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Autónoma de Puebla
FACULTAD DE LENGUAS**



**THE USE OF LUDIC MATERIALS TO TEACH ENGLISH
GRAMMAR**

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Languages for the degree of:

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

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“THE USE OF LUDIC MATERIALS TO TEACH ENGLISH GRAMMAR”

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction to the problem

During our experience as an English teacher in front of an elementary school group, we have observed that one of the main problems that some students had when they learn English grammar is the boredom and the lack of interest. Therefore, as graduated students of the teaching English degree, we had learnt how some materials help teachers to motivate students to learn English in a fun and attractive way. Based on our experience we are focusing this research on what kind of materials the student teachers use during their classes to teach grammar in elementary school. As Tomlinson (1998) says teachers should devote plenty of time to the demanding task of constructing, deconstructing and reconstructing their daily pedagogical practices as a means of facing decision making and improving their teaching performance, innovating in their classes and so, developing professionally by using attractive materials teachers will develop the students' skills as well as they will feel more comfortable learning English.

In addition, novice English teachers should focus classes on the needs of the students by using ludic (playful) materials. According to Tosta, (2001) activities such as games contain significant playful-elements and that adds to the joyful tone which foreign language classes must have. Because of this, the learning could be more meaningful to students and also they could see it easier and the level of participation in class could increase. Furthermore, students could feel more confident and eventually more interested in learning a foreign language. As Tosta, (2001) mentioned one of the key elements of success in a foreign language class is the possibility for that class to be not only an instance of learning, but also a moment of fun.

1.1 Rationale of the research

This research was carried out considering; it will support future teachers to include ludic material in their classes. Ludic material could help students to get attracted to the English language lessons. This research was developed in order to explore when and how a cohort of student teachers used ludic material in their classes with children. Martinez (2011) developed a project called “Teacher strategies for the learning of the English as a second language in Primary School”, this study was focused on increasing English teachers knowledge and skills for teaching English to primary school students. This thesis shows and explains some materials and strategies that are good for teaching English to primary school students, it also gives an explanation of what grammar is and explains different methods to teach grammar to children.

In this research, a group of 12 students-teachers was selected, all of them were enrolled in a BA program at the Facultad de Lenguas. All participants were taking the subject “Teaching practicum with children” (*Experiencia docente con niños*), participants answered a questionnaire about their teaching experiences and which were the ludic activities they put into practice to make the classes more interactive and interesting and how the English language level of the students improved by using ludic activities.

1.2 Significance of the study

The topic was selected because it is important to explore how new generations of English teachers are using teaching materials to motivate students to learn English in a more simple and effective way. Nowadays, learning English as a foreign language is very important, especially in childhood, is essential for educational training, since learning a foreign language opens up new roads as well as greater opportunities in the work and personal field.

Based on our experience, it was observed that sometimes it is difficult for students to learn English, just using the grammar book and the whiteboard, students did not seem to feel motivated to learn English. Then, we decided to use different materials; after some lessons we saw student felt more motivated to learn grammar because we did not focus on the grammar books or in answering exercises or handouts. Using different activities helped us to realize that students seemed to be more motivated. Our experience showed us that what we really need in class are materials that help students to learn the language in an easy way and capture students' attention, not only by writing the grammar on the whiteboard or answering the activities in books and handouts. We observed that students need to interact among them using the language, feel attracted, comfortable and gradually students have the desire to continue learning the language. The material we used was ludic material because learning a foreign language is not easy at the beginning, learn grammar seems to be tedious and difficult and it seems to be much harder for children.

In classes, students seem to be bored when learning grammar, it often happens that children sometimes show apathy when learning a foreign language because it seems completely unknown in many ways, in the form of pronouncing it and how to write it. This may cause some fear when taking the classes; therefore, students do not participate and stay quiet because they do not feel safe to speak and also because of their age they still do not understand that learning English will be useful in their futures lives.

Thus we as future teachers need to develop and design materials to teach grammar to the students, which is not easy to understand and over the time it becomes harder and harder, so using ludic materials teachers and student teachers will encourage and help students to make their English grammar learning easier and funnier at the same time. That is why we decided to focused the present research on students of the BA in

English Language Teaching (ELT) at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP), mainly in a cohort of BA students who are in the last semester of their BA. The participants of this research are students enrolled in the subject called “teaching practicum with children”. The purpose of this research is to explore how student-teachers use ludic materials to teach English and if it helps to make students more self-confident at the moment of participating in classes, also if students wanted to learn English because the classes are more dynamic, interactive and attractive to them, and if they feel more comfortable.

1.3 Theoretical context of the research

According to Thornberry, S (1999) when learning a new language, learners need to see how the structure of the language (subjects, objects, verbs, adverbials, tense, aspect and modality) are just some of the ways in which grammar is used to fine-tune the meanings wish to express, and for which words on their own are barely adequate. The main job of a language teacher is bringing to the classroom the language structure in a proper manner to each class.

Children are usually full of enthusiasm and energy and they are not interested in learning something that is boring, so teachers need to attract their attention for teaching them something; in this light, teachers need to have a variety and change of activities for their learning such as: games, songs and plays as Tosta (2001) and Small (1997) assert that an essential element of success in the process of learning a new language there is the possibility for the class to be an opportunity to learn and the students to find learning enjoyable.

1.4 Research Setting

The research was carried out in a public university called Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla in the Languages Faculty that is located in Calle 24 Nte 2003, Humboldt. This faculty provides a higher level education whose main objective is training professionals in the area of education who will be able to teach English as a second language at any academic level. The participants were 12 students of the subject called “teaching practicum with children” all of them were given English classes in primary school level.

We decided to carry out the study in this specific context because we have observed that many students do not feel attracted to learn English as a foreign language and we realized it was because most of the classes were boring and repetitive, so we decided to observe and analyze how students reacted to the use of different materials especially ludic materials.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore how a cohort of twelve English language students-teachers used ludic materials to make dynamic classes and to identify how they applied different materials for teaching grammar to children. Furthermore, it aims to identify how students’ participation increased when ludic materials or activities are used.

1.6 Research Questions

1. How do student teachers apply ludic material with children? And how often?
2. According to the student-teachers, what are the most effective ludic materials to teach English to children?
3. How do student teachers perceive students' participation in the classroom when ludic materials are used?

1.7 Keywords

Grammar. Grammar is an applied linguistic goal that help learners to know and understand the choices available to them when communicating in speech and in writing, as well as more formally or more informally

Primary school students: They are the people engaged in the apprehension, implementation and reading knowledge of any science or art discipline. It is usual that a student is enrolled in a formal program of study, but may also engage in the pursuit of knowledge in an autonomous or informal manner.

Materials: Materials are those that bring together media and resources that facilitate teaching and learning. Often used in the educational environment to facilitate the acquisition of concepts, skills and attitudes

Dynamic classes: The dynamic classes are those in which students do or learn fast and efficiently the topics.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This section provides the information that is behind this research. The definition and importance of teaching grammar to children is presented as well as the background of children's learning and the use and design of materials is discussed.

2.1. Concept of grammar

It is important to point out that grammar is essential in the language teaching process as Thornbury (1999) states "Grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in language, thus, grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed" (p. 1), so grammar is the study of the rules and fundamentals of any language that govern the way of using and organizing the words on a sentence. Based on this, grammar seems to be very important for primary school students because they need to learn grammatical terms and certain rules that are supposed to be associated with correctness so they could efficiently and they should know how to express themselves in a real conversation. Besides that, it seems not easy that children focus their attention on learning grammar directly because sometimes it becomes tedious and children get bored, but it is important that they learn the rules that govern a language, through learning grammar students realize when and how to use those terms.

2.1.1. English grammar

English language belongs to the family of the Indo-European languages and a great number of words that belong to the English vocabulary was given by other languages, including: Latin, French, German and the Scandinavian languages, according to Yule grammar is defined as the process of describing the structures of phrases and sentences in such a way that we account for all the grammatical sequences in a language and rule out all the ungrammatical sequences. (Yule, 2006 p. 81).

- The type of biological distinction used in English is quite different from the more common distinction found in languages that use grammatical gender. In this latter sense, nouns are classified according to their gender class and, typically, articles and adjectives have different forms to “agree with” the gender of the noun.
- English has one of the most difficult spelling systems in the world. The written forms of language are not phonetic for two main reasons. First, the spelling of the English language has not changed despite a marked evolution in pronunciation. Second, the spellings of foreign loans are often left intact.

2.1.2. The importance of teaching grammar

As foreign language students, it is recognize that grammar plays an important role in the process of learning a foreign language. Based on Thornburny (1999) says when teachers are teaching the grammar of a language, teachers should remember that students are improving our communication in every single way of their lives.

Grammar is important because it will allow speakers to express from simple ideas to more complex ideas; for example, if a student does not know how to use the

simple past form of the verbs, he/she will not be able to express what he/she did last night, so grammar is seen as a cornerstone for an efficient communication.

Harmer (1991) stated that grammar is presented in every sentence, in every utterance people make to transmit a message, if learners of a foreign language do not know the rules and how to use them, they will not succeed in putting across what they want to say and they will not understand the person they are talking to or what they are reading or even when they listen to a song or watch a movie they will not understand what they are hearing. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), grammar knowledge is important, as it enables students to communicate accurately, meaningfully and appropriately” (p. 142).

2.2 Teaching grammar to children

It is known that children acquire a new language easily and it seems to be evident that the development of grammatical competence has an important role in the learning of a foreign language. Tomlinson (1998) says that grammar is an applied linguistic goal that helps learners to know and understand the choices available to them when communicating in speech and in writing, more formally or more informally. It is necessary that children learn the language rules from the beginning because that allows them to communicate in proper way and have a greater capacity to express their ideas.

2.2.1 Children’s language acquisition

There are two processes in which bilingualism is achieved: acquisition and learning. The acquisition relates to an unconscious process, in which the need of communication

and constant exposure to a particular language allows a person to communicate in the target language. According to Chomsky (1957) children are born with an innate grammatical system that allows them to learn a language. They are born with that skill that children develop as they grow and interact with the world around; Fleta (2006) mentioned that the process of acquisition of a language takes place when the child has contact with the environment in which the language is spoken, and also thanks to the social interaction language develops itself.

At school, language acquisition is fulfilled through playing and enjoying, learning a subject in an enjoyable classroom atmosphere, so the acquisition of a language takes place according to the interaction of the child with a social environment where the language is spoken, and the more interaction the child has with that environment the learning will be faster and natural Fleta (2006).

2.2.2 Teaching English grammar to children

According to Fleta (2006) children acquire a language faster than adults because they own an innate biological capacity to acquire a language at a certain age. Children may have a slight edge in the ability to mimic foreign sounds and the supply of instructional material and a qualified teacher, all children unless they are severely neurologically impaired are capable of learning a language. Children use language to share their thoughts and to expand and clarify concepts because of this children's learning and intellectual developments are inseparable from their emotional and social development.

2.2.3 Children in primary school.

Children love playing and they learn much better when they are enjoying what they do. At this stage, children have short periods of attention and concentration span that is why teachers should avoid long lessons, which can quickly result in lack of interest of the children. One of the biggest problems that most of the teachers face in primary school is a lesson where, the students are at different levels – some with quite competent English, some whose English is not very good, and some whose English is only just getting started, so the teacher needs to find out a way that help students to learn the foreign language at the same level, and also that students who knows the language help those who do not know anything. As with many other content subjects, teachers face this problem every day, most of the time the teacher faces lack of cooperation of the students: constant chattering in class, not listening to the teacher, failure to do any homework, so the teacher needs to make that students pay attention to the classes, and even more when they are learning a new language so it becomes harder to both teacher and students. According to previous information teachers should make materials that involve students to participate in class and they feel comfortable learning the grammar of the language that many times is tedious and difficult Jarvis (2002).

2.3 Use of materials

Children are usually full of energy during the classes so teachers need to attract their attention for teaching them something, so teachers need to have a variety and changes of activities for their learning activities such as: games, songs and plays among others. On the other hand, if the cooperation and communication are part of the process of learning a language as well as part of the process of growing up, then the sooner the students learn simple and meaningful language in context, the better. As McGrath (2002) says

learners can learn more than a language from materials used in language learning classes. There are many types of activities for children that are motivating and involve language in use. Some of them are using songs, painting or drawing and so on. The type of material and activity chosen by the teacher should be exciting, interesting and motivating for the students.

2.3.1 Types of materials.

Teaching with materials facilitates the teaching-learning process within a global educational context, and stimulates the function of students' senses function for getting more easily access to the information, acquisition of skills and abilities, and formation of attitudes and values (Cook, 2000). Teaching by using ludic materials also seems to invoke a spirit of participation and children are in awe of anything that is tangible. Larsen-Freeman (1986) rightly points out that "Materials are important because they have certain features in common with real communicative events" (p.279). In the following subsequent sections the types of materials are further detailed.

2.3.1.1 Didactic materials

The didactic material is the tie between words and reality in teaching. The ideal situation would be that all learning could be undertaken inside a real situation of life.

All this is possible if the material is real and designed in the best possible way in order to facilitate and improve language teaching according to Cook (1997).

The material which is called didactic helps in the elaboration or acquisition of knowledge. The didactic material is defined as an aid to make teaching more and more

comprehensible and to direct the learning. In this field, Cook (1997) classified Ludic into two types: 1) play with language form, such as with the sounds of language, with rhyme, rhythm, song, alliteration, puns, grammatical parallelism, and 2) semantic play with units of meaning, combining them in ways which create worlds which do not exist such as in fictions.

2.3.1.2 Visual materials.

Visual materials are important tools for conveying information to others, according to Anzaku (2011) “the term visual materials is commonly used to refer to those instructional materials that may be used to convey meaning without complete dependence upon verbal symbols or language”, thus according to the above definition, a textbook or a reference material does not fall within this grouping of instructional materials but an illustration in a book does. Some children remember what they hear, some children remember what they see, but most children remember best what they see and hear. Eze (2013) states that the human being learns easily and faster by visual processes than by verbal explanations alone; people’s ability to arrive at abstract concept through perceptual experience is however a phenomenon not clearly explained and perhaps not explicable.

Visual materials can make the teaching of a foreign language easier and attractive to children and also people can focus their attention in the direction teachers want, and teachers can make students to participate and achieve success in their learning.

2.3.2 Designing materials for teaching grammar to children

There are some didactic materials which help to attract children's interest into the English learning. Therefore, designing materials is really a need for those who teach a foreign language to children. A teacher should keep in mind that designing materials as a support is one of the most important means upon which he must rely on in order to achieve an important improvement in teaching a new language according to Allwright (1981).

Materials not only support students' attention but they also enrich their knowledge, avoiding monotony and softening efforts. It is very important that materials be well designed and prepared and at the same time, attractive, precise and clear, with the purpose of making the class pleasant and effective.

Nevertheless, materials usually depend on teachers to choose them, so they should be designed thinking about children's needs. In addition, designing materials as a resource for teachers is an important support for their classes. It is essential for quality materials to be made available to the teachers and students in adequate quantities to support the teaching and learning processes. Tosta (2001) and Small (1997) assert that an essential element of success in the process of learning a new language is the possibility for the class to be an opportunity to learn and the students to find learning enjoyable.

2.3.3 Use of the different types of materials with children

The use of educational materials is affected by the interaction that should exist between four factors: task, students, post and environmental characteristics. According to Halliwell (1992) suggestions, a ludic activity allows children's creative use of limited

language resources, promotes indirect learning and makes the most of the children's need to play and have fun, so here is a list with some principles that Halliwell (1992) mentioned about ludic materials:

- Ludic activities give students opportunities to practice the language in a more relaxed and enjoyable way.
- Ludic materials make the most out of the children's need to play and have fun.
- They are spontaneous.
- They are associated with a feeling of joy.
- They are a more natural way to learn.

A wide range of activities can be referred to as ludic. When setting up ludic activities in the classroom, the teacher must consider the goals that he/she wants the students to achieve through the activity (Bernardo, 2009). It is necessary to create an explicit context for the use of the ludic activity which motivates and keeps students interested. On the other hand, students need to understand the reason and purpose of the activity, so they can realize that they are learning as well as playing when engaging in activities which are fun and which involve reading, writing, listening and speaking.

When using activities for the classroom the teacher must keep in mind not only the ludic aspect but, also, the pedagogical aspect of the activity. For example:

a) Games are good tools to promote acquisition of communicative competences and cooperation between students according to Read (2007), ludic materials are an essential part when teaching English to young learners, since they provide stimulation, variety, interest and motivation. Ludic materials are enjoyable and fun and lead children to use the language in a more natural and spontaneous way.

b) Pair/group work: promotes cooperation, interaction and students 'perception that they can also learn when interacting with their colleagues. Here students are learning through a process of exchanging and sharing ideas.

c) Flashcards/Illustrations: they provide stimulating visual support and allow children to "grasp meaning" and to produce meaningful language" (Halliwell, 1992).

d) Stories: are "build on children's innate capacity and imaginative play" (Read, 2007, p.114). Halliwell (1992, p.7), says that imagination provides a powerful stimulus for real language usage.

2.3.4 Conclusion.

We truly believe that students learn more when they are motivated and, after doing this literature review, as teachers we realize that for some students learning a foreign language can be stimulating and they embrace it with great interest, but for others it can be challenging. On the other hand, as suggested by Halliwell (1992), students must have a more active role in the classroom. For that to happen, it is necessary to change the focus from the teacher and the course book to the student, therefore, it is necessary to develop activities which can enable students to be successful in this process, by preparing dynamic classes and meaningful activities that contribute to a lighter and effective learning environment and, at the same time, students will enjoy themselves as they learn English.

When choosing this topic for our research we are hoping to find new ways and methods the new teachers use to improve their practices in order to provide better opportunities for their students.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter relevant information about the participants and instrument for this research are presented. The topics included in this chapter are detailed information about the research method of investigation, how the data was collected and specific information about participants where the research was carried out.

3.1 Research design

This research was carried out using a mixed method approach. Mixed method is a series of activities in which the steps of the process qualitative and quantitative are integrated. According to Johnson (2006) mixed method research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.

The present research is a descriptive research, according to Dulock (1993) a descriptive research portrays the characteristics of persons, situations or groups and the frequency with which certain phenomenon occur; these studies observe, describe and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs, according to this research the main interest may be to determine whether there is an association among two or more variables.

3.2 Context

The present research was carried out in a BA in ELT at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla (BUAP) in the Language This University is one of the most recognized universities in the state and the country, and this faculty is specialized about languages and has the degrees of Teaching English and French as a foreign languages. Students of this BA take different teaching courses; almost at the end of the career students take a subject called Teaching Practicum with Children, in this subject, students should teach English lessons in real context. Participants of this research were taking this subject and teaching English to children at an elementary level.

3.3 Participants

The participants for this study were a cohort of 12 student-teachers of the BA in ELT. All participants were enrolled in the last semester of the BA at the moment of the research. The participants of this research were taking this subject and teaching English to children at an elementary level so the main teacher gave us the opportunity to apply the questionnaire.

The subject the participants were taking was called “teaching practicum with children” the main purpose of this subject is to give ELT students (student-teachers) the opportunity to prepare and give classes to children in real context.

3.4 Instrument

The instrument used was a questionnaire with fourteen questions that the participants answered; the questionnaire was online and it was shared by Google drive. Participants

exposed their experiences during working with children and the changes that they observed during the English classes when using the materials they selected, designed and implemented. This questionnaire can be observed in the appendix A (pp.39)

The sample is just a statistic to collect data, and identify the percentage of students who have used didactic material to teach English to Primary school and explore if this material has worked or not so that students learnt English in a simple way. The questionnaire was applied to a total of twelve undergraduate students. When teaching a foreign language, English in this case, there is a need to use materials that help the teacher to carry out the learning activities, depending on the needs of the classes and students, materials will be adapted to the classes, which will be motivating to students' learning, so they will wake up the interest, creativity and reflection.

The instrument helped the researchers to know which materials aided to the student teachers to make the class fun and enjoyable, and also to check out if the use of these materials were a good method to teaching. The instrument contains fourteen questions that the students-teachers answered and then the data collected was used to create graphics. The data collected was also divided by participants' gender. The questionnaire was according to the topic, the instrument was the most appropriate to collect the data that was needed for carrying out this research. After answering questionnaire, the data was kept and analyzed.

3.5 Data collection Procedures

The instrument was created online and shared to participants by a tool called "Google drive" the teacher of the group helped with the distribution. The instrument was answered randomly by twelve participants from November 7th to November 15th 2017.

The age of the participants was from 20 to 36 years old. 10 were female and 2 were male.

3.6 Data analysis procedure

This research was carried out using a mixed method approach, due to it was analyzed the answers using qualitative and quantitative aspects.

As it was mentioned before the questionnaire was applied to a total of twelve undergraduate students. When teaching a foreign language, English in this case, there is a need to use materials that help the teacher to carry out the learning activities, depending on the needs of the classes and students, materials will be adapted to the classes, which will be motivating to students' learning, so they will wake up the interest, creativity and reflection

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

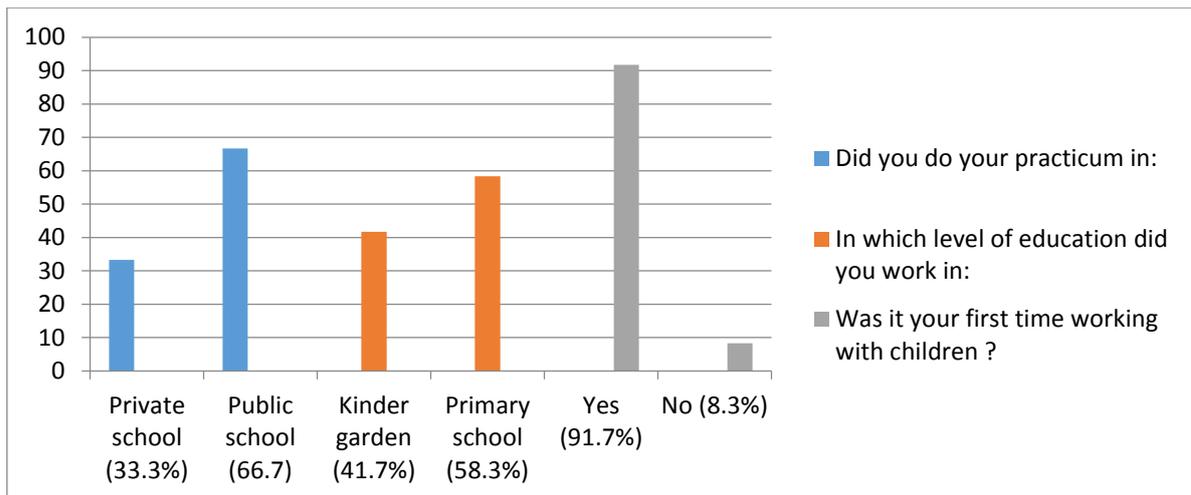
The aim of this chapter is to present the results obtained from the data. In order to achieve the goals set at the beginning of the research. This chapter presents the information obtained from the questionnaire.

4.1 Questionnaire

This section presents the results of the online questionnaire. The questionnaire had fourteen questions. The results are organized and presented in graphics and tables. These answers were based on the participants' experiences working with kids in an English language classroom, and about how the ludic material helped them to teach English grammar.

4.2 Students teachers' context

This section presents the results drawn from the general information where the students-teachers gave the classes. The following chart describes the general information of the school, educational level where the classes were given, and if it was their first time giving classes to children.



Graphic 4.2 Students teachers 'contexts.

The graphic 4.2 shows that the 66.7% of the student-teachers gave classes in public schools while the other 33.3% gave classes in private schools, all the student-teachers only had two options to give the classes (elementary or kindergarten) the 58.3% chose elementary schools and the other 41.7% kindergarten, for the 91.7% of the student-teachers it was the first time that they gave classes to children, so it was a new experience to them while the other 8.3% had previous experience in this area.

4.3 Students-teachers' motivation

In this section, the question was about student-teachers' motivation to teach English to kids, the data showed different answers from the participants; the participants' answers are shown using the letter "P" with a sequence of numbers from 1 to 11.

	What motivated you to choose that level to do your practicum?
1:	<i>"I think it was because for me it is the most difficult level and it would be a challenge for me, I wanted to prove myself that I was able to do it and be successful".</i>
2:	<i>"The experience of work with children".</i>
3:	<i>"Well I thought that level was easier".</i>

4:	<i>"I thought that it would be easier than kinder garden".</i>
5:	<i>"I believe that I would be a good idea to work with this age in which they are still easy to amuse, and also where they could still acquiring the language faster".</i>
6:	<i>"Because in kinder garden there are not male teachers".</i>
7:	<i>"My baby is the reason and I like sing, draw and play with children".</i>
8:	<i>"Because someone says to me if you can control children of kinder garden, the other levels will be easy".</i>
9:	<i>"Because I have heard that with children we learn so much, they are very honest and I wanted to know how fast they learn".</i>
10:	<i>"Have experience".</i>
11:	<i>"Learn about children".</i>

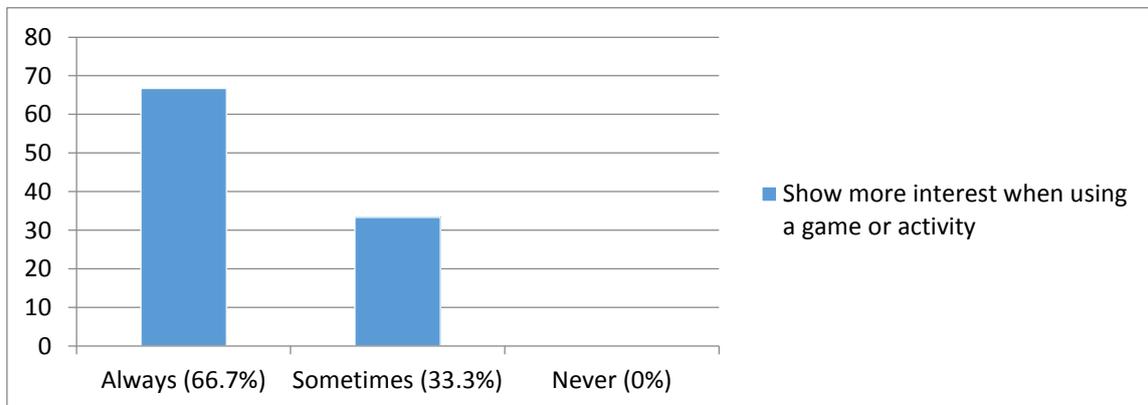
Table 4.3 Students-teachers 'motivation.

This table 4.3 shows the reasons participants decided to work with children. From these questions it is important mention that 7 of the participants were highly motivated because they thought that teaching English to kids is easy and they wanted to get experience. Other 2 participants expressed that they felt motivated because it is a challenge in their personal life and because in kinder garden there are not male teachers. One participant felt motivated because she had a baby and loved playing with kids. Finally, another participant felt motivated because he/she wanted to learn about kids and see how they learn.

4.4 Students interest when using a game or activity

One of the purposes of this research was to explore both how student-teachers apply games or ludic materials in their teaching context and how children react to those

activities. The data obtained from the questionnaire showed how participants felt when they used ludic materials in their English classroom.

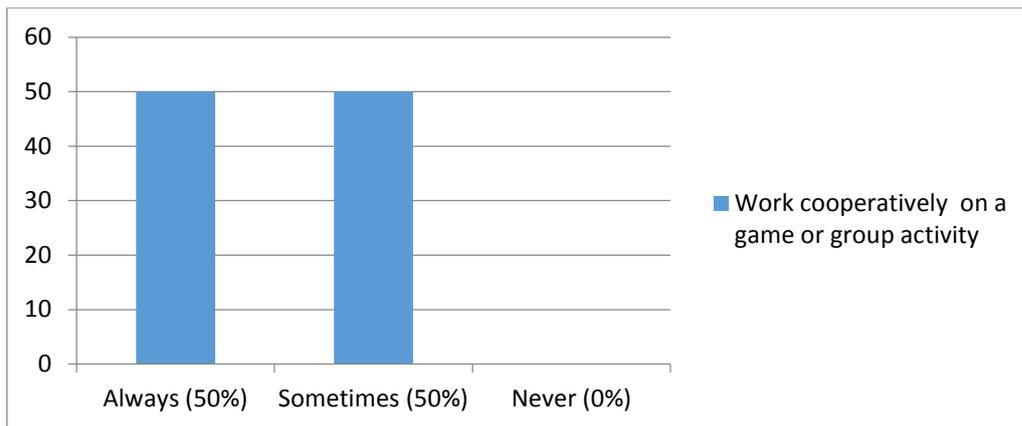


Graphic 4.4 Children's interest when using a game or activity.

The graphic 4.4 shows that the 66.7% of the students showed more interest when the teacher used games or activities to give the classes, since children liked the material in class and interacted with their classmates. While the other 33.3% said that their students were more interested when it came to learn a new English topic. This could be the fact that students began to familiarize themselves with the topics.

4.5 Work cooperatively on a game or group activity

The instruments also included a question where participants expressed how participative the children were during games in English classes, and if the children work cooperatively with the teachers, and how often the students showed interest in class.

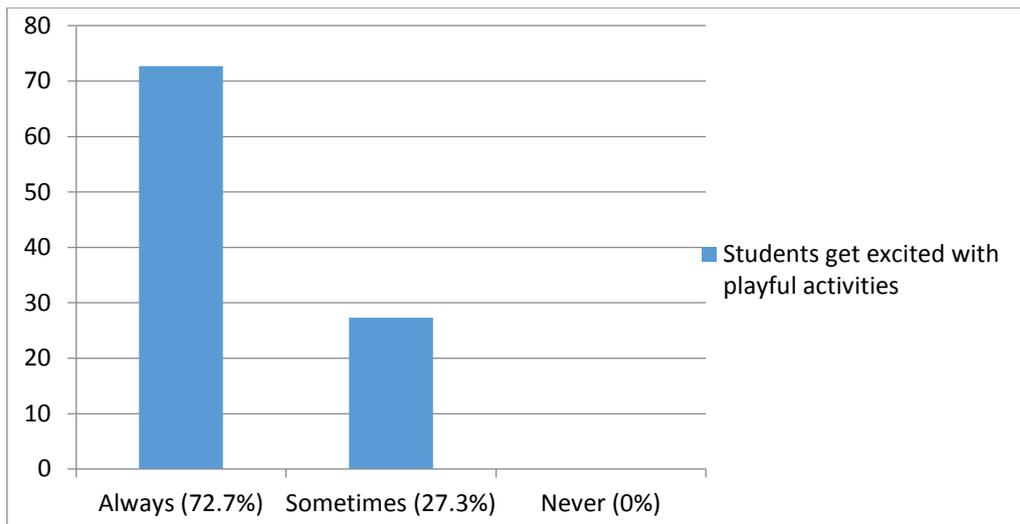


Graphic 4.5 students work cooperatively on a game or group activity

As it can be seen in the graph 4.5, the 50% of the students “**always**” worked cooperatively with each other when it came to activities with games, playful activities or also in group activities, with this information teachers realized that students developed social skills in a different frequency half of the students were cooperative and the other half were not, because they “sometimes” worked cooperatively, not all the time as we expected. Besides, the social interaction is also a determining factor in student development and learning.

4.6 Students attitude with playful activities

This section presents the results of children’s attitudes toward learning English with the playful material that the participants used with them. This section also shows the frequency of children got interested in the class.



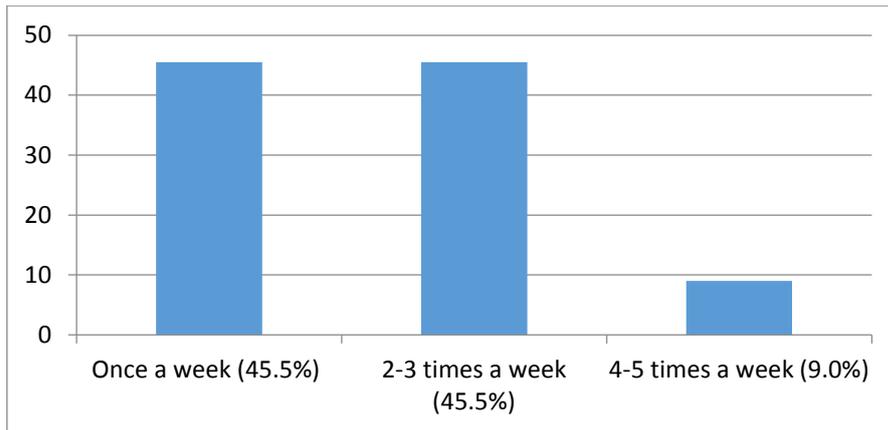
Graphic 4.6 Students using playful activities

It can be seen from the graphic above that the student's excitement seemed to be higher and positive from 72.7% in "always" and 27.3% in "sometimes" when the student-teacher used playful activities to teach English. This means that students understand the material and developed a taste for learning English while playing games. Such a conclusion is very useful since it shows that the use of ludic materials was successful.

As it can be appreciated in the previous table, students got excited when playing games or participating in group activities.

4.7 Frequency of the use of playful activities in the classroom

Another purpose of this research was to identify how long during the week children were involved into playful activities., In Graph 4.7 it can be observed the frequency that these activities were used by the student-teachers in the classroom, this to make the classes fun and more interactive to children.

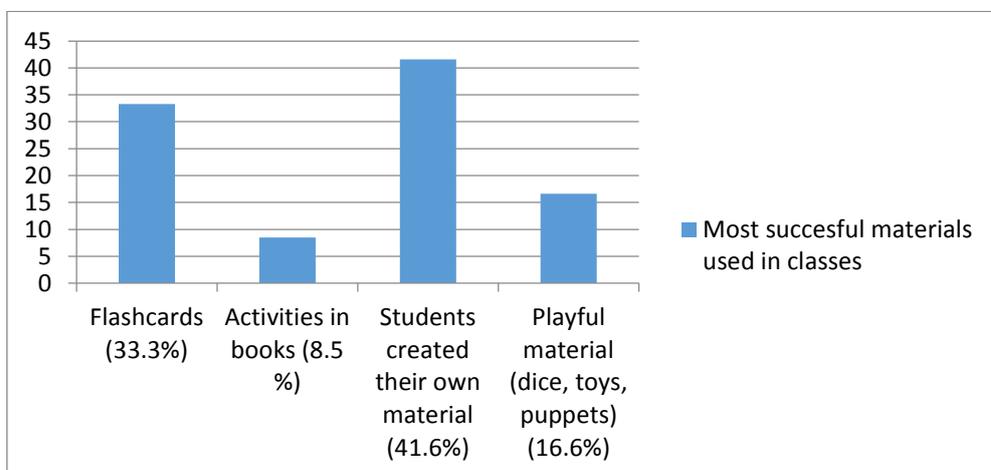


Graphic 4.7 Frequency of the use of playful activities in the classroom

As we can see the graphic 4.7 shows the times and the percentages on the frequency of using playful activities. Students teachers used playful activities with the students once a week meaning the 45.4% and it shows, 2- 3 times a week that represents 45.5%, and the 9.0% used the activities just 4-5 times a week .

4.8 Successful material used in class.

In this section the data shows the most successful and useful materials that the students teachers used during their classes. Thus, we could realize which materials and activities are the most attractive to children in the teaching context.



Graphic 4.8 Successful materials used in classes.

As it was described in chapter 2 there are many ludic materials that teachers can use to give classes and make them more enjoyable to the students as we can see in table 4.8. Participants mentioned different materials that they used during the classes, the most popular and helpful materials were those that the students created on their own during the classes with the 41.6 %, flashcards are in second place with the 33.3%, the use of playful materials such as dice, toys and puppets are in third place with the 16.6%; and the activities in books are in fourth place with the 8.5%., these materials were successful because students showed an improvement in the classes and this data will be shown.

Playful activities most used the during

the classes

Chinese whispers

Bingo

Simon says

Say it with mimic

Matching and painting

Relate objects

Posters

Graphic 4.8.1 Playful activities most used during the classes.

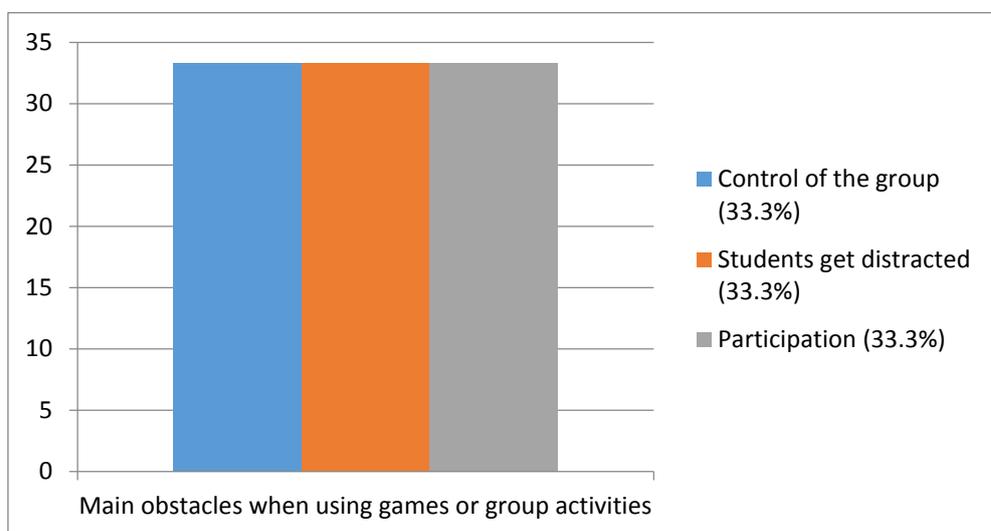
According to the questionnaire and the answers given by the teacher-students, the playful activities that are shown above evidenced a good effectiveness on students

when the teacher uses them properly; they helped students to have more cooperation with their classmates besides they learned new vocabulary.

As it can be observed in table 4.8 there were many activities used during the classes in addition to the materials, such as: Chinese whispers, bingo, Simon says, say it with mimic, matching and painting, related objects and posters.

4.9 Obstacles using games.

It could observe that there were three main problems which were constantly present in the classes of the student teachers and which they had to face during this period of time. Thus, it is important to highlight these problems, so that future teachers could be aware of the issues that can be present in the classroom.



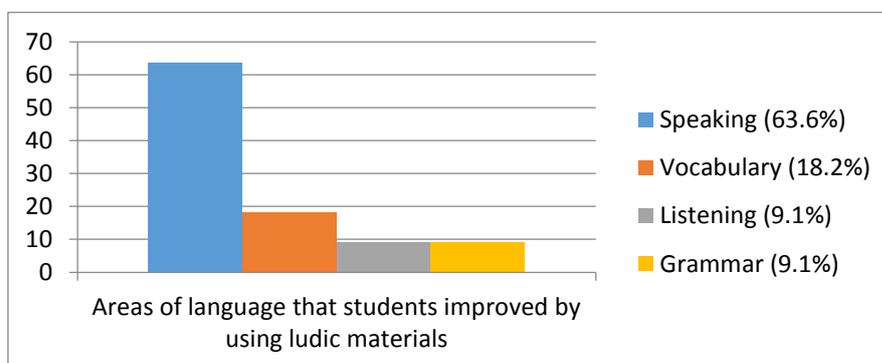
Graphic 4.9 Obstacles using games.

There are many problems that the student-teachers faced while they were giving the classes; there were three problems that were common among all the student-teachers: the control of the group, the distraction of the students and the lack of participation. As we can see in the table 4.9 each one of this problems represent a 33.3% according to the

student teachers opinion. Additionally participants mentioned different reasons about the problems presented in the classroom when using games or ludic activities and materials for example P1 said: *“When you are using games as a pre-service teacher you can lose the control of the class”*. And P2 mentioned: *“The control of the group because sometimes students get distracted easily or they start doing another thing”*. Thus, it can be observed that student-teachers mentioned that the teachers must always pay attention on students to not losing the control of the group.

4.10 Language skill improved by using ludic materials

The graph 4.10 presents the different areas of language that students improved when using ludic materials during the process of learning English as a foreign language. It is important to emphasize that each student has a different type of learning. Therefore, not all areas had the same percentage as can be seen below.



Graphic 4.10 Areas of language that’s students improved by using ludic materials

It can be analyzed in table 4.10 that students improved different areas of language, most of them (63.6%) improved the speaking skill and they were able to express ideas and short expressions during the classes, the 18.2% improved vocabulary, this means that the activities with vocabulary were meaningful to them, and finally the

remaining students improved listening and grammar with 9.1%; the results seemed to be very diverse since every student had different needs in the process of learning English.

4.11 Conclusion.

After applying the questionnaire and finished doing the analysis and interpretation of the compiled information (data); and supported by the theoretical foundations which allow us to describe the reality at the researched institution, we arrive to the following conclusion:

Most of instructional materials applied by English teachers are conventional. The board, textbook and dictionary are the common aids used every day by everyone to support the teaching learning process of the English language. On the other hand, they have not still considered the possibility of designing their own materials to solve that deficiency.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions obtained from research and the answers of the research question presented in chapter I. Besides that, the conclusions based on the results that developed this research and the findings of this work are presented.

5.1 Answers to the research questions

The main purpose of this study was to explore how a cohort of twelve English language student-teachers used ludic materials to make dynamic classes and to identify how they applied different materials for teaching grammar to children. Furthermore, it aims to identify how students' participation increased when ludic materials or activities are used, and after analyzing the data we can answer the research questions:

RQ1: How do student-teachers apply ludic material with children? And how often?

According to the data, the ludic activities play an important role in learning and development of children. The student-teachers were the ones that established the environment in the classroom to promote the learning of English in a fun way by using playful activities and games to get the students' interest. As a result, students express their feelings and emotions; this entails a natural reaction to learn English. The results show that the student-teachers used playful activities on average of two to three times per week and it was enough to improve the different areas of language during the process of learning English as we could observed in chapter IV, in the chart 4.10.

RQ2: What are the most effective ludic materials to teach English to children?
(according to the student-teachers)

The most effective materials are those where the students use their imagination to create their own materials, it was evident from the results that many students enjoyed and learned more from these activities, another effective material are flashcards because students felt more attracted to the colors and pictures that were presented to them, the bigger and colorful the better for students to pay attention, and finally the playful activities (bingo, Chinese whispers, Simon says) were efficient activities to increase students cooperation in class, because these activities helped students to work in teams.

RQ3: How do student teachers perceive students' participation in the classroom when ludic materials are used?

The students (children) felt more attracted to the topic that the teacher presented when using games or playful activities, as it can be observed in the graph 4.3, chapter IV, it shows that the 66.7% of the students showed more interest when the teacher used games or activities to give the classes also students also learn new vocabulary and this could encourage a natural and fun way of teaching and learning English. We can also conclude that students developed teamwork because students had a social interaction with their classmates every day. As it could be observed in chapter IV, chart 4.4 the percentage of percentage was 50 for “**always**” and the other 50 for “**sometimes**”, this means that students needs attractive materials to participate in class.

5.2 Conclusion

Teachers need to be aware of students' needs and learning styles, because for students, especially children the process of learning a new language and especially English is a

new, mysterious and fun fact. Thus, teachers should adapt materials that develop the interest of students for continuing learning the language. Most of the time teachers only think about rules of the language or requirements for the classes: punctuality, assistance or homework at the time of teaching a topic and they do not realize that students need attractive materials. Attractive materials motivate the interest of the students in keeping learning a new language as it was mentioned by McGrath (2002), so it is very important that teachers are able to see the needs of the students and the needs of every class and topic.

After doing this research, we were more convinced that it is up to the teacher, when working with children to implement activities which can promote teaching and learning in a funnier and more pleasurable way, helping students to feel more comfortable as Halliwell (1992) mentioned before. We know that play and fun are two of the most common characteristics of children's everyday life. Both characteristics have an important role to play in early childhood as a part of children's cognitive and social development

This research focused on how to the futures teachers teach English grammar using ludic material, it is necessary to change the focus from the teacher and the course book to the students. It is not appropriate to keep students sitting on a chair doing exercises and passively receiving input. They should have a more active role and be the center of the learning process. One way to do that is through the use of materials and activities that engage and help students to assimilate the input they are receiving in a more natural and relaxed way. According to the results of this study ludic activities are a vehicle to encourage interaction in the classroom and to promote a better learning process.

When choosing this topic for this research we were hoping to find new ways and methods to improve our practice in order to provide better opportunities for the students. The results of our study have contributed to our development as teachers since we had the opportunity to see how we could be more proactive when planning lessons by organizing engaging activities and creating our own ludic resources to supplement the course book.

On the other hand, this experience was also a learning process for us as teachers. We have a more comprehensive understanding of what teaching is and came to realize that some of our activities were not as ludic as they could have been. They were book-based lessons rather than dynamic classes. Before starting our study we thought we were able to successfully implement activities that catch students' attention. However, according to this research, most of our activities did not follow this approach and the lessons were not as effective as expected. An activity can become attractive to students with tiny changes, for example, the inclusion of a physical response to something, allowing movement even if the students are still sitting on a chair.

This research helped to reflect upon our teaching and think now we are equipped with more tools that allow us to become better teachers and to create more opportunities for students to learn English grammar in a more relaxed and enjoyable way. It was a good experience and it reinforced our believes that a light and easy-going environment really does help when teaching English to young learners. Ludic materials can create a more relaxed environment and engage students in learning and having fun at the same time. Thus, a light environment can also boost students' confidence to participate more with a smile.

5.3 Limitation of the study

There were some limitations that were faced during this investigation. The first limitation presented is the situation of the student-teachers because most of them did not have free time for answer the questionnaire so that delayed us a little while waiting for their answers. The second limitation was the lack of time on our part, because we work as teachers so we had to attend our classes first and then continue with this research.

5.4 Suggestion for further research

To become students motivated by English subject, we propose teachers to include in their planning their students' interests, needs and abilities; which mainly are related to music, games, fashion and so on. They need experience a change in the teaching techniques as well as in the instructional materials also to escape from the conventional and routine instructional material we recommend teachers to renew the teaching materials by designing their own ones, adapting them to students' needs and level.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions on a honest way and those that try to answer them as specific as possible.

*Obligatorio

Dirección de correo electrónico *

Tu dirección de correo electrónico

Gender:

Female

Male

Age:

20 - 25

31 - 35

36 - more

1.- Did you do your practicum in:

Public school

Private school

2.- In which level of education did you work in:

Kinder garden

Primary school

3.- Was it your first time working with children?

Yes

No

4.- What motivated you to choose that level to do your practicum?

Tu respuesta

5.- Did you consider that when using a game or activities with interactions students show more interest in learning a new topic ?

Always

Sometimes

Never

6.- Did you consider that students work cooperatively when they are on a game or a group activity ?

Always

Sometimes

Never

7.- Did you consider that students get excited every time you present a playful activity?

Always

Sometimes

Never

8.- Did you think students learn more effectively some specific topics if you use a playful activities? Why?

Tu respuesta

9.- Did you think that the use of games in the classroom develops the ability of students to solve real life problems? Why?

Tu respuesta

10.- How frequently did you use playful activities in your classroom?

Once a week

2-3 times a week

4-5 times a week

11.- What was your most successful material or activity in your classes?

Tu respuesta

12.- Could you mention some playful activities you have used with your students?

Tu respuesta

13.- What do you consider are the main obstacles when using games or group activities in your classes? Why?

Tu respuesta

14.- What areas of language learning do you think students can improve the most by using games or group activities?

- Listening
- Reading
- Speaking
- Writing
- Grammar
- Vocabulary

Thank you very much for answering this questionnaire, your answers will be very helpful for us to continue with our research.

ENVIAR