” (2007) is really useful and interesting in the fact that it shows some definitions and facets of the pedagogical strategy as an aspect that carries out the actions that lead towards educational objectives. From the revised texts, I find it useful for

me to understand what the components that a pedagogical strategy has are and thus be able to apply them to my daily practice.

Teaching and learning activities that have become unfashionable for a variety of reasons may still make a positive contribution to learning if they apply useful principles and if they are focused on worthwhile goals (Nation, 2009). Paul Nation and Jonathan Newton present the book “Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking”, which has an emphasis on a language-centered learning approach, with foundations and many techniques and strategies that have been the fundamental pillar to establishing communicative strategies that enhance and are meant to strengthen the skills and oral production of students at an early age. The most noteworthy aspect of these communicative strategies is that they focus on meaning, language-centered learning, and fluency development, so sometimes there are strategies that involve all areas of learning and not just oral skills.

As mentioned above, there are an innumerable number of strategies that although they are not the most innovative, depending on the meaning, the context, and the intention proposed by the teacher, can result in an activity with a lot of learning and an incredible value. Therefore, the analysis of various strategies has been performed to determine which of those strategies have significance in early childhood language learning acquisition, including digital resources, and how they can be adapted in the context of the school.

Some of the most used strategies were:

To work through "**Guiding Listening and Speaking**", the basic strategy is "What is it? Technique" (Nation, 1978). With this strategy, the teacher writes short concepts, words or vocabulary and in different ways describes these words so students can understand the meaning of them. The objective of this technique is to ask students for the definition of a new word, concept or sentence that through different explanations, they can understand and answer. The idea of this strategy is to keep the students as far away from the meaning as possible for a considerable time in which there can be a process of construction and the student is integrated with a communicative meaning activity. In addition, it allows the main actor who performs most of the actions at the moment of reasoning to be the student and not the teacher, which makes the activity much more challenging. It is a fun strategy in



which teachers do not have to make a big effort because most of it is being made by the students.

**Listen and do activities** are used in most classrooms and are the basis of Total Physical Response language teaching (Asher, Kosudo and de la Torre, 1974). Strategies that involve the use of listening and doing activities usually start with the teacher's instructions and students must do what is requested. There are many ways to perform them and they have many benefits. Among the main benefits is to enhance students' ability to express themselves in a non-native language, allowing them to acquire the second language in a faster and more practical way. On the other hand, students have the opportunity to interact with their peers and build stronger bonds, so this strategy involves a lot of teamwork and strengthens the union and empathy among peers.

**Listening to Pictures technique.** This technique “involves a large quantity of material to listen to”. (Nation, 1995, p. 13) “The picture helps learners understand the spoken description and allows them to learn the new language items in that description.” (Nation, 1989, p. 21) Indeed, since it is a strategy that requires such a large amount of material to listen to, it always makes use of images that serve as a reference to strengthen the students' comprehension. Students feel at ease when doing this type of activity because they quickly associate the vocabulary being introduced with the images, colors, objects or shapes shown in the images.

**Describe the picture** in a systematic and predictable way, for example, beginning in the top-left corner and moving across, so that the students can easily follow your description and match the picture to your words. (Nation, 1995, p. 13). This strategy also has many benefits because the students know where the picture will begin so the description will make sense as long as the children are looking at the pictures. The activity is quite clear as long as you use simple language that students can understand, so they gradually associate those familiar words with new vocabulary, and thus expand their vocabulary or introduce a new topic.

It is also important to keep in mind the age of the children and the limited vocabulary they have, so both body language and the type of questions play a vital role in this formative process. That is, students understand more easily the questions that have as answer yes or

no, false or true and using the strategy of "what is it?". A good aspect about using simple questions is that when answering incorrectly, it opens the possibility of answering and correcting the answer to reach the correct result and thus have a more conscious and meaningful learning.

Gradually, this technique can be used with greater difficulty, students are challenged to start describing very simple aspects such as the color of the clothes of the people in the images or simply describe the physical appearance. However, the difficulty can be increased, they can begin to describe the actions that the character is performing, or also identify certain specific objectives in the images and finally be able to analyze what is the favorite part of the image and what is its meaning, by means of an inference.

The strategy of **descriptions** is a way of integrating students' vocabulary learning and prior knowledge with images that can be verbal or graphic. A description can be done verbally, where the teacher makes a comparison, a difference, or talks together about the appearance, attitude, or space of something or someone. Students have the opportunity to use vocabulary to be able to find similarities to the words they use to connect them with the images or with the descriptions made by the teacher.

It is important to mention that descriptions allow a wide field of work, this strategy within the communicative ability of language is very valuable because it allows each child to contribute, even with one word, information that is valuable to shape whatever is being described, and this allows the student to gradually generate greater self-confidence and thus manage to develop more easily in future activities that involve describing something or someone.

In the **Picture Ordering strategy**, learners see a set of pictures that are in the wrong order. They listen to a description of each of the pictures or to a story involving the events in the pictures, and they put the pictures in the right order (Flenley, 1982). This activity can be used for different themes that have a specific order, since it allows the chronological organization of the photographs or scenes. The idea of this strategy is that as the teacher describes the situation or describes the images, the students have the ability to arrange the images in the proper order they are describing.

It is an activity that promotes the use of critical thinking and teamwork. Critical thinking because it allows students to reason about the different situations that are being described in the context of the scenes or in the same case, the images. On the other hand, teamwork stands out because through individuality a student will not be fully capable of performing a work that has a certain level of complexity, in fact, it is designed to receive a constant process of feedback from the teacher and the same classmates in order to define the appropriate order of the images and thus create sense to the descriptions that the teacher makes in order to order the sequence.

The use of the Padded questions strategy is vital for the listening practice of the students, who have to give a very simple and minimal answer when it occurs. In fact, when a teacher uses this strategy, students must respond in a precise, short way, because this type of question seeks to encourage the listening area and at the same time students begin to grasp the idea of how to convey short thoughts to English questions verbally.

This type of questioning is very easy to do because the topics to cover are infinite, and can be adapted to any topic you are working on with the children. It is very useful and works very well because students show interest in each topic. The fact of not presenting the topic at the beginning of the class generates intrigue among the students and this makes them have a great concern about what they will begin to see in class. This motivates students to have an active listening process but also to be able to answer short, simple and easy to answer questions.

During an activity, the **supporting listening strategy** is very valuable because it supports students when they need help to understand certain concepts. It is sought that the student understands without the teacher using Spanish language and without giving the answer directly to the questions. The idea is that teachers provide support by providing ideas that involve the students' previous experience and context, also guiding the students through the text, providing synonyms or small steps that allow them to understand the main idea they are looking for through critical analysis.

**Multiple-choice sounds** are a strategy that allows students to practice pronunciation. In fact, the teacher when explaining may say certain words that are not correctly pronounced so the student must help in the process of repeating the words properly. When the teacher

writes certain words that are already known to the students' vocabulary, the words are written on the board and pronounced aloud in an incorrect voice so that the students perform a group feedback process and recognize that it is not pronounced correctly.

Since the students in the “preparatorio” grade show so much interest in being in a constant process of learning the English language, there is no doubt that they will have the ability to detect these inconsistencies at the moment of pronouncing the words so they will ask if those words are pronounced correctly or not. At this point, the teacher will ask about the proper pronunciation so that they can repeat and correct them as a group. This activity is valuable because students have active listening and participation in their own learning process.

**Could you repeat that?** (Folse, 1991) involves a learner or group of learners dictating to someone writing on the blackboard, while they are facing the other way. Therefore, the people dictating cannot see what is being written on the blackboard. This can be done with two teams and similar but not the same sentences. In fact, this strategy can be used by both the teacher and the student, and it implies that the person who is managing the communicative process must repeat what he/she has just said because the person who is asking the question has not fully understood what he/she is trying to say. This is one of the most traditional strategies in English language teaching because it allows seeing if the student has retained the knowledge, either a concept or a word, and is able to reproduce it through repetition.

Although it is a very effective strategy and works in all the activities that are executed, its use should be moderate because it can become boring for the students if it is not handled in a proper way. Generally, it is used at various times, from the moment the teacher arrives in the classroom the students should speak in English and when they do not, the teacher uses this mechanism to clarify that they should speak in English and to ask the children why they are speaking in Spanish.

In **discovering the story** one learner has a copy of a story. They tell the topic of the story to others in the group and they ask questions to discover what the story is about. There are many variations of this technique (Joyce, 1982). The idea of this strategy is that through critical thinking, students can discover the story when provided with key elements that can

be used to discover what the story is about or to guess the name. There are cases in which stories based on children's movies have been used and the children are very happy to recognize the descriptions or segments of the stories, as they can identify them more easily and this gives them the opportunity to mention the name of the story and have a greater number of correct answers.

The authors propose many uses of this strategy, and it is considered that one of the most vital and important can be a story written by the student and that the information is provided to other students, so that those students need to guess the theme of the story. This activity requires a lot of concentration and classroom management on the part of the teacher, as students must be attentive at all times during the class so that there are no unforeseen events, they are not distracted and retain all possible information from each of the different stories narrated.

### **3. Significant learning**

Ausubel (1983) mentions that significant knowledge can only be born when the new content has a meaning in light of the knowledge that we already have. It means that new learning will always be connected with previous ones in order to create a wider meaning. The new learning is assimilated in the literal way in which it appears in the study plans and it works really well with the previous knowledge as it works while connecting it to make it way more completed. Liceo Montessori works with constructivism based on Montessori Philosophy and meaningful learning. They consider the student as the axis of his own learning and it is oriented to academic excellence, in a bilingual and multicultural environment, which favors the development of critical thinking as a superior skill. Learning is significant when the content is related in a non-arbitrary and substantial way (not literally) to the already known content by students. By substantial and non-arbitrary relationship, it should be understood that ideas are related to some specifically relevant existing aspect of the student's cognitive structure, such as an image, an already significant symbol, a concept, or a proposition (Ausubel, 1983).

David P. Ausubel is one of the most useful authors for my research, with his theory of meaningful learning. In fact, according to the school, they work with meaningful learning as a model and it is very important because it allows me to align my practices with the way

in which they work. Therefore, working with Ausubel's theory seems to be the most appropriate idea and that is why his publications will be very useful to understand the characteristics and assimilate that the student must connect the new learning with the previous ones so that he can have more complete learning.

Another of the main reasons why I decided to work with meaningful learning is because bilingualism is really a branch of knowledge that in Colombia has been developing slowly. Therefore, it is highly valid to work with strategies that have great significance for students to make their learning really lasting and to generate an impact for the rest of their lives. The idea of finding out which are the most significant strategies implemented in the bilingualism area in young people of such an early age is to be able to spread and implement meaningful learning to educate critical and highly competent people in the development of a second language seen from the academic and curricular content.

## **Methodological framework**

The educational process is a constant act of reflection, it is very important to know the different actors that are involved in our investigations. I have decided to develop a systematization of my educational practice, to reflect on the practices and in this way, analyze and make a self-criticism of the different strategies and didactics that I use to enhance oral skills in students at an early age. The important thing about systematization is that it connects theory with practice, integrating knowledge with experiences and thus being able to make conclusions and contributions that benefit the school. I am planning to use a qualitative research method to collect and evaluate non-standardized data. As the participants are a small sample, they will seek to obtain an understanding of the vital aspects for the development and strengthening of oral skills through bilingualism classes. Indeed, I will work with interviews, small surveys, and information that is not quantitatively measured.

I am in a bilingual school where the students are in constant learning through bilingualism. The school emphasizes significant learning and learning the academic content through the use of the second language (English). The main objective is to create and educate young people with high argumentation skills, who are able to think critically and be prepared for a globalized labor field characterized by international competition. Through the systematization that I will carry out, I will be able to evaluate, record, and interpret the different pedagogical moments/practices. From my experience with young children, it is important to start working on the development of a second language through the different subjects such as math, social studies, religion, science, etc.

I have decided to focus on strengthening the oral skills of students through bilingualism practices, integrating theory and practice. I will talk about strengthening oral skills because their oral skills are excellent for their interest and motivation. These young learners are determined to learn and develop their oral competencies through bilingualism in different ways. Therefore, it is pertinent to collect and make an exhaustive analysis of the most significant strategies, moments, and practices in order to obtain the greatest effectiveness in the same development of these competencies.

### **Phase 3 – Reconstruction of the systematization**

#### **September -2021**

In September, the “preparatorio” grade students began the 2021-2022 school year, after spending a year and a half virtually and. In this year it was proposed by directives to implement a greater intensity in the use of the English language in the subjects that belong to the bilingualism department. I am in charge of the Social Studies area, which is developed in the English language. According to the annual planning and the general guide that contains the knowledge and topics of the whole year, for September, it was necessary to make a general diagnosis of the topics that had been seen last year (Kindergarten). To do this, I reviewed the annual guides from last year to get more information about the topics given and thus be able to make a diagnostic exam orally and written, so I could identify their strengths, weaknesses, and aspects to improve.

Before diagnosis, it was essential to meet the students and also to gather information about their English level. To do this, I began by remembering and explaining the expressions in the classroom, such as “excuse me, say that again, please? How do I say this? Can you help me? How do you spell? May I go to the bathroom, please? May I drink some water, please? Among other expressions. In addition, I focused on relevant and meaningful content, using basic sentences and examples such as “my name is, I come from, I live in, I am x years old, etc. For this, the repetition technique was used orally, with gestures and involving the student, either by asking them or to write on the board and asking the others to say what it meant. For these activities, I used the forming group’s strategy and called the students to do short tasks. Indeed, for learning speaking, I implemented the Memorizing Useful Phrases and Sentences strategy so that the children could create simple communicative events, such as, “good morning, good afternoon, I am ready, we are ready, teacher excuse me, can you please repeat”, among others.

The students felt a bit disoriented because the return to face-to-face classes led to a different class environment than the one they had already adapted to in the last two years. As these strategies were implemented so that the students could get to know each other, talk about themselves, and know the rules and regulations of the class, the students quickly



consolidated and acquired the necessary vocabulary to ask permission to go to the bathroom or to drink water.

In the beginning, it was a gradual process in which most of the students only spoke in Spanish and there were very few who had a very limited vocabulary in English, so the strategies of forming groups helped them to create social bonds, so they would not feel embarrassed when making a mistake or asking about certain specific vocabulary. It is important to mention that students had a lot of motivation and desire to continue learning, they had a proactive and participatory attitude, which allowed for a very pleasant learning environment.

Over the weeks, notorious learning was achieved regarding the use of basic vocabulary to introduce oneself, ask for certain favors or requests, and to respond to short questions, which had the answer yes or no, right or wrong, etc.

For the diagnosis, I used physical guides that contained activities related to the rules in the classroom, behaviors during classes, the traffic light, and its colors and indications. In addition to this, I introduced a role-playing strategy where this character called “Simon” would be my assistant in the classroom.

When the diagnosis was made, I gave instructions for the written part using markers and the board. I emphasized thinking carefully about the colors of the traffic light and what its use was. In addition, for the oral evaluation, where they were supposed to talk about the colors and the rules of the school and the classroom, I used Simon, so that “he” was giving examples such as: If Simon starts running around the room, would it be appropriate? Would that be good or bad? To which the students would respond in English. In addition to using Simon as an assistant, I used gestures, where it was important for them to be aware of my arms and gestures since on most occasions I used them to highlight positive or negative actions and even questions. This diagnosis was a reference to determine the English and content level in which the students were positioned. Afterward, a review was carried out to remember these topics and thus, the students could live the experience of those learnings that were experienced virtually but now they would be face-to-face.

Employing some physical guides, an oral exercise was executed, where students had to stand up and perform the imitation that was proposed in the guide and told by me so that the other students could deduce what I was doing and also be able to identify if whether that action he was doing was appropriate in the classroom or not. Therefore, the instruction is that first they had to tell me what the student was doing, and then I would ask them if that action was correct or incorrect in the classroom.

On the other hand, there was an exercise where different actions of students in the classroom were shown and the students had to mark with an (X) which were the actions that were not correct to perform in the classroom. After that, there was a review and revision of the traffic light and its purpose. First, a traffic light was made in the notebook and they had to color each of the three colors correctly, this was a diagnosis to see if the students recognized the colors correctly. After the completion of the same, I focused on an exercise in the room where a car was simulated and I told them the color, and they had to decide whether to move or not, whoever moved in the red, had a penalty in the game and should be returned to its starting position. The one who managed to reach the other "street" following the traffic regulations would win the game.

This month, I focused on working on the topics that had been covered in the third period of last year but also began working on the first topic of the 2021-2022 school year in the area which was the cardinal points. For this topic, I emphasized learning through a task-focused interaction strategy.

The results of the diagnosis revealed that the students manage to identify most of the functions and colors of the traffic light. In addition, the interactive activity where the students were drivers and were given instructions on when they could move made it possible to verify that the students have a very good capacity to respond to the requests made by the teacher.

On the other hand, in the oral part, the students showed difficulties, since they are not able to respond in English to the questions about the norms and rules of the class. However, through communicative strategies such as the use of gestures to complement verbal instructions, the students were able to identify whether the actions they were asking were correct or not according to the context of the classroom. Although they can assimilate

instructions, listen to concise orders, and understand the vocabulary, even at this starting point they cannot respond in English to some questions and/or requests.

This diagnosis provided the necessary elements to conclude that it is relevant to carry out a strengthening process by the school's English department in terms of promoting oral skills. Therefore, this project arises from the need for the "preparatorio" grade to strengthen their oral skills.

Finally, a very positive aspect that is vital to emphasize is that when reinforcing the topics seen last year, the majority of the students responded adequately to each of the proposed topics, so it could be concluded that effective learning took place in virtual classes last school year.

### **October -2021**

Through the Guiding Listening and Speaking communication strategy, I focused on the topic of the cardinal points. I provided each student with a guide that had a drawing of a compass with the most basic compass directions, north, south, east, and west. Through the "what is it?" technique, small tasks, like beginning to learn what those four main points were, they began to appropriate the use of the letters of each cardinal point. I wrote the letter on the board and asked them which of the cardinal points it was, so they had to answer through the given guide.

After having learned the letters, an exercise of "repeat after me" was carried out with each of the points, to begin to emphasize the pronunciation of each of the students. The main objective for this unit where the cardinal points are worked on is for students to be able to recognize, through each word, each cardinal point.

On the other hand, to properly recognize each cardinal point and by using the interactive listening strategy, I gave my students images such as a lion, a parrot, a person, a star, a monkey, a car, a heart, and I would tell them to locate each image in a specific cardinal point. In addition to learning the letters and the four cardinal points, they needed to learn to locate them, so through another physical guide, they used a compass that had different objects to cut and paste. In that order of ideas, I told them "X object, it has to be located in

North”, where is North? Could it be that the S stands for the north? So it was a challenge for them to figure out which items would go in which.

As mentioned above, as a member of the bilingualism department, I emphasized the use of the English language to produce communicative events during classes, so from the moment I greeted them and entered the room, I would speak in English and wait for answers in English. Whenever they answered something in Spanish, I would repeat with hesitation “Spanish? No, English!” To avoid the use of Spanish in class, one of the strategies that I used the most since the beginning of the school year was non-verbal strategies for explanations and examples. For example, if I wanted to emphasize a word or concept that the student was about to understand, I would use my hands and eyes to make the student understand that he was right and that what he was about to say was the right definition.

I also made use of this non-verbal communication strategy when I made oral exercises on the board in which I asked the students what the definition(s) was according to what I was asking, and when the students could not answer correctly or did not yet have enough knowledge to answer in English, through gestures I would make actions or signs that managed students to deduce the definition.

Considering that we were working on cardinal points, using Language Centered Learning, I decided to take my students to the schoolyard, place them in a line and call them one by one to the front to point the direction of each cardinal point while listening to my instructions. While I called each one, I tried to make sure that each student was aware of the instructions in case the student in front did not know, so I could call another and this one choose the correct option. At that moment, when a student directed his hands toward x-direction, I asked the other students if that x-direction was the one indicated or was the one I had asked for, if so, I congratulated the student. If not, I would encourage the participation of other students and at the same time provide feedback on the mistakes that student was making at the time.

In the following classes, the following cardinal points were worked on, which are the combination of the basic points, northwest, northeast, southeast, and southwest. Due to the difficulty of these, the students worked through various exercises. In the first instance, the students copied the points in the notebook, through drawings, I emphasized how important

the order of the letters was, that is, to be careful when putting "SW" instead of "WS", it was They made dictations, games of guessing the word, hanged, and on some occasions, the students had to answer what each cardinal point means according to its letter. That is if I asked them what the letter "N" means, they had to say that it means North in English.

At the end of October, we began the topic of the days of the week and for this I used the strategy of "practicing sentence patterns" where a structure and a sequence of words were followed, in this case each day formed a sequence. On the other hand, I implemented the "picture ordering" technique in which I pasted several images on the board with the different days of the week and the idea was that the students correctly order the sequence of the days of the week. In addition, another significant communication strategy that was used was that of "padded questions" where I asked short and simple questions, like what days they had x subject, for example: On what day do you have Social Studies? What is the day in which you have math subject? Etc.

The idea was to use the Meaning-Focused Speaking approach, so that month I focused on doing listen and do activities, in which the student listens to the instructions, the teacher gives the rules of the game and the students begin to carry out the activities. The "What is it technique" was essential in this process, as I would often use it to investigate the different vocabulary related to the days of the week. I emphasized on the order of the days and that they could identify and distinguish which were the hardest and the easiest days in terms of doing activities such as going to school, playing videogames, watching TV, etc.

In the last week of October, through meaning-focused Speaking strategies, I decided to work with Halloween topic through different activities and connect it with the seeing topics in social studies. To do this, I started with several listening strategies in which I pronounced vocabulary related to Halloween and the students had to answer what each one meant. As many words were unknown to the children, I used descriptions to get the students to understand the vocabulary of the theme.

In addition to this, I used certain objects that were in the room and through the "listen and choose" strategy, I asked the children to listen to me carefully so that they could help me design the best costume, considering those objects that I was naming and pointing. I pointed to objects such as markers, rulers, chairs, and suitcases. I started using the

"interactive listening" strategy, where students would collaborate with me to design a costume, then while we were all sitting on the floor, I asked them what objects and accessories were needed to design the costume when they mentioned words to me in Spanish, I asked them in English the name of the object, and if they did not know, I would write it in large size on the board, and tell them to remember it because at the end of the activity they should be able to identify those words. After a couple of words were written on the board, short questions were asked so the students would continue interacting, asking for shapes, for colors to design the costume.

After doing this set of strategies and activities, the words that had been seen that day in class were written on the board and then practiced with an oral pronunciation exercise. Using the "multiple sounds choice" strategy, the vocabulary would be named in different ways, and they had to answer if that was correct or incorrect.

On Halloween, the children went to school in costumes, and many activities that encouraged the use of English were done. Firstly, through the problem-solving strategy, different cases in which the students would need to be the heroes and heroines to save the teacher were created. In order to save the teacher, the children had a circuit of exercises focused on oral production.

The first exercise was to talk about each student's costume, and although the students did not know how to say the words of each accessory, they were able to properly identify the colors and some students were able to partially mention some accessories. With this activity, the students earned points and went up on the podium to save the teacher. Then, different objects that are seen on Halloween were drawn on the board, and then each one had to answer the name of those objects, the ones who did not answer correctly had to complete a challenge in which they had to mention the colors of the costume of one of his friends.

Finally, with the "discover the story" strategy, a Halloween story was read and while doing that, the interactive listening strategy was important so they could participate in the story. At that time, students would need to provide information and clear descriptions of each character, the names, the food, and the actions that occurred in the story. After that, each one got an award for their dedication and commitment to the class.

Through the communication strategies that were carried out this month, different reactions from the students can be evidenced. In the first place, through the Guiding listening and speaking communication strategy, the students had a guide through the different activities, so it was very effective and dynamic, when the students made mistakes when pronouncing or did not know how to express themselves, they received a process instant feedback to reinforce your knowledge and vocabulary. The vital aspect of this strategy for them is that by receiving this continuous feedback process, they are not left without learning new sentences, words, or sayings and thus they can practice in real-time, creating a meaningful learning environment.

The “What is it?” strategy is simple and very useful to identify if students know a specific question or concept. The strategy is effective to start a new topic and to be able to distinguish if the students have ideas about the topic. On the other hand, it serves to reinforce the learning that has already been taught in the class, making it a fairly effective strategy.

Although the "repeat after me" strategy is one of the oldest communication strategies, its relevance is important when improving and managing the moments where the pronunciation of the students is heard. “preparatorio” kids like this strategy because they get a chance to participate. In these groups particularly, the strategy is commonly used individually to emphasize the pronunciation of each of the students.

In general, students enjoy these strategies because they are in constant interaction with their other classmates and with the teacher. Through interactive listening, students actively participate and can answer short questions and follow instructions. At the same time, non-verbal strategies are used and these strengthen the concepts because when students do not understand verbally, through mime, signs, and other actions, they manage to capture an idea or intention of what is being asked or said.

The problem-solving strategy is effective and the students like it very much because it includes them being in constant movement before the problems or situations that are described, and they also get excited when they see that there are possible simple solutions. However, this type of strategy must be very well structured and guided step by step,

because sometimes children do not have enough vocabulary to support their answers or ask the necessary questions and must resort to Spanish.

### **November-2021**

In November, the relief forms and the characteristics of landscapes topics took place. For this, the Meaning-Focused Speaking strategy was used through activities such as descriptions, in which the shapes, colors, and sizes of each of these relief forms were mentioned and the children had to guess what landscapes were being discussed.

In the first classes, the students went to the Tics Room, where they had the opportunity to watch videos that were related to the different landscapes. In these videos, the vocabulary and the pronunciation were shown. Using these resources, the students wrote each of the relief forms in their notebooks, but they also carried out repetition and “listening and choose” exercises, where images were shown without the dialogue or the name of the landscape, and the Students had to mention what was the name of each landscape. After that, a learning strategy was used through the context, where they talked about the relief forms they knew, and the different landscapes they had traveled to, short questions were asked such as "Have you ever visited a beach? Do you know or have you visited lakes, rivers, mountains? Among other questions.

On the other hand, through the classes, the listen and choose strategies were used, where the students listened to a description that was made and they had the opportunity to answer which was the correct option, respectively. On the other hand, to practice the pronunciation of each of the landforms, the multiple-choice sounds strategy was used, where on purpose, the words were pronounced incorrectly so that the students noticed that it was not right and they could correct them. When this could not be done, the alternative strategy was to put different pronunciation options and they chose which was correct.

In addition, to emphasize the correct pronunciation, the use of the technique "could you repeat that?" was implemented with the aim that students repeat the words several times and thus remember whenever necessary.

To evaluate the learning of this unit, several "retelling" strategy exercises were carried out, where the students listened to a story where the different types of relief were mentioned and



then, they were asked to repeat which were the landscapes they had heard. In addition, they were asked to draw them on the board to identify if the students had learned the difference between each one.

During this process, the students also learn about the different months of the year, and to teach these, communication strategies with clear outcomes were used. For this, the students had to mention and write on the board the months of the year that they knew. Bearing in mind that the children did not know how to say most of the months, then the birthday of each one was inquired about. When a student said her/his birthday, then the student's name and month were written on the board in English. Afterward, the student was asked to repeat how the month was said in English to see if the pronunciation was correct. Finally, the idea was to ask the students in which month their classmates had their birthday.

In another class, the celebrations of the year were used to emphasize the learning of each of the months. This is why, through videos, the different celebrations of each month were presented, so that the students could identify the months with each of the most important celebrations.

In the last weeks of November, the teachers of the bilingualism department had to be ready for the preparation and realization of the Christmas Show. This show was divided into three days, one day for preschool, another for primary, and finally, the last day for high school.

The idea of the Christmas show was to integrate the knowledge that had been provided in the school year in the subjects in English, and with the Christmas proposal, to make a show that parents could watch and enjoy, while seeing the academic results of the second language.

This show had several phases of preparation, in the first instance, the teachers were in charge of the distribution and creation of the dialogues, in addition to the distribution of characters. Another important aspect for the selection process was the English level of the students since there were characters that had many more dialogues than others. However, the idea was that each student had a moment to participate and to be able to communicate and express themselves using English language.

After the character selection process (some were decided by their level of English throughout the school year, others through a qualifier, depending on which student could best interpret the character, among other selection processes).

Once the script was prepared and designed, the teachers were in charge of each of the different grades of the school. In my case, I took care of the “preparatorio” grades, which is where I mostly spend my time in school. In the case of “preparatorio” students, some had to play Santa's helpers, others had to be elves, others Frosty (the main character), and others were the narrators, who narrated the story as the actors performed the show. Each show was supposed to last around 15 minutes, considering that the “preparatorio” grade is the first grade of primary school.

The main mission during the last days of November by the teachers was to organize the roles, the dialogues, the actors, and the visual part, that is, the clothing, the stage, and the performance. Then, define which students would have the leading roles, since primary children had many dialogues, despite being short messages. In addition to representing a work created by the teachers related to Christmas, the children had to dance a choreography directed and rehearsed by the corporal expression teacher.

The teachers were also in charge of, training the students in the communicative part and training them to achieve the best performance of the students. In this project teachers and parents were needed in order to help students not only in the process of learning the dialogues, but also to pronounce them correctly.

It is important to mention that the final evaluations of the first period were carried out in the last week of November. For the “preparatorio” grade, in the subject of Social Studies, the exam had a written part and an oral part. The total evaluation lasted an hour and a half and the students had to correctly answer questions related to the cardinal points, as well as locate them correctly on a compass. For this topic, in the oral part some objects such as animals, sports, and school utensils, were drawn and each student had to locate those objects depending on the instructions provided. In the last point related to the cardinal points the students were asked to answer for the meaning of the cardinal points, so they had to write them in English, in Spanish, and at the same time arrange them, since the words were out of order.

Another of the oral exercises that were made in the final exam was a riddle, where the landscapes of the relief were described and each student had to answer what that landscape was. Finally, the students had to make a drawing where the cardinal points and at the same time the relief forms could be seen, and that these drawings made sense.

Through the meaning-focused speaking strategy, the students had significant learning because the context in which they live was used to be able to implement the theme of relief forms.

In the beginning, a new vocabulary was taught in which the students had the opportunity to analyze and discover the landscapes that exist in the world. After that, through the descriptions, a practical exercise was carried out where the students identified the landscapes and finally, to integrate it into the context with an activity that had meaning and that in turn helped the students to remember each of the characteristics and words learned in the vocabulary.

The descriptions are part of the activities that are part of this communication skills strategy, and it is a very effective strategy since students like activities that have visual content, and where they interact with the environment. In addition, the fact of changing rooms and taking them to the Tics room allows children to interact with innovative digital platforms and to relate videos with the vocabulary learned.

Through the “listen and choose” strategy, students have the opportunity to choose between different options, and they like that very much because it is a challenge for them and at the same time a competition to see which one is right. This activity connects with the “could you repeat that?” strategy. It is therefore necessary that each of the students has the capacity and the opportunity to carry out the exercise in a timely and satisfactory manner.

Finally, through the "retelling" strategy, the students felt very excited because the knowledge of the unit, the learning, and the vocabulary were integrated with their life experiences of each one. As the places they visited were asked, each child had a unique and different experience so they could exchange cultural experiences, and concisely describe them using the vocabulary worked on in class, about the landscapes, colors, and shapes they had seen during their travels.

## **December-2021**

In December, a review was made on the topic “the months of the year”, since in November it was taught in the last days. In the first classes, visits were made to the digital room, where there are technological resources such as a touch board and a video beam. In this room, students have the opportunity to interact with various digital platforms.

An activity was organized in which they explored different celebrations that were seen throughout the months of the year. Through the “Supporting Listening” communicative strategy, the students listened to narrations in English and interactive images and videos were shown on the virtual board, where questions were asked that they actively had to answer. Through this strategy, students had to remain silent and very active, because at any moment, the narration could ask a surprise question and the students had to run, analyze and correctly answer the question on the virtual board. In addition to this, the students had to draw things or objects in their notebooks as the video mentioned the different months, which were related to the month that was narrated.

For those students who did not have the best performance in the final exam, academic reinforcements were carried out in order to strengthen their knowledge and learning seen. Several workshops were held that strengthened the written and oral parts regarding the topics covered in the first period. Therefore, the cardinal points were the first topic that was emphasized and through communicative strategies such as multiple-choice oral exercises on the board, students who presented academic difficulties had the opportunity, step by step, to point out which were each one of the cardinal points and their corresponding positions on the compass.

After this, through a singing and dancing activity, the students were able to internalize the days of the week, which was a topic in which they had quite a few difficulties since they could not differentiate each of the days.

The last topic that needed to be reinforced was the different landscapes that had been studied in class, so for this, "cut and talk" activities were implemented, where each of the landscapes was explained and then the students would look and cut some images from magazines where different landscapes appear. The result of this was to make a small

presentation where the students could present the places they had found and not only mention them in English but also describe the shape, color, and size.

After finishing the theme of the months of the year and the reinforcements, the Christmas show training began with a lot more frequency, so each class was an opportunity to strengthen the oral production skills of each student. There were several strategies to positively influence the learning process of the dialogues, in addition to the understanding of the texts, for their correct interpretation on the day of the act.

The most used strategies for training the Christmas show were:

In the first instance, the students were given the dialogues for the presentation. The project was presented to the children, and it was explained what the show would be, what role each one would play, what the objectives of the show were and, of course, emphasis was placed on how important it was for each of the children to understand their role. The first strategy used was the repetition technique, reading word by word and the students repeating it to better understand the pronunciation of unknown words.

The second strategy used was interactive listening, where students had to start reading by themselves and the teacher corrected as soon as the student made a mistake. It is considered that it was an interactive listening strategy, since the student was in constant contact with the changes or suggestions that the teacher gave him, and thus he gradually improved his pronunciation.

Third, the phonology of English was used, so the words of the dialogue were written below exactly as they were pronounced so that the students, in addition to understanding how the words were written, could read the dialogues more efficiently without making mistakes in pronunciation.

During the process of teaching the students about the dialogues, other aspects such as pronunciation, intonation, acting, and the use of the stage appropriately were very important. For this, body language was used a lot, that is, through body language, students were taught that in order to interpret a character it was necessary not only to learn the dialogues but also to gesticulate the actions and also show different emotions as each act

progressed. Through the role-playing strategy, each character assumed the role, gesticulate appropriately and use appropriate intonation of voice.

While the students were preparing for the end of the year presentation, topics such as Christmas accessories were taken up, so many elements that were used at Christmas were taught and the reason why they were so important was explained.

To focus more on the oral production, the accessories that were in the classroom were drawn, and the students who knew some of them mentioned them and helped in the process of writing and pronouncing the words. Finally, a tree was built and the students were asked to bring objects to put on the tree, while putting them, questions were asked about what accessories were being added to the tree, promoting at the same time the Christmas spirit and practicing words that could appear in the dialogues of the Christmas show.

After several weeks of daily training and many hours of practice, the children learned their lines and learned to gesture and interpret their characters correctly. With the narrators, the part of breathing, intonation, and handling of pronunciation was specifically worked on, since they were the students who had to speak the most. Concluding the month of December, the show was carried out satisfactorily, the students were able to demonstrate the training and learning on the night they performed. Both the actors and the narrators achieved a fairly good level of English.

After making use of the strategies mentioned, the students were able to improve their knowledge of the concepts that were missing through the reinforcement workshops. These reinforcement workshops were very effective because they not only helped students who had learning difficulties in the concepts seen but also helped students who already knew the concepts to remember, review and carry out a feedback process for each one of the companions. For the latter, a student who had difficulties with a student who had enough knowledge in the subjects studied was assigned to serve as a tutor. This greatly favored in several aspects, primarily in the positive learning process of students who had difficulties, such as integrating into the classroom with other classmates with whom they did not frequent.

The strategies used for the students to learn the dialogues for the Christmas presentation were very useful, because by using different strategies, alternatives were promoted so that the children were not forced to use the same strategy.

Through the supporting listening strategy, students had the opportunity to receive constant feedback from the teacher. Indeed, through this strategy, as the student read the dialogue, the respective clarifications and corrections in intonation, punctuation and pronunciation were made.

Through the repetition technique, the students rehearsed the dialogues many times to learn them by heart for the presentation. Even though it is an effective strategy for memorization, it was promoted that before using it, it be integrated with the interactive listening strategy, because that way they would not get bored of repeating the same phrases all the time, but rather they would understand the context of the work, they watched videos related to the role that each one had to play, appropriating their role. Finally, body language was a strategy that greatly favored not only the understanding of the texts, but also so that the work would look much more natural and each child would interpret their role artistically, showing meaning and appropriation of the character.

These strategies worked very well because the Christmas show was a total success. The narrators also had a very important function and despite having the script all the time to be able to read most of the story, they practiced so much and had so much acquisition from the dialogues and paragraphs that they were even able to say the dialogues on occasion.

Body language was a vital strategy for the development of the characters and the learning of the dialogues, since the students learned their dialogues but also managed to give life to each of the characters in the play, showing passion, dedication and the work of more than a month. Parents and teachers were surprised and moved by the dedication and excellence in the execution of the Christmas show.

**January-2022**

In January, the theme of "the place we live in" was worked on. In this unit, we would work on teaching how to respect each person while discussing the place where we live and their members. Indeed, the essential elements of Colombia, the national symbols, the Colombian flag, its colors, and the meaning of each of them would be taught.

To introduce the topic of the national symbols, an oral brainstorming strategy was used, where each of the students contributed an idea about words or vocabulary that was related to the country where they live. Without mentioning the country, the students had to say the colors of the flag and also remember the colors, and try to answer the meanings of each of those colors. When they were finally asked what country they lived in, they answered Colombia. The students then began to offer their opinions on the meaning of each of the colors.

Using interactive guides, the students worked on the different meanings of each of the colors and also learned about the different aspects and elements that characterize Colombia. Emphasis was placed on the pronunciation and understanding of these elements, with oral and written exercises. For this topic, the students were taken to the digital room, in addition to this the students had the opportunity to watch different videos about culture, music, religion, national symbols, hymns, and other aspects that characterize the country, in addition to these, they were also able to observe the landscapes and forms of relief, so they could remember the topics seen in the past period, allowing and giving the opportunity to ask questions and a retrospective process to the learning of the first period.

Through the interactive listening strategy, the students contributed with their previous knowledge about the different elements that are visible in the context and that are seen in the country.

When students spoke in Spanish, they were reminded that the use of English was necessary. Since the students were on vacation in December, several of the students came to the classroom speaking Spanish, so it was vital to remember that one of the main rules in the social studies class is to speak English most of the time.



The month of January was short due to the arrival of the children after vacations, so the topic of Colombia was an opening topic that would continue to be worked on in February together with physical and emotional aspects, diversity, and traits of people in the world.

Since they had almost a month of vacation, the brainstorming strategy was implemented to be able to remember the vocabulary that they had been working on in the previous months. In addition, the objective of the oral brainstorming strategy is to analyze and identify if the students have a vocabulary that helps and encourages them to provide elements, words, or vocabulary that are useful for the topic that was being started.

The good thing about this strategy is that students have the opportunity to participate and each one is motivated to do so, so each one has a moment to show their knowledge, whether it is what they learned in class or their prior knowledge.

On the other hand, this month several visits were made to the digital classroom to be able to carry out interactive activities and promote greater use of the students' oral skills. Indeed, the purpose of the digital classroom in this context was to use digital resources such as computers, video projectors, and speakers so that students could better understand the listening exercises, and after that, be able to respond to certain questions. or short oral exercises.

Therefore, this month's emphasis was placed on the use of the interactive listening strategy, since there was a constant exchange of oral messages from the teacher to the student, and from the student to the teacher. It is important to emphasize that the students had prior knowledge of the subject since the national symbols of Colombia were worked on. This was fundamental for the development of the activities since the students knew the vocabulary in Spanish and the process of adaptation and learning the English language was much easier.

This month, the students enjoyed the theme in the way it was being approached, because in several of the work guides they had the opportunity to work with the film "Encanto", and also use their context and previous knowledge to remember, identify and mention the vital elements that define the national symbols of Colombia. However, it was necessary to constantly remind the students that since it is a class that is taught in English, most of the

time they must try to speak in English, so every time a student asked for a favor or said something in Spanish, an attempt was made to develop a strategy in which the teacher asked the child what he was saying, because when speaking in Spanish, "it was not possible to understand the message", encouraging the student to use English as the main language.

Although this strategy was a bit complex for them because they did not have enough well-formed grammatical structure to make questions or long sentences, the students built meaning to the words they used or to the short sentences to be able to ask for a color, ask permissions for the bath or to drink water, ask the teacher about the activities, or action that they could not do when the school year began, for which an incredible advance was evidenced in terms of the oral competences and the performance of the students.

### **February-2022**

In the month of February, the project of the international day of Venezuela would be integrated, which is a celebration that takes place every year in the month of February and each grade has to expose certain characteristic aspects of the culture, economy, diversity, customs, and geography, etc. For this project, students and teachers must organize the rooms according to the specific aspect that was assigned and thus create a presentation that other students could observe, in English.

Within the themes seen this month, it began with the physical and emotional traits of the students, but also that the student had the ability to present himself and identify in English his likes, dislikes, favorite activities, place of birth, where you currently live, age, favorite color, favorite music, among other essential aspects that manage to describe each one.

Through the strategy of "picture ordering" and meaning-focused speaking, and taking advantage of the movie "Encanto", the movie was used as a reference to implement the theme of physical and emotional traits. In the first instance, the children saw a segment of the film and as the scenes passed, the children identified the characters, their way of being and acting, and their physical features. After watching the segment, they began a word search with the new vocabulary, which included words that were related to the physical and emotional traits of people.

After finding the words, I introduced myself to the students, mentioning my name, age, where I live, favorite activities and colors, among other things. This was done to then ask each of the students to repeat the vocabulary that had been found in the word searches through the repetition strategy. Therefore, once they had a basic structure on the topic, each student had to write their own presentation with its characteristic aspects and then present themselves in front of their students.

The students had some preparation time for this activity, and one by one, they went to the board to make their presentations. When students made mistakes, those mistakes were written on the board for correction at the end of each presentation. On the other hand, unknown words were also noted on the board to be able to look up the meaning. Little by little the increase in oral production was evident, the students managed to introduce themselves and with few errors in terms of pronunciation and intonation. However, each of the students received feedback.

Another day, through the "listen and activities" strategy, different faces with different emotions were drawn on the board, so the students first had to answer how each of those emotions was said in English. When one of the students answered correctly, that student was asked to repeat the word so that the others could internalize it. After each of the students had a chance to answer a face, the students drew the faces in their notebooks.

On another occasion, an interactive listening strategy was carried out, where the students listened to the descriptions of the size of the nose, the eyes, the mouth, the color of the eyes, the skin, the eyebrows, the hair, and the emotion, and the idea was that as the students listened to the description, they would draw them in the notebook to finally see what the result of each one was.

Continuing with the activities related to the movie "Encanto", the physical descriptions of each of the characters were discussed. For this, they were given a card containing the drawings of each of the characters, and next to it, they had written different options to physically describe the characters, such as tall or short, fat or thin, strong or weak, old or young, among others. The idea was that through the "padded questions" strategy, the students would answer what the characteristics of each of these characters were. In

addition, after completing this activity, each student had to mention her favorite character and provide the reasons for her decisions.

For the international day of Venezuela, the students of the “preparatorio” degree had to know more about the culture of the country, for which they were shown a video that contained very vital and general aspects about demography, geography, culture, meals typical, religion, customs, etc. After that, brainstorming was carried out to remember all the ideas and analyze each of the aspects that they remembered the most from the video. Once this was done, some individual dialogues were written where each of the students had to appropriate that small script and study it for the presentation at the end of the month.

Each student had to study the dialogues in class and at home, but in class, it was the moment where each one received an extensive feedback process to help the student use an adequate pronunciation so that they did not make mistakes with the words or clarify unknown words. Among the strategies that were used so that the students could learn the dialogues correctly were:

In the first place, the contextualization process where videos and images were shown and each of the elements was explained, so that the students knew what the topic they would talk about was. After this, a series of "padded questions" were asked to identify if the students had understood most of the cultural, economic, and customs aspects of Venezuela.

Each student was assigned the dialogue that she was to read. The teacher read each of the dialogues first so that the student got a general idea of what the proper pronunciation looked like. There was time for each child to study in silence, then each one would go to the front to present their dialogue in front of all the children, so that little by little each child would stop being embarrassed or afraid of the public.

Sometime later, the positions were organized so that each student was already aware of the precise moment in which she should speak and next to which partner she had to stand.

Finally, there were many moments to practice and rehearse each of the dialogues, individually and together. For those students who had more difficulty learning the dialogues, extra support was provided, with the phonetics of the English words, so that it was a little easier and they could learn it more quickly.

On the day of the presentation, the students explained the economy, geography, demography and other vital aspects of the country of Venezuela in front of all the students of the school, so during this process, there was permanent accompaniment and when someone said in any way erroneously a word or a phrase, he was corrected after finishing, so that he could understand the phrase correctly.

The students found significant learning with this presentation, they managed to play their roles and each one appropriated the dialogues that had to be learned. It was a presentation that is different from the commonly seen standards, going out of the context of the classroom, which motivated the students even more.

It is important to recognize that the strategies used for this project were successful because they were based on the motivation of the students and the desire to want to learn their dialogues in order to interpret their roles perfectly. Every time they managed to recognize and mention a sentence and verbal credit was given for the effort and dedication; the students became even more motivated to continue working to learn all the dialogues.

In addition to that, students had the opportunity to learn about a different context of a country that, although it has similarities to our country, has its own customs, characteristics, and more. This type of work allows students to have greater control of their learning because seeing that they are projects that have visible results before a certain audience, they see the importance and power they currently have, with the knowledge they have acquired, so this type of learning strategies and these types of activities promote oral skills in students in a timely and effective manner.

### **March-2022**

After the students learned how to describe a person by their physical and emotional traits, and also managed to identify the essential elements of their own country (Colombia), in the month of March the topic of how to be a good citizen for society in Colombia was introduced. For this, it was decided to bring back the personification of the character "Simon", the main assistant in the classroom as a strategy for students to find greater motivation when learning how to be a good citizen.

In the first place, the "Word detectives" strategy was used, where a vocabulary related to the activities and actions that a good citizen would do was written, and the idea of the activity is that the students guess what the theme would be about. After carrying out the activity and the students understood the vocabulary, many ideas came out to determine and define the theme of "good citizenship in Colombia".

This month there was a vital emphasis on the use of basic commands in English, as children have already begun to develop greater use of the English language through basic questions or to make requests. As the days went by, the demand for handling English was increased, so that the students continued to use it, from greeting the teacher, such as the simplest questions to go to the bathroom or drink water, to making requests or questions about the topics seen in class.

Children in the "preparatorio" grade were asked to remember the teacher's main assistant, that is, "Simon". Through their speaking process, the children mentioned Simon's physical features so that they could draw him on the board and accompany them in class. It was explained to the boys that Simon had been to Europe and that he had learned a lot about the different cultures and experiences abroad but that he had forgotten how to be a great citizen in his own (country) so he asked the "preparatorio" students to help you regain your good citizenship.

On another occasion, through the problem-solving activities strategy, Simon was drawn and below him a list with many actions, both good and bad, was written. The idea is that students could identify the number of good and bad actions and thus define if Simon is or is not a good citizen. When writing each of the actions, students were asked questions about each word and each sentence.

The main strategy for students to recognize the sentences was to break down each of the sentences by words. In effect, each sentence was divided by words so that each student could be asked what it meant word by word. As students responded to each word, the sentence made sense. Finally, the students managed to recognize the meaning of each of the sentences.

The construction of the sentences was only the first step in Simon's citizenship process. Once the sentences were organized and understood by each of the students, each one was asked to indicate if they were good or bad actions, for this, interactive listening activities were carried out where the student had to be very active and attentive because they could be more likely to participate. When they indicated that it was a good or bad action, an X or a checkmark was placed as appropriate.

For the next class, the students put together a bag with different actions in the form of sentences (both negative and positive). The idea of the activity was for each student to draw a sentence, read it aloud, and recognize whether it was a good action or a negative action. If it was a positive action, he would have to go to the board and stick it near Simon. On the other hand, if the selected action was negative, then they would have to trash the action.

The students read each of the sentences aloud and a round of short questions was asked to verify the children's understanding of each of these sentences. Finally, students were able to build the ideal citizen, through their own means and thoughts.

At the end of March, the final exams of the second period were carried out and for this exam, its components were divided into segments. In the final exam of the second period, the topics to be evaluated were: Landscapes, remembering the types of relief, the days of the week and the months of the year, the place where the students live, as well as the national symbols of Colombia. Finally, through the film "Encanto", the physical and emotional traits were worked on.

The oral production part in the final exam was connected to the film "Encanto", since each of the students had to answer some questions with the "listening to pictures" strategy. In this activity, some of the characters from the film were shown and the students had to answer questions that talked about the personality and physical traits of each character. In addition, more specific questions were asked to verify the children's vocabulary, categorizing the characters of the film by tastes, by the friendliest, the most physically beautiful, the one with the best personality, among other questions.

Through the personification of the character of Simon, the students enjoyed the classes more because that character was with them since the beginning of the year and after so long

without using him, it was an exciting moment for them. In general, most of the activities that involved the use of the character Simon were for recreational activities such as the "Simon says" game or to exemplify actions or behaviors that Simon had during class, and thus be able to ask the children if they behaviors that the character had were appropriate or not for the school context.

Reiterating the above, through the roleplay strategy, children learned about the actions and behaviors that a good citizen should have when being with other people and living in society. In order to have guaranteed results and create a significant space, Simon was used as an example and reference, on the behaviors that he handled in the class, so while Simon was drawn in the class, actions were noted on the board that he did that could classified as positive or negative depending on the context. This allowed the students, in a real and experiential way, to determine and identify if the actions committed by the character were appropriate or not.

Through the interactive listening strategy, students not only expressed whether the actions were good or bad, but were also able to produce short sentences in English to help the teacher determine whether those actions were appropriate for the context.

Another strategy that the students really enjoyed was "Word detectives". Through this, the students had to discover the words that were missing respectively from the vocabulary of good and bad actions on the subject of good citizenship in Colombia. This was satisfactory for them, because as they guessed the missing words, the greater the ability to identify the vocabulary seen in class. On the other hand, for those students who did not have this ability, they began to understand the meaning of each of them, because as they guessed, each one was asked for an explanation in both English and Spanish.

Through interactive listening and the strategy of problem-solving activities, the students carried out a dynamic of being able to find the appropriate actions so that the character Simón could be a good citizen. This strategy motivated them a lot because they felt a leading role during the activity, a direct connection between Simón and them, for all the motivation that was provided at the time of giving the instructions and for the fact that as they were collecting the actions throughout the room to that Simon was a better citizen, Simon's face was changing (the face was drawn on the board and as the actions were



implemented, Simon's face became more and more cheerful). However, when the children did not perform the actions effectively and used negative actions that they could also find in the room, Simon's face changed to sad, which was the main indication that adding that action was not the most appropriate.

In this period, the final exam had a very strong oral component because as the school year has progressed, the progress of the students in oral production has been excellent, which has allowed a greater number of exercises in the final exam. be oral and not written.

In general terms, most of the students achieved very satisfactory results managing to answer, describe and identify elements in English, of vocabulary and topics worked on, and using short sentences and all the content worked on in class. The idea of integrating the “Encanto” movie was vital because this movie is the favorite of all students because they have seen it many times in English and Spanish, and this has allowed them to acquire more vocabulary and prior knowledge to identify the questions and have the ability to answer them correctly in English.

### **Interpretation and reflection of the implemented practice**

At the beginning of my educational practice at Liceo Montessori, I was assigned to teach social studies in English for the “preparatorio” grade. In the first instance, this generated enormous challenges and expectations because I had never had the experience of teaching children who are around 5 to 6 years old. At the time of being assigned to this group, the mentality as a teacher must adapt to different contexts and understand that the methodology with young children must be a dynamic, innovative methodology, with many didactic resources that allow children to have meaningful and playful learning, awakening their interest and taste for learning the different content subjects in English.

In the case of the “preparatorio” students, the interest in learning English as a foreign language awakened immediately. In fact, upon entering the classes, the first impression that the students gave was an immense interest and desire to learn to express themselves in English, because when I expressed myself in English and used gesticulation and visual resources to make the students understand, they reiterated their desire to learn English and want to express themselves through the foreign language.

One of the main advantages that these young learners had at the beginning of the school year was that, through the use of English, I expressed myself in a very practical, simple way so that they could understand perfectly what I was trying to transmit. On most occasions, the students were able to recognize what my instructions were regarding the activities proposed in class, without the need to explain them in Spanish. However, the students, wanting to confirm that what they had understood was what they had to do, asked in Spanish if they had to do the activity I was mentioning in English. This was the first difficulty I noticed in this course and what generated in me an expectation that the children needed to strengthen their oral skills to be able to express themselves in English, from the content they knew and would learn in that school year.

As with any learning process, it was necessary to begin gradually with simple, everyday instructions. That is to say, to focus on the use of English for requests or favors. For example, when going to the bathroom or going out to get water, the students learned that in my classes they had to ask me for any favor or request in English and if they did it in Spanish, they had to ask again using English.

This strategy at the beginning was complex to apply because the students would forget and ask for things in Spanish, which made the process of internalizing the requests in English more difficult. However, as the weeks went by, the students were able to understand and learn correctly the way in which they should ask for things. This learning was applied in the same way for greetings at the entrance of the class and for the farewell moment.

From the moment the school year began, there were two aspects that shaped not only the educational practices and learning moments, but also the way in which the school context would be directly affected. This school year was the first year in which students finally returned to face-to-face education after having spent two years in virtual education. For some, this was the first school year that they attended a school in a face-to-face manner, which meant emotional changes, change of routine and of course moving away from their family context to enter into social interaction processes with children and teachers that they had never seen face to face before.

The pandemic brought with it new regulations that had to be followed correctly in order to avoid the spread of the virus, so students were not allowed to perform many activities that they normally performed before they were in a formative process in the midst of the pandemic. When the cases of the virus decreased exponentially and there was a total return to face-to-face education, the students were initially disconcerted because they were no longer in front of their parents' mantle, which was what they had normally been doing since virtual education. Understanding this context allowed configuring the development and learning process from a more humanistic perspective and generating proposals that would have an impact on education at a slower pace so that students could adapt to the school context and enjoy the educational process.

On the other hand, one of the main difficulties that arose for the development of social interaction as the development of English language learning was the use of the mask. Indeed, the mask does not allow students to express themselves in the same way, so this factor had a profound impact and became a challenge for the development of oral competencies in English as a foreign language. By not being able to see the students' faces directly, one cannot really see the way in which the students pronounce certain words, and generally teachers emphasize this because there is vocabulary and certain words that

require a specific pronunciation, so the mask to some extent hinders these aspects, so that different alternatives have had to be used for the management of pronunciation.

The motivation of the students to learn the foreign language was one of the elements that most influenced their own learning processes, since they showed a great interest in learning English from the area of social sciences, I made emphasis on conducting classes that enhanced oral skills through different communicative strategies, and thus, collecting the most important moments of this experience and analyzing each of the strategies in order to define whether they are useful and enhance the oral skills of each student.

### **Communicative language strategies classified by their axes**

It is important to clarify that although the communicative language strategies were classified in this way, they may be relatively changed according to the educational purposes and intentions, as well as to the needs posed by the course.

| <b>Meaning-focused listening</b>        | <b>Learning through task-focused interaction</b> | <b>Language-focused learning</b> |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Guiding listening and speaking          | Listen and do activities                         | Multiple-choice sounds           |
| Descriptions                            | Picture ordering strategy                        | Could you repeat that?           |
| Describe the picture                    | Discovering the story                            | Phrase by phrase                 |
| “What is it?” technique                 | Supporting listening strategy                    | Padded questions                 |
| Memorizing useful phrases and sentences | Listening to pictures                            | Repetition technique             |

In the first instance, the "**what is it**" strategy allows us to ask students about a concept, a specific vocabulary word, or an answer to something. In the case of the students, using this strategy keeps students away from the meaning for a while they do not have the exact definition. Thus, it allows them to be creative and use critical thinking to construct meaning. It has been evidenced that when students do not have the exact answer, they look for other means to answer the question such as answering randomly, or using the notebook

to write down what they want to answer, and this produces immense interest and competitiveness among students as they all want to answer correctly.

This strategy is very effective and interesting because the argumentation capacity of the students increases as they say different answers, looking for the correct one, and also all the work is done by them until they get the result. In the “preparatorio” grade, students respond positively to this strategy and most of them are able to identify the use of this strategy because at the moment of using it, gesticulation is also used to emphasize that a question is being asked and students need to answer.

The next strategy used in this learning context is "**listen and do**". Listen and do activities are used in most classrooms and are the basis of Total Physical Response language teaching (Asher, Kosudo and de la Torre, 1974). These activities involve students' one hundred percent attention to get a clear idea of the instructions the teacher is providing. One of the advantages of this strategy is that it promotes the areas of speaking and listening. In the listening area, students must listen attentively to the teacher because if they do not, the instructions will not be clear and they will not be able to follow them and perform the activity correctly. On the other hand, the speaking area is worked on in the case of the “preparatorio” grade because instructions are requested that are focused on the constant use of English to express themselves and to carry out the activities.

On the other hand, students have the opportunity to interact with their peers and build stronger bonds, so this strategy involves a lot of teamwork and strengthens the union and empathy among peers. However, this can be positive and have its disadvantages, so students are easily distracted and may talk too much when working. This is why sometimes this strategy must be strictly managed to avoid distractions on the part of the students. It is a strategy that has many benefits and for this grade level it generally works very well, regardless of the previously mentioned aspects of distractions and constant chatter among students.

The next strategy that has been widely used is the **listening to pictures technique**. This technique "involves a large quantity of material to listen to". (Nation, 1995, p. 13) "The picture helps learners understand the spoken description and allows them to learn the new language items in that description." (Nation, 1989, p. 21). This strategy has been very well

received by the students because of the amount of graphic and sound material provided and required. By means of photographs, the students are able to clearly analyze the focus of the activity and this makes them feel more at ease for its realization, since they quickly associate the images with the vocabulary they are working on.

The interesting thing about this activity is that depending on the type of image shown, it increases or decreases the students' interest. In other words, it is vital to show striking images that capture the children's attention. Generally, images from animated series or cartoons are used, which they may know and may have a broader idea of how to associate the descriptions of the characters or landscapes with the vocabulary they are beginning to work on.

**Describe the picture** in a systematic and predictable way, for example, beginning in the top-left corner and moving across, so that the students can easily follow your description and match the picture to your words. (Nation, 1995, p. 13). This strategy works very well and they love it because by connecting this with the previous strategy, students are able to create stories or try to make sense of the sequence of pictures in order to describe the actions and with simple language, use words and short sentences that manage to associate prior knowledge with the pictures.

However, it is important to keep in mind that children have a limited knowledge of vocabulary so it is common that they are not able to follow a sequence of description fully using the English language, or at least they do not manage to do it alone, so this specific strategy should be guided and receive constant support and feedback so that the communicative act can flow.

However, as the months have passed, the level of difficulty of the strategy has gradually increased and little by little the students have been able to use more words and short sentences in English, showing that they have mastered a wide vocabulary.

Descriptions is one of the most effective strategies for fostering students' oral skills. Since a description can be done verbally, it is used in different ways, such as referring to a comparison or talking about the physical appearance of a character, object or thing.

On the other hand, with this strategy the vocabulary worked in class can be used to emphasize collaborative work, since it allows each child to contribute, even with one word, information that is valuable to shape whatever is being described, and this allows the student to generate greater self-confidence and thus manage to develop more easily in future activities.

The students like this strategy very much because in most of the topics worked on during the school year, the students are asked to describe their favorite objects, characters or landscapes. That is, always integrating the learning to the context of each child, in order to always generate interest and motivation in them to continue promoting oral skills.

In the **picture ordering** strategy, learners see a set of pictures that are in the wrong order. They listen to a description of each of the pictures or to a story involving the events in the pictures, and they put the pictures in the right order (Flenley, 1982). Students enjoy this activity very much and even more when they do it in pairs, where they can order the pictures as the teacher describes the situation or the same order, so that, through listening, the children must arrange them using logic and understanding the teacher's instructions.

This strategy strengthens critical thinking because it allows students to reason about the different situations that are being described in the context of the scenes or, in the same case, the images. On the other hand, teamwork is highlighted because through individuality a student will not be fully capable of performing a work that has a certain level of complexity, in fact, it is designed to receive a constant process of feedback from the teacher and the same classmates in order to define the appropriate order of the images and thus create sense to the descriptions that the teacher makes in order to order the sequence.

The use of the **padded questions** strategy is vital for the listening practice of the students, who have to give a very simple and minimal answer when it occurs. In fact, when a teacher uses this strategy, students must respond in a precise, short way, because this type of question seeks to encourage the area of listening and in turn that students begin to grasp the idea of how to convey short thoughts to English questions verbally.

This type of questions is very easy to do because the topics to be covered are infinite, and they can be adapted to any topic that you are working on with the children. Not introducing

the topic at the beginning of the class generates intrigue among the students, and this causes them to be very concerned about what they will begin to see in class. This motivates students to have an active listening process, but also to be able to answer short, simple and easy to answer questions.

The **problem-solving** strategy consists of the children being given a problem or activity to solve, for which they must dialogue and work as a team to find answers to the questions that have been created by the teacher and the instructions provided. In general, this activity is very effective if they are simple problems, because sometimes students had problems of great complexity and were not able to solve them, so it is important to be constantly supporting them in the process. That is why, in most of the activities that have been carried out during the school year, the Supporting listening strategy has also been used, which is very valuable because it supports students when they need help to understand certain concepts.

The aim for the student is to understand the subject matter without the teacher using the Spanish language and without directly answering the questions. Teachers provide support by giving clues that involve the students' previous experience and context.

**Could you repeat that?** (Folse, 1991) involves a learner or group of learners dictating to someone writing on the blackboard, while they are facing the other way. Therefore, the people dictating cannot see what is being written on the blackboard. This can be done with two teams and similar but not the same sentences. In fact, this strategy can be used by both the teacher and the student, and it implies that the person who is managing the communicative process must repeat what he/she has just said because the person who is asking the question has not fully understood what he/she is trying to say.

This is one of the most traditional strategies in English language teaching because it allows us to see if the student has retained the knowledge, whether it is a concept or a word, and is able to reproduce it through repetition.

Although it is a strategy that is very effective and works in all the activities that are carried out, its use should be moderate because it can become boring for students if it is not handled properly. In fact, this strategy can also be used in activities that require great care



and attention because many times the teacher will not allow the students to hear more than three times what the person is trying to say and if in that number of times it is not understood, it is very difficult to interpret the meaning of that communicative event and that is why it is so vital that whenever possible to reiterate and use this strategy.

In **discover the story** one learner has a copy of a story. They tell the topic of the story to others in the group and they ask questions to discover what the story is about. There are many variations of this technique (Joycey, 1982). The idea of this strategy is that, through critical thinking, students can discover the story when provided with key elements that can be used to discover what the story is about or to guess the name. There are cases in which stories based on children's movies have been used and children are very happy to recognize the descriptions or segments of the stories, as they can identify them more easily and this makes them have the opportunity to mention the name and have a greater number of correct answers.

The authors propose many uses of this strategy and it is considered that one of the most important can be a story written by the student and that the information is provided to other students, so that those students need to guess the theme of the story. This activity requires a lot of concentration and classroom management on the part of the teacher, since students must be attentive at all times during the class so that there are no unforeseen events, they are not distracted, and they retain as much information as possible from each of the different stories narrated. In high school, students sometimes fail to finish the activity because they are easily distracted, and this is one of the difficulties that arise at the time of executing the activity so it is necessary to make constant calls for attention to continue with the development of the same.

One of the main advantages of this school is the opportunity it gives students to perform in different areas and exploit all their skills, not only focus on the academic part, but seek that students can demonstrate the capabilities they have in other fields, such as sports, music, robotics, dance, art and acting. The Liceo Montessori constantly creates new events and festivities in order for students to develop an international perspective and understand more about the different events that are celebrated globally, making students understand globalization and elements that are not seen in Colombia.

The most important project of the year takes place in December and is the Christmas show. It is a project that should be mentioned in this analysis because the teachers who are part of the bilingualism department are in charge of directing it. In fact, the project is carried out in English and the main idea is that each grade can face the stage (parents, students, teachers and directors) and perform a play whose theme is any story related to Christmas.

The “preparatorio” students had as their topic the story of Frosty, the snowman and how Christmas was gradually weakening and how important it was for Santa Claus to save Christmas. In order for the students to learn the dialogues of the presentation and also to show their talent as artists, the communicative strategies took on a useful and priority role, because by using them, the students had alternatives and thus did not have to learn the dialogues in the same way.

Through the **supporting listening** strategy, students constantly received feedback from the teacher while reading the dialogue and the teacher detected difficulties or incorrect pronunciations. On the other hand, through the repetition strategy, students were able to study the dialogues on many occasions and internalize them. Clearly this was not the most pleasant for them, since it is a strategy that had no playful purpose and was memorization. Although it is not the most fun strategy, it was very effective and most of the students managed to learn the dialogue. However, the interactive listening strategy was integrated, so that they could understand the context of the story, watching videos of each of the roles and thus not having to use the same strategy and end up bored.

Finally, **body language** was a strategy that greatly favored not only the understanding of the texts, but also so that the work would look much more natural and each child would interpret their role artistically, showing meaning and appropriation of the character. Body language was a vital strategy for the development of the characters and the learning of the dialogues, since the students learned their dialogues but also managed to give life to each of the characters in the play, showing passion, dedication and the work of more than a month. Parents and teachers were surprised and moved by the dedication and excellence in the execution of the Christmas show.

These strategies worked very well at the Christmas show and it was a total success. The parents were very happy with the performance and effort of the students. The teachers were

very satisfied with the results and performance of each of the students, who with joy and enthusiasm turned these practices into a beautiful work of art, full of light and Christmas spirit. Finally, the students were very happy because they were able to meet all the expectations they had, at the time of performing they felt very calm and enjoyed the act one hundred percent. The use of English as a foreign language in this act took notoriety and they themselves were surprised at the amount of learning and memories they took away with their own talents and visual representations.

Another project that has great visibility with the social studies subject and the development of oral English language skills was the international day of Venezuela. The social studies teachers were in charge of this event and the idea was to present all the important elements of the country and expose them to the other classes of the school.

The “preparatorio” grade was in charge of presenting the geography, demography and sociodemographic components. For this, the first thing used was a set of activities such as guides, videos and presentations that contained pertinent information for the students to contextualize themselves with the necessary elements and even other curious facts. After that, students had the opportunity to analyze each of the elements and as students mentioned the aspects they remembered from the videos, some dialogues and keywords were written on the board. Once this was done, some individual dialogues were written where each of the students had to appropriate that small script and study it for the presentation at the end of the month.

The children had to study the dialogues both in class and at home in order to internalize them quickly and effectively, as there was not so much preparation time and it was necessary for the event to be successful. The most important thing was that the students understood the relevant elements and the reason for celebrating the international day of this neighboring country. After a few days of studying the dialogues individually, each student received feedback in class to clarify the use of the vocabulary that was in the dialogue, proper pronunciation and avoiding mistakes, explaining the mistakes and unknown words.

After this, a serie of "padded questions" were asked to identify if the students had understood most of the cultural, economic, and customs aspects of Venezuela. The teacher read each of the dialogues first so that the student got a general idea of what the proper

pronunciation looked like. There was time for each child to study in silence, then each one would go to the front to present their dialogue in front of all the children, so that little by little each child would stop being embarrassed or afraid of the public.

For those students who had more difficulty learning the dialogues, extra support was provided, with the phonetics of the English words, so that it was a little easier and they could learn it more quickly.

On the day of the presentation, the students explained the economy, geography, demography and other vital aspects of the country of Venezuela in front of all the students of the school, so during this process, there was permanent accompaniment and when someone said in any way erroneously a word or a phrase, he was corrected after finishing, so that he could understand the phrase correctly.

The students found significant learning with this presentation, they managed to play their roles and each one appropriated the dialogues that had to be learned. It was a presentation that is different from the commonly seen standards, going out of the context of the classroom, which motivated the students even more.

The importance of these projects to my content area, which is social sciences, is that it integrates the learning and technical knowledge that have been worked on in the subject, but also connects the learning and promotes the oral production of students at an early age. Responsibility is established, since each student assumes a work role and thus, each one feels the importance he/she exerts in the presentation. This not only motivates the student, but also teaches important values such as learning to make mistakes, learning to receive feedback processes without feeling sad or uncomfortable, learning to take responsibility for their actions, deeds and tasks, and finally learning to be more fluent in English as a foreign language.

Personally, I feel that projects are very meaningful strategies that will always show evidence of collective student-teacher work, and this creates a greater relationship between them. In addition, it is directly linked to the subject of my systematization, since each of the activities and communicative strategies that favor the students' performance in orality is

important to mention and valid to highlight in order to evidence the communicative processes in English that have been recorded during the school year.

### **Motivation**

"The term motivation is derived from the Latin word "movere" which means to move. Motivation represents the process that arouses, activates, directs and sustains behavior and performance. It can also be seen as the process of stimulating people to action to achieve a desired task. A person is motivated when he or she wants to do something." (Orhan, Çetin, & Aslan, 2011). Indeed, it is important to promote in students the constant desire to learn in different ways. English language teaching requires a number of important aspects when it comes to motivating students to have an interest in learning the foreign language.

The first necessary aspect that has influenced the "preparatorio" grade to motivate the students has been the confidence that the students have received from the teacher. That is, from the beginning of the year, showing the students affection and good treatment was one of the key aspects for them to be willing to learn, because when they recognize that they have a teacher who is willing to trust their work and who teaches them with patience and affection, the greater their desire to study and learn English.

"Academic motivation is the term associated with motivation in academics. This can create confidence in ability, along with an increase in the value of education and the desire to learn." (Young, Johnson, Hawthorne, and Pugh 2011). On the other hand, students know that in social studies classes, excellent behaviors, teamwork, effort and dedication is not only rewarded with learning, but, sometimes the teacher stimulates students to strive to achieve their goals, and rewards them with outings to games that are in the school, or allows them to make drawings or even, to perform competitions that have additional grades for encouragement.

This motivates students to keep working and although it is not an activity or moment that happens in every class, it makes students willing to continue learning most of the time. Similarly, another way to motivate students is to highlight the work when it has been done correctly, and when children do not perform the activities correctly, not to scold them, but to encourage them and perform a feedback process so that they can try again and learn

without being demotivated and without the teacher having to resort to giving the answers to the activities.

### **Use of communicative strategies and technologies**

After having analyzed the use of communicative strategies in each of the recorded moments of the teaching practice, it can be confirmed that students learn with greater enthusiasm when different learning strategies are used, which although framed by the same objective, are developed in different ways and this motivates students to continue working, because when they see activities and strategies that are innovative, that use new digital resources and that have themes that are related to aspects that they sometimes know (when the themes and content of the class are connected with movies or known characters from series or movies), the students work cooperatively and autonomously.

For the learning of a foreign language it is necessary to use different audiovisual resources, since this generates that students are exposed to a foreign language context and more easily associate the videos and the content to the vocabulary that they begin to work on. The school, by having access to different innovative resources such as screen projectors and speakers, allows students to experience an interactive class from their own classroom.

In the same way, there are times when it is necessary for students to carry out activities outside the classroom and these activities strengthen teamwork and change the children's mentality, so they do not use the classroom as the only place where they can generate learning. This is why, on occasion, students would go out to the playground to do activities that required them to remember the topics seen in class.

In addition to these resources, the school has several areas to explore other skills of students, such as the Tics room, a digital space where there is a giant touch projector, which allows students to work directly from the screen and this not only promotes teamwork, but also allows students to learn using other types of playful and dynamic activities.

### **Behavior**

The behavior of students in each educational institution configures a good environment in the school context and this allows classes and knowledge to flow easily. It is not only a task

of the students, but also as a teacher of social studies, it is important to encourage class rules and appropriate behaviors, to promote learning and avoid behavioral problems.

The students in the “preparatorio” grade are very affectionate, kind, and respectful of the teacher who is teaching the class; they are children who are always ready to receive the teacher with a lot of encouragement and willingness. Sometimes they are distracted and talk constantly during class, but for this it is important to have a good classroom management, where not only the teacher serves as a role model but also promotes behaviors and attitudes that are based on the values and principles that the school has in its educational proposals.

In the academic aspects, the students in general have a very even level of English, which allows the classes to be guided at the same pace, and when there are doubts, through explanations and feedback from the teacher and sometimes from other students who have more knowledge or handling of the subject, help is given to those who still have questions and are not clear about the concepts.

As previously mentioned in the section on motivation, expressing to high school children when they are performing correct actions and are working properly in class is one of the simplest and most important ways in which children can motivate themselves and continue working to achieve their learning, since they adopt positive behaviors and this creates a pleasant learning environment.

## **Conclusions and experiences**

The development of this systematization has allowed me to analyze different aspects of teaching a subject in English, such as the different communicative strategies for oral production, their effectiveness and the impact they have on students. In addition, the opportunity to recognize elements that are vital in the formation and process of personality development and education of young children and the behavior they manage in the classroom through these communicative strategies.

The systematization is an opportunity to reconstruct the process of my professional practice as a future graduate and at the same time, it is the perfect moment to demonstrate the learning and methodologies that I have learned in my years as a university student. In addition, this process allowed moments of reflection on the school context, on the available work resources, on the different learning strategies that were used during the systematization recording.

In the first instance, the behavior of the children in the “preparatorio” grade provides an appropriate school environment to promote and reinforce oral skills in the students. The willingness and interest of the children make it possible to carry out the different activities proposed for the classes. In this process of recording pertinent moments, it is important to mention that it was seldom necessary to use other communicative strategies that had not been planned as the main idea of the class. In other words, the students followed the instructions most of the time, which meant that I did not have to modify the activities during the classes.

The children showed a behavior that favored the student-teacher relationship, generating trust, kindness and respect. This made it possible to recognize that the students of the “preparatorio” grade, from the beginning of the school year until the last moment of the systematization record, showed an immense interest in strengthening their oral English language skills. To this end, they complied with the instructions and followed the proposed activities and communicative strategies.



This in turn motivated me as a teacher because the connection achieved with this group allowed me to feel more and more like teaching at this grade level. At the same time, seeing the children's interest, willingness and enthusiasm to learn English awakened in me a sense of belonging and a greater responsibility to promote learning in all English skills, but to focus a little more on the oral part, which was the main focus of my research.

Systematization has been an indispensable method for registering the experiences and key moments of the 2021-2022 school year. At the beginning of the school year, the students had a very basic notion of English in oral production, which generated in me a great interest in strengthening this area. According to the communicative language strategies used, I can conclude that most of these have been very useful and have fostered in the students interest and motivation to learn and strengthen oral skills, taking into account that creativity was used, the different digital resources available, the context of the students as well as their previous knowledge, movies, cartoons and cartoons, as well as audiovisual resources that in the classes avoided a boring environment and learning masterfully.

One of the most important lessons that I took away from this experience is that the systematization allowed me to analyze different communicative strategies of the language that I did not know and others that I already knew but that were configured according to the needs of the students. During the research process, being able to know these strategies allowed me to broaden my range of knowledge as a teacher and at the same time, to see if these strategies can be used in other contexts.

Among the communicative language strategies that I can highlight that had the most impact and that currently work best in the context of "Preparatorio" grade students are:

First of all, the guiding listening and speaking strategy is one of the best strategies to use with this grade, because in addition to allowing the student to use the vocabulary he/she knows to express him/herself and at the same time receive real-time feedback from the teacher so that he/she can connect his/her own learning with what the teacher is providing and thus, be able to manage an adequate communicative process. In the case of children, they love to receive "help" from the teacher when they do not know what to say after starting the sequence of words to form a sentence.

Padded questions are one of the simplest, easiest, and most useful strategies when teaching in this course because it works for everything. Indeed, this strategy helps at the beginning of the class when you want the students to remember what was seen in the last class, but it also works to ask concise questions about a topic, to see if the students are understanding or if they have previous knowledge about a specific question. With high school children, this strategy is very easy to use and is highly recommended for use, however, it is recommended that it not be used so many times in a single class because the idea is that classes with children of such a young age are didactic, and the constant use of this strategy could lead to student boredom.

Listening to pictures, describing the pictures and picture ordering strategies are highly recommended, the activities are performed in a guided way. When performing these strategies the student must understand each of the instructions step by step so that he/she does not make mistakes, but what children like most about these strategies are when they let their imagination fly with images that are related to their favorite characters from animated series or movies. I recommend its implementation from early childhood to upper grades because it is a strategy that allows for the enhancement of students' oral skills.

Multiple choice sounds is a strategy that I would recommend in future implementations, but I do not consider it to be the most appropriate during my systematization process. The use of the mask did not allow me to perform this strategy perfectly, in fact, it made the process more difficult, and having to take off the mask to perform it resulted in a breach of the biosafety rules at that time. That is why I could conclude that the strategy works because the times I used it the students achieved favorable results; however, the use of the mask made it difficult to perform the strategy, which is why it was not used so many times.

Ultimately, the discovering the story strategy was a very valuable strategy for the students that allowed the students to strengthen social ties with peers with whom they do not normally work. This allowed us to analyze whether the children were able to work in groups, not specifically the group of friends. This strategy can be implemented for future school years and is a lot of fun, however, it is necessary for the teacher to be attentive at all times and to have perfect management of the class, because sometimes the children are easily distracted and do not work as they should.

The methods and communicative language strategies used during the systematization gave good results in strengthening the oral production of high school students in the 2021-2022 school year; therefore, I recommend their implementation to determine their effectiveness and operation in the medium and long term, as long as the needs of the students are investigated beforehand and each of the strategies are adapted to the necessary context, otherwise, they will not work in the same way.

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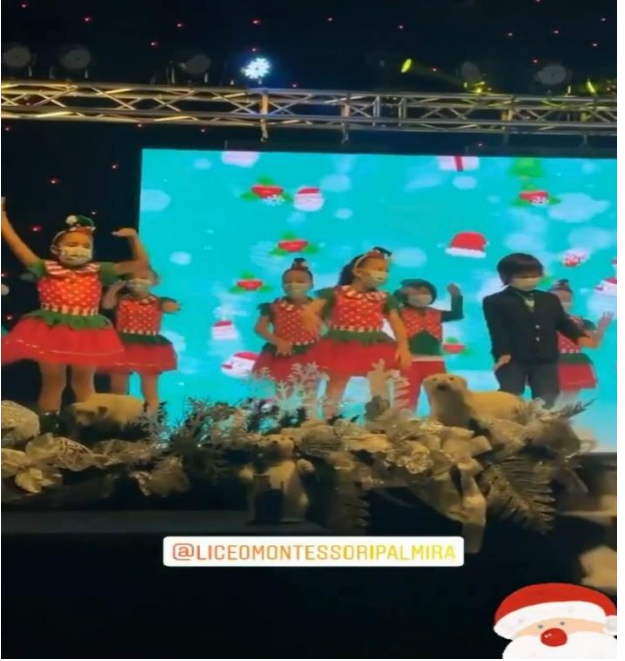

## Annexes

| Activity name                 | Available resources                                  | Communicative strategies  | Pictures   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Venezuela's International Day | Classroom, chairs, decorations, microphone, speaker. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> </ul> |    |
| Venezuela's International Day | Classroom, chairs, decorations, microphone, speaker. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> </ul> |   |
| Venezuela's International Day | Classroom, chairs, decorations, microphone, speaker. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening</li> </ul>               |  |



|                               |   |  |  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
|                               |   | and speaking.  |  |
| Venezuela's International Day | Classroom, chairs, decorations, microphone, speaker.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> </ul>                              |    |
| Venezuela's International Day | Classroom, chairs, decorations, microphone, speaker.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> </ul>                              |   |
| Christmas Show - 2021.        | Microphone, costumes, stage, chairs, decorations, scripts, makeup, artificial effects, music, lights. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> <li>- Padded questions.</li> </ul> |  |

|                               |   |  |   |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
|                               |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listening to pictures.</li> </ul>   |   |
| <p>Christmas Show - 2021.</p> | <p>Microphones, costumes, stage, chairs, decorations, scripts, makeup, artificial effects, music, lights.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> <li>- Padded questions.</li> <li>- Listening to pictures.</li> </ul> |   |
| <p>Christmas Show - 2021.</p> | <p>Microphones, costumes, stage, chairs, decorations, scripts, makeup, artificial effects, music, lights.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> <li>- Padded questions.</li> <li>- Listening to pictures.</li> </ul> |  |

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| <p>Christmas Show - 2021.</p> | <p>Microphone s, costumes, stage, chairs, decorations, scripts, makeup, artificial effects, music, lights.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repetition technique.</li> <li>- “What is it” Technique.</li> <li>- Supporting listening strategies.</li> <li>- Guiding listening and speaking.</li> <li>- Padded questions.</li> <li>- Listening to pictures.</li> </ul> |   |
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