Teaching through Games

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Abstract

The main objective of this work is to explore the effectiveness of teaching a foreign language through games to improve students' communicative performance. After working with games for more than 30 years I have collected data showing the advantages of teaching through games. For this thesis I have observed different classes where games were used or not and I have also conducted a survey among my students. This study suggests that teaching through games is among one of the best methodologies to use when teaching a foreign language.

Key words: games, teaching, active learning, fun, creativity, play, communicative performance

Introduction

Games and learning have always been associated. We have all learned many things playing games when we were children. We learned to share, to take turns, to respect others, to take risks and to find a creative solution.

However, games and formal instruction have not always gone hand in hand. In formal education games were left for the playground and if the teacher was 'nice' they might allow students to play a game during the last five minutes of class as a reward. The prospect of a reward was supposed to make learning more effective. The main obvious difference between teaching through games and traditional education is that engaging games always involve play, and traditional methods rarely do.

After the 19th century the focus of teaching and learning was mainly placed on acquiring and developing the four skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing. Yet, now many experts state that success in the twenty-first century depends on the type of education that focuses on higher order skills related to critical thinking like the ability to solve complex problems or interact critically through language and the media. In this sense, teaching through the use of games can help students not only to practise the language but also to be prepared to interact in a new and changing world. This means that making changes in teaching methodologies is almost a mandatory recipe to facilitate the acquisition of much needed skills and knowledge to function successfully in a society that is increasingly demanding. Students should no longer be passive: they need to be active, to move around and to be the builders of their own learning process. Games are inherent to this form of education and as such, students are also the leaders of their own learning process. Dr. Maria Montessori, founder of the Montessori Method of education, observed that children concentrated most effectively when they were interested in the activity and when they were intrinsically motivated to learn. Montessori schools promote stimulating environments that allow for incorporating learning with play. The Montessori Method of education stresses the importance of respecting children's different learning modality and capacities to perform and innovate. Games promote curiosity, innovation, and thinking outside of the box. Creativity as well as problem-solving abilities is enhanced by playful learning. Play supports the development of the whole person and is essential to

development because it contributes to the emotional, social, physical, and cognitive well-being of people. Vygotsky (1978:102), a psychologist, founder of a theory of human cultural and bio-social development, asserts that "during play, children are always above their average age, above their daily behavior, and ahead of their actual development level. It is as if children are trying to jump ahead of themselves when playing in order to explore their learning potential".

Successful second or foreign language acquisition has always been an important concern for educators who try to find the best methodology to motivate their students. Teachers have looked for help in psychology and linguistics, the sciences which look into the process and the content of language learning. There have been many changes in theoretical orientations in linguistics and psychology on the teaching of foreign languages which have influenced language teaching and learning. Different methods and methodologies emerged along with these changes. Language teaching in the twentieth century was marked by constant change and innovation and by the evolution of different and controversial language teaching ideologies. In spite of all the efforts teachers have made to use more appealing techniques, students are not in general, motivated enough when learning a second language as they seem to feel that there is no connection between what they are being taught and the real world. To be exact, students do not find what they learn in their English class meaningful. The practical experience acquired by games enables students to interact with phenomena directly rather than through abstract concepts. Rieber (2001:4) proposes that "a simple way of understanding serious play in education is with the advice of 'experience first, explain later'. A teacher who follows this advice looks for ways to engage learners in some meaningful experience as early on as possible"

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary a game is "a physical or mental activity or contest that has rules and that people do for pleasure" Learning through games requires that the experience be fun and this increases student engagement .As an English teacher, I continue to be amazed at how effective games are in capturing the attention of students in the classroom. Games have surprising and stunning results; that is why we should not underestimate this powerful teaching tool to reach our students**.** Games and play are definitely important as these two closely related activities inherently demand creativity and critical thinking. These are two characteristics that should be encouraged and promoted in every school and considered in the development of curriculum. The aim

of this study is to show that **teaching through games improves students' communicative performance.**

1-Theoretical Framework

To carry out my thesis I analyzed Krashen´s Affective Filter Hypothesis and the Theory of Multiple Intelligences developed by Professor Howard Gardner of Harvard University. I also examined the three learning styles proposed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in their NLP model and the emerging scientific field known as Educational Neuroscience.

1.2- The Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen's theory of second language acquisition consists of six main hypotheses:

1. The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

2. The Monitor Hypothesis

3. The Natural Order Hypothesis

4. The Input Hypothesis

5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

6. The Reading Hypothesis

In what follows I considered the fifth Hypothesis which is directly related to the body of my thesis. The Affective Filter Hypothesis claims that there is "a mental block, caused by affective factors... that prevents input from reaching the language acquisition device" (Krashen, 1985:100). This hypothesis, embodies Krashen's view that a number of 'affective variables should be considered. These variables include motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Krashen points out that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. According to Krashen, one obstacle that manifests itself during language acquisition is the affective filter; that is a 'screen' that is influenced by emotional variables that can prevent learning from happening. This hypothetical filter does not impact acquisition directly but rather prevents input from reaching the language

acquisition part of the brain. According to Krashen, the affective filter can be prompted by many different variables including anxiety, self-confidence, motivation and stress. According to this hypothesis the learning environment shoul be made as stress-free as possible. Referring to Krashen´s Affective Hypothesis we can infer that learning will be more effective when students are confident, motivated and free of stress. His theory is based on reducing the students' stress during learning and making learning enjoyable so that students will want to be involved. According to Krashen, acquiring an L2 is very much like acquiring an L1. No conscious effort needs to be made to focus on the language as such, since "when the filter is 'down' and appropriate comprehensible input is presented (and comprehended), acquisition is inevitable" (Krashen, 1985: 4).

Krashen (1987:31) states that "The Affective Filter Hypothesis captures the relationship between affective variables and the process of second language acquisition by positing that acquirers vary with respect to the strength or level of their Affective Filters. Those whose attitudes are not optimal for second language acquisition will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter - even if they understand the message, the input will not reach that part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device (LAD)[1]. Those with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, but they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, which will strike "deeper". This is where games make a difference because they often transform a negative attitude into a positive one, as they involve students in activities that are not merely academic and students definitely learn during the process of playing the game.

The Affective Filter is the basic reason why people block their learning opportunities and it is related to factors such as a negative attitude that influences, as all teachers know, language acquisition and learning in general. From this hypothesis, Krashen, (1987:32) deduces that : "... our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter ... The Input Hypothesis and the concept of the Affective Filter define the language teacher in a new way. The effective language teacher is someone who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation" This hypothesis explains why all

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[1] First proposed by Noam Chomsky in the 1960s, the LAD concept is an instinctive mental capacity which enables an infant to acquire and produce language.

learners are not equally successful, even when they get the same comprehensible input. These learners are blocked as their affective filter is up.

1.2- Multiple Intelligences Theory

The concept of Multiple Intelligences comes from the field of psychology. Human beings have very different kinds of intellectual strengths and these strengths are very important in how people learn, how they represent things in their minds, and how they use these representations to show what they have understood.

Howard Gardner, an American developmental psychologist and Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard University first defined Multiple Intelligences in the 1980s as a set of abilities, talents or mental skills that all individuals possess to a greater or lesser extent. He defined intelligence as the capacity any human being has to solve a problem. Gardner considers the human intelligence as having multiple dimensions that must be acknowledged and developed in education. As there is not just one kind of intelligence, then it follows that we shouldn´t teach everybody the same thing in the same way and assess them likewise. According to Gardner, every human being is intelligent in their own way but the traditional IQ tests only measured two intelligences: logical/mathematical and linguistic. Gardner's findings show that people have many other intelligences that were previously considered only talents or gifts. Up to this point, intelligence had been defined by measurable results on standardized intelligence tests. Those tests only examined the linguistic, logical, and some aspects of spatial intelligence, whereas the other intelligences such as musical or artistic talent or social awareness were virtually ignored.

Howard Gardner changed the way we think about intelligence. He proposed the notion that human beings have not just one type of intelligence, but several. At first he identified seven different kinds of intelligences and later he included an eighth intelligence and says that there might be more.

At the beginning many researchers criticized Gardner's work. Yet, nowadays, more people are accepting his theory. In his introduction to the tenth anniversary edition of his classic work *Frames of Mind, The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, he states ¨In the heyday of the psychometric and behaviorist eras, it was generally believed that intelligence was a single entity that was inherited; and that human beings – initially a blank slate –

could be trained to learn anything, provided that it was presented in an appropriate way. Nowadays an increasing number of researchers believe precisely the opposite; that there exists a multitude of intelligences, quite independent of each other; that each intelligence has its own strengths and constraints; that the mind is far from unencumbered at birth; and that it is unexpectedly difficult to teach things that go against early 'naive' theories that challenge the natural lines of force within an intelligence and its matching domains". (Gardner 1993: xxiii).

.   Howard Gardner also suggests that environments, cultures, and genetic make ups will determine how all of our intelligences work together -- they seldom operate in isolation -- and also determine which of the intelligences is more fully developed. The intelligences he defined are the following:

1.2.1- Linguistic Intelligence: involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively use language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically, and language as a means to remembering information. Writers, poets, lawyers, and speakers are among those that Howard Gardner sees as having high linguistic intelligence.

1.2.2-Logical-mathematical Intelligence: consists of the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically. In Howard Gardner's words, it entails the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking. The suggested occupations for this intelligence are accountant, auditor, computer analyst, computer technician, computer programmer, database designer economist, engineer and mathematician among others.

1.2.3- Musical Intelligence: involves skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. It encompasses the capacity to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. According to Howard Gardner musical intelligence runs in an almost structural parallel to linguistic intelligence. For this intelligence, the recommended occupations are audiologist, choir director, disc jockey, music conductor, singer, song writer, etc.

1.2.4- Bodily-kinesthetic Intelligence: entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems. It is the ability to use mental abilities to coordinate body movements. Howard Gardner sees mental and physical activity as related. The suggested occupations are actor, athlete, physical education teacher, yoga instructor, dancer, etc.

1.2.5- Spatial Intelligence: involves the potential to recognize and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas. The recommended occupations or careers for this kind of intelligence are engineer, surveyor, architect, urban planner, graphic artist, interior decorator, photographer etc.

1.2.6- Interpersonal Intelligence: is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of other people. It allows people to work effectively with others. Educators, salespeople, counselors, program planners, religious leaders, political leaders and psychologists all need a well-developed interpersonal intelligence.

1.2.7- Intrapersonal Intelligence: entails the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations. It is related to our internal world. In Howard Gardner's view, it involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and being able to use such information to regulate our lives. This intelligence is found in spiritual counselors, theologians, therapists, writers, etc.

1.2.8- Naturalistic Intelligence: students with this intelligence developed are curious about plants and animals. They are able to make distinctions and recognize patterns in the natural world. They are interested in ecology and the environment. We find this type of intelligence in biologists, park rangers, farmers, geologists, gardeners, etc.

1.2.9- Existential Intelligence: **(new)** these learners reflect on the meaning and purpose of life, death and, attend to philosophical topics of that nature. We find this type of intelligence in healers, gurus, health practitioners, motivational speakers, etc.

Everyone has some of each of all the intelligences, but generally one or two of them are more pronounced. Gardner claims that everyone has all eight intelligences to some degree, but each individual has his or her own pattern of stronger and weaker

intelligences. Gardner also argues that most tasks require more than one intelligence working together. For example, a football coach uses bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, but he also uses interpersonal intelligence as a group leader.

A person's preference for a particular intelligence greatly influences how that person learns. This becomes an opportunity for teachers as they can plan their lessons taking into account their students' learning preferences.

1.3- Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is concerned with communication and to personal development. It was developed in the 1970s when an Associate Professor from the University of California, Santa Cruz, John Grinder, teamed up with Richard Bandler, an undergraduate at that University. They claim that there is a connection between neurological processes ("neuro"), language ("linguistic") and behavioral patterns learned through experience ("programming") and that these can be changed to achieve specific goals in life .According to NLP, we experience the world through our senses. The most commonly representational systems used are the visual, auditory and kinesthetic. People tend to have a preferred primary representational system, that is to say, that they learn better when presented with activities which activate their preferred primary system. The main characteristics of the three learning styles are the following:

1.3.1- Visual learners: attend to information most effectively when they see something, for example, pictures or diagrams. Thus, people who mainly experience the world visually like to take in information through their eyes, tend to sit at the front, like to read books, look at pictures and take notes to read again later. They also express themselves with words that reflect this learning style: e.i. "I see clearly"

1.3.2- Auditory learners: experience the world auditorily and like to get information through their ears. They like to listen and are disturbed by background noises. Auditory learners often enjoy class discussions, and they learn the best through listening and speaking. When they express themselves they might say: "I hear you, it sounds good".

1.3.3- Kinesthetic learners: experience the world kinesthetically and like to get information through their bodies or emotions. They like touching things as they learn better when they feel involved. Kinesthetic learners learn through their sense of touch, as well as through physically doing things They might express themselves with words like "show me" or "I can't get a grip on this" etc.

There are a variety of types of learners in every classroom. Therefore, it is important to incorporate multiple teaching strategies. It is also essential for the teacher to discover what their own predominant learning style is, because when they teach, they may unintentionally favor their own personal learning style neglecting that of the students. The key here is balance, as both teachers and students have their individual learning styles that should be considered. Taking into account the three learning styles proposed by the NLP model, teachers should combine them all within their teaching plan. It is also important for the teacher to be aware of students' preferred learning style. The beauty of games is that they cater to all the abilities not just those of the visual learners, but also those of auditory and kinesthetic learners. Playing games will engage students who might otherwise struggle to pay attention in class.

1.4- Educational Neuroscience

Educational Neuroscience is an emerging scientific field that brings together researchers in cognitive neuroscience, developmental cognitive neuroscience, educational psychology, educational technology, education theory and other related disciplines to explore the interactions between biological processes and education. When teachers take neuroscience into account, they organize their classes around real experiences and integrated whole ideas.

Knowing how the brain works offers a wealth of benefits. Many years ago teachers were not expected to be acquainted with how the brain works and its implications. They would choose the best methodology according to their own their teaching style or the latest trends in education. Mariale Hardiman (2012) explains that connecting brain research and education is essential to help students in their learning process and at the same time understanding it.

Extraordinary progress in our understanding of the nature of learning has been made in recent years. Neuroscience and classroom instruction have become closely linked. As advances in technology enable us to view the working brain as it learns, teachers can now find evidence-based neuro-imaging and brain-mapping studies to determine the most effective teaching methodologies.

All learning occurs in the brain. According to Joseph Ledoux's synaptic theory of the self, there are no aspects of an individual which exist outside the brain. No two brains are alike. This is, in fact, the main reason why no two persons are alike. Our brains are shaped and re-shaped by the influence of two main forces: one, genetic endowment and the other our personal experience. Ledoux (2002:9) points out that "without learning and memory, the self would be an empty expression of our genetic constitution".

While genes shape the broad outline of our minds, experiences have profound effects on our beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and behavior. Every experience that we have triggers an immediate reaction and adaptation in our brains. This is precisely what learning consists in: the nurturing of nature, the experience-based modification of hard-wired structures in our brains. One of the crucial tasks of neuro-education is to shed light on how this interaction takes place, so that both teaching and learning strategies can be designed in order to favor such natural processes.

Recent findings in Cognitive Neuroscience are likely to have important implications for educational theory and practice. While in the past, language teaching was an isolated field, nowadays, it is part of a number of fields that come together to consider the student as a whole. This is called Mind Body and Education Science and it involves psychology, neuroscience and pedagogy. This new science has helped professionals become more open minded and tolerant of other fields and at the same time more generous when sharing their findings.

Neuro-education refers to creating specific interventions in order to impact the brain's structures to increase intelligence, improve memory, or enhance attention. When learning a second language, special activities and techniques can be used to make students acquire implicit competence. Linguistic competence is acquired incidentally, is stored implicitly, is used automatically, and is sub-served by procedural memory. Meta-linguistic knowledge is learned consciously, is stored explicitly, is used in a controlled manner, and is sub-served by declarative memory.

A good reason for educationists to embrace cognitive neuroscience is the hope that such an endeavor might help students become better learners, global thinkers and at the same time enjoy the process.

Games and play are needed for the healthy development of children, because games not only increase intelligence, improve memory, enhance attention but also, and most importantly, strengthen their self-esteem. Research shows that 75 percent of brain development occurs after birth and playing games nurture that development throughout that critical period of the lives of a young child. Games stimulate the brain through the formation of connections between nerve cells. These connections are crucial in the whole development of a growing child´s fine and gross motor skills as well as the development of language and social skills. Fine motor skills are actions such as being able to hold a crayon. Gross motor skills are actions such as skipping, jumping or running. Language and social skills include empathy, taking turns, sharing, communicating emotions and problem solving.

The outcomes of studies in neuroscience reveal that the brain integrates thinking, feeling and acting into a whole. Curiosity, interest, joy and motivation are the basic assumptions to teach and learn something. By studying the functioning of the brain, it is broadly established that every person is able to learn from their birth to the end of their life. Consequently, neuro-education means not only helping develop new learning approaches that take into account the neuropsychology of the developing brain, but also showing that the tendency and willingness to learn are essential qualities of the human being; all in all, neuroeducation adds a new dimension with vast implications for the educational process and which will no doubt, probably affect the way people learn.

1.5- Conclusions

The approaches and theories discussed above point out the importance of considering each learner as an individual with different abilities and opportunities to learn. Professor Roberto Paterno from Moron University wrote a very innovative article named *Neuroeducation Today*. I agree with Paterno (2008:p 2) when he says that "curiosity, interest, joy and motivation are the basic assumptions to teach and learn something".

Learners bring along their own individual potentials, talents and interests to the learning situation. Students all learn differently and appreciating their differences helps teachers obtain more successful results with happier students. People also show differences in what they do with the knowledge they gain: how they process information and how they think. Some people are always looking for connections, while other people are less focused. The assumption is that everyone can learn, provided teachers respond appropriately to each student's learning needs. This results in equal opportunities for all types of learner.

2-Research Work

2.1- Materials and Methods

In this section I will refer to the materials and the methods I used for my research work. The materials include the environment, the actors and the concrete material I used for this study. The methods refer to the kind of research I chose for my work. My research is ongoing and based on my personal teaching experience, classroom observation and direct contact with teachers and students.

2.1.1- Materials

2.1.1.1- The Institute

This research study was carried out in an English Institute where English is taught to students of all ages. This institute is located in San Carlos de Bariloche, Rio Negro Argentina. This is one of the most important ski resorts of Latin America. Thus, English is a very important tool to communicate with the thousands of tourists from abroad who visit the city every year. Unfortunately, plans to include foreign language instruction (English) as part of public school curriculums at the primary school levels have not become effective throughout the country. Many students attend public schools where English is not taught at all or is taught very deficiently. This institute fills the gap left by the State; here students have their English lessons twice a week for one or one hour and a half each day. The groups are generally very small (maximum 12) aiming at a very personalized education. There are five classrooms and a backyard where students play language games facilitated by the teachers. Three of the classrooms have chairs arranged in a circle in order to promote community and encourage everyone to participate. There is also a smaller classroom with a table and chairs and there is another classroom where drama is taught. This room has a supply of masks, customs and props which students can make use of. Each group rotates classrooms regularly-they do not have an assigned room for the whole year. This variety helps students and teachers make use of the possibilities each room has to offer with the different learning styles in mind. The institute has a well stocked library

with a reading room for students to use freely. All of the classrooms have their own TV sets and there is Internet access in the entire institute. There is also a library for teachers with more than 1000 books and a teacher's room where all the material is kept. Teachers work cooperatively sharing ideas and developing lesson plans. All the material they produce becomes part of the institute material. I agree with Shin (2006: 7) as he writes: "Although teachers can feel quite isolated in their classrooms, it is important to remember that openness, collaboration, and sharing are the keys to enrich your teaching and your students' learning " The institute has adopted his philosophy which is absolutely fantastic as teachers work less and have more quality material to work with. After working in this manner for more than 20 years the institute has around 800 games which are sorted by theme or grammar point. When teachers need to teach clothes for example, they can browse in "the clothes bag" where they will find games like bingo, memory game, betting game or board games and also pictures related to this theme. As Shin (2006: 3) claimed " One way to capture their attention and keep them engaged in activities is to supplement the activities with lots of brightly colored visuals, toys, puppets, or objects to match the ones used in the stories that you tell or songs that you sing". That is why one of the trademarks of the institute is using attractive material to engage students.

The use of games to teach languages is the main feature of this institute and what makes it unique. Years in the teaching profession, with great results, have shown us that games are exceptional, if not among the best teaching tools. Games are fun and create a relaxing atmosphere. They help practise the four language skills naturally and almost unconsciously and cater for the three language styles suggested by NLP: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Audio visuals and authentic material help different students to understand and use the language presented much more easily. Games also invite cooperation between teachers and students and promote friendly competition. We observed that games, besides supporting communicative learning, help use the language with a different purpose: the language is studied not only grammatically but also functionally. To sum up, we have found that games are not only a wonderful tool to motivate students, but they also promote cross-cultural understanding and support the development of positive self-esteem. This tool, which has become the backbone of the institute, has significantly broadened and enriched its aims.

2.1.1.2- The Teachers

The teachers who work in this institute are given opportunities for professional growth and periodic in-house training in the use of games to teach languages. They understand that integrating play and learning is a valuable tool for teaching.

They are aware that their role is not only transmitting knowledge, but also being facilitators in the students' learning process. They always focus on creating opportunities for higher level thinking. They always plan their classes taking into account the student´s needs, acknowledging their individual learning styles; appreciating in this way the essential function of play in each student´s development. I observed three classes: two were taught by teachers trained in the use of games and the third class was taught by a new teacher with no training in this methodology.

2.1.1.3- The Students

I observed three classes: the first one with a group of children, the second one with a group of adults and the third one with a group of adolescents. The students attend the classes on a voluntary basis, so they do not feel under obligation to come to class. Students are there because they want to learn, they are rarely absent and they are always involved and engaged in a task. They participate with genuine interest and they never ask the typical questions asked by students who are bored like: "When is class over?" or "Do we have to do this again?" It is a big difference with public schools where students are just interested in passing.

The students in the classes I observed were not aware of my research. As I am the Head of the Institute, they are used to seeing me around interacting with both teachers and student and also participating in their classes. I will describe each group´s characteristics and their profile below.

2.1.1.4- The Surveys

I used two kinds of surveys in my research work which are explained in the corresponding section.

2.1.2- Methodology

The objective of my research was to investigate the use of games in the classroom in order to discover new facts which supported my hypothesis. I carried out personal field research both qualitative and quantitative as they provide different perspectives and usually complement each other. Through personal research I investigated the advantages of using games in the classroom through my own practice as a teacher for more than 30 years. Using qualitative research, I studied two classes where games are used as the main form of instruction and another class where English was taught in a traditional way. Using quantitative research, I interviewed students through a questionnaire conducted on line. Through this survey, I asked them to answer some questions aimed at evaluating teaching through games. I also analyzed the three classes I observed in the light of the advantages I found out through my personal research.

The results of these surveys, the observation of classes and the analysis of the advantages of using games in the classroom support my hypothesis. These advantages are looked at as opportunities for success in the acquisition of the foreign language. The advantages I will consider below are the result of my own work - I have taught using games for more than 30 years- in different classes with different groups and in different levels and institutions.

2.2- The Research

Is teaching through games better for students´ learning process than teaching in a traditional way?

2.2.1- Personal Research

2.2.1.1- Advantages of Teaching through Games.

After working with games and play for more than 30 years I have come to the conclusion that teaching through games has countless advantages. I discovered many advantages myself through experience, but I will justify their benefits citing different authors who talk about them, giving my point of view. In my opinion, teaching English

through the use of games brings forth the change required to enrich and enhance the students' learning process.

2.2.1.1.1- Motivation

Although there are different positions and substantial arguments that examine and/or evaluate the role of motivation in learning, we believe that it cannot be dismissed regarding its effect on a student's capacity to learn.   Without it, very little learning takes place and information is quickly forgotten. Well chosen games motivate all kinds of learners as there is a game for every learning style and generally one single game requires different abilities

The term motivation is derived from the Latin "movere", meaning "to move". When someone is motivated, the inner energy is released to move and perform an action. Games require interaction, participation as people must move either physically or intellectually.

Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that is propelled by an interest or enjoyment in the activity itself, it exists within the individual instead of on external pressures. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. The first one consists in doing something because we want to do it. Extrinsic motivation refers to an activity that is carried out in order to attain a certain result or outcome, although that activity can also be intrinsically motivated. Extrinsic motivation comes from outside of the individual; rewards are an example of extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation consists in doing something because we have to do it. Well chosen and planned games are usually associated with intrinsic motivation, as students are in control of their own performance. Thus, learning is the desired result.

Language games are a great benefit for both teachers and students. When students are motivated to learn, their chances of success are much higher. Motivation and achievement in language learning usually go hand in hand. In her book *A Course in Language Teaching,* Penny Ur (Ur 1991:273) summarizes learner differences in these main categories: "Learner populations differ according to various parameters: whether the learners are beginner, intermediate or advanced; whether they are young children, adolescent or adult; their objectives in learning the language, and how they are motivated; whether their environment

outside the classroom is target-language or mother-tongue; how heterogeneous or homogenous the class is; the size of the group; and many more." Thus, when teachers are aware of the importance of motivation in their classes, there are more chances of achieving a successful learning experience.

2.2.1.1.2- *Meaningful context*

Games provide a **meaningful context**. Rivers (1986:2) explains that "students...achieve facility in using a language when their attention is focused on conveying and receiving authentic messages— messages that contain information of interest to speaker and listener in a situation of importance to both—that is, through interaction...interaction between people who have something to share." Besides motivating students, language games give students the chance to practise the language in a meaningful way. It means that to capture students' attention and to engage them in the learning process, their learning must have meaning beyond the activity or task. Here the language is learned naturally because it is the tool used to communicate with other players and not the objective to be learned. When we learn a language naturally, we do so by focusing primarily on what we want to say (i.e., meaning) rather than on how we say it (i.e., form). Instruction needs to cater to this capacity for learning naturally by creating contexts in which learners focus on the content of the message. Using games to teach a second language is perhaps one of the best ways of achieving this. In this approach, no attempt is made to design lessons around specific linguistic teaching points. Instead, the teacher selects a series of communicative tasks designed to create learning opportunities of a general nature. In task-based teaching, teacher and students both function as communicators and as we have already said, use the second language as a tool for communicating rather than as an object to be analyzed and studied. Language games are experiential. As the activities are student centered they have more chances of using the language. Instead of only receiving input from the teacher, students create their own learning environment. At the same time, language games are a benefit for teachers who share their lessons with engaged students, who are having so much fun, they do not want to go home. However, our approach is eclectic and the formal teaching of grammar is also needed to provide repeated practice for those structures that cause persistent problems. This means that a more formal presentation will be used as needed, but this is also done with

games that are designed with a specific grammar point in mind that can thus, be practiced and learned in a nontraditional way. While helping students understand that the structure of the language is important, this manner of teaching/learning makes practicing grammar enjoyable for both students and teachers. Students, while learning, do not feel the pressure to acquire a specific skill and the teacher is free from the common frustration that comes from bored and uninterested students. Songs, games, rhymes, chants, stories, drama and role playing are effective teaching tools which are intrinsically interesting to students because they provide a meaningful context for learning and because some of them provide "story form".

2.2.1.1.3- Diversity

Games cater for **diversity** as they consider the individuality and uniqueness of each student. Penny Ur explains her view on this issue in the following way: "There is in fact no such thing as a 'homogenous' class, since no two learners are really similar; and therefore all classes of more than one learner are in fact heterogeneous." (Ur 1991:302)

Games cater for **the three learning styles** proposed by Neuro- Linguistic Programming. According to NLP, we experience the world through our senses. The most commonly used are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. This is called VAK. VAK stands for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. All individuals have a certain learning modality for which they have a preference. Each student in the classroom will prefer one of these ways of receiving information more than another. If instruction in the classroom matches their preferred modality, they are more likely to remember and effectively process information. People tend to have a preferred primary representational system that is to say, they learn better when activities, which activate their preferred primary system, are presented. Visual learners are those who experience the world primary visually. They like to take in information through their eyes, tend to sit at the front, they like to read books, look at pictures and they take notes to look at them again later. Auditory learners often talk to themselves, experience the world primarily through sound and they like to get information through their ears. They like to listen and are disturbed by background noises. People who experience the world kinesthetically like to get information through their bodies or emotions. They like touching things as they learn better

when they are physically involved. As most games include skills for all learning modalities, they provide opportunities for all learners: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. They can interact having equal opportunities to excel and have fun at the same time. Games attract and engage students who might otherwise, struggle to pay attention in class. People have different learning styles depending on how their brains work during learning and, as most games cater for all the learning styles, they are beneficial for the entire classroom. They are also a great way to make students work on their predominant intelligence as we have seen above when we referred to Multiple Intelligences. When students play, more than one intelligence is involved. Teaching through games is a challenge for teachers who also have to adapt their own teaching styles to help students of different abilities and in the process everyone is enriched by the experience.

"Learners are different from one another in all sorts of other ways that affect how they learn and need to be taught." (Ur 1991:303) This is why it is important to consider not only how each student learns best, but also, how they need to be taught. Although it is difficult to address everyone's needs, it is important to address as many needs as possible. Games are a perfect resource, as there is a great variety of games suitable for different learners. The teachers at our institute, who are trained in this methodology, are constantly busy creating new games to meet the curriculum objectives

2.2.1.1.4- Cooperation

The most commonly used division of games is between competitive and cooperative games. Competitive games divide the players into winners and losers. By contrast, cooperative games either have all the players as winners or all the players as losers; everyone cooperates to defeat the game. Cooperative Learning is defined as "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (Johnson, Johnson & Smith 1991: 3)

According to Johnson, Johnson & Smith (1991:6) five essential components must be present for small-group learning to be truly cooperative:

1. clear positive interdependence between students
2. face to face interaction
3. individual accountability
4. emphasize interpersonal and small-group skill
5. processes must be in place for group review to improve effectiveness."

Playing cooperative games engages the whole person—body, heart and mind; this is the reason why, when we play a game in the English class we try to make it cooperative as it also helps to develop social skills among students. If we play a competitive game we don´t encourage competition, but we make a point in just playing for fun. Cooperative games encourage team-work, creative thinking, problem solving, and they help players be aware of the idea that everyone can win. We help students notice that sharing, making decisions and having fun is more important than winning. Cooperative learning provides a tool for educators to incorporate values in providing quality education.

Playing a game in a cooperative way also helps and strengthens students throughout their learning process. According to (Vygotsky,1978:90). "Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers"

2.2.1.1.5- Meaningful activities

Teachers have become aware that language teaching should be fostered through the use of **meaningful** activities, authentic material, not through drills and de-contextualized rules.

Curtain, H., & Dahlberg (2010) refer to thematic instruction as something that makes learning more relevant to the learner. When themes are well chosen, students will be more engaged in learning because they can see its purpose and they can find it interesting—and fun. Learning is made meaningful by connecting it to students' personal experiences, to their fantasies and dreams. Contextualized language instruction, when well implemented, provides a wonderful source of cognitively engaging activities which will help enrich the programs. It connects the English curriculum with the chance of seeing English as a means to acquire meaningful information about the world and real life. Furthermore, as Curtain, H.,

& Dahlberg (2010:3) point out "Content-related instruction supports what we know about how the brain makes connections and how learning takes place. Students are actively engaged in constructing meaning and making sense of the interesting world presented to them through the vehicle of English" Thus, content-related instruction is life-long learning as it helps making permanent connections in the brain. Teachers who provide a context through the use of games are definitely leading the way into a much more meaningful learning experience.

2.2.1.1.6- Creativity and spontaneous use of language.

Games **reinforce learning** and also **encourage creative and spontaneous use of language.** Games are a great way of teaching oral skills. Teaching oral skills: listening and speaking, is a big challenge for English language teachers. It is not easy for them to find ways to help students improve their oral fluency. This is especially true in countries where learners share a common mother tongue and have little or no exposure to English outside the classroom.

Therefore, when English is not spoken outside the classroom, helping students work with oral skills is much more important, as it is only in the English class that they will find the chance of using the language. Teachers should, then, try to recreate spontaneous communicative situations to encourage students to practice the language.

Some of the activities that many teachers use are songs, rhymes and chants. Young learner classes often have songs and chants that are repeated and that children love. They are used to teach vocabulary and grammar in a fun and engaging way and are also very useful for improving students' oral skills, yet, they are not enough. Slatterly & Willis (2001) in their book *English for primary teachers* point out that repeating set phases is not a condition for language acquisition. Repeating by heart does not necessarily mean understanding and transferring the vocabulary and the structures into a new communicative situation. If teachers are aware of that**,** they can create situations to help students use the language in the songs and chants in a meaningful context and make sure that language acquisition is taking place more effectively in their classroom, particularly with respect to oral communication "It is important finding the balance between providing language through controlled and guided activities and at the same time let them enjoy natural

talk."(Scott & Ytreberg, 1990:33). Games are an ideal tool to make students practice their oral skills

There are many activities that teachers can use to make sure that oral language is acquired by their young learners. Scott & Ytreberg (1990) in their book *Oral work. In Teaching English to Children* suggest a wide variety of activities which go from controlled practice to free talking. "Controlled practice goes hand in hand with presentation since it is important that pupils try out new language as soon as they have heard it." (Scott & Ytreberg 1990:37). One way of presenting new material is through the use of the senses. "Most students can take in information through any of the senses, but in any class, about a third of our students are likely to have a preference for one of the three principal senses. For a few, it makes a significant difference to their progress. The important thing is to present new language in a variety of ways to cater for all learning styles." (Revell & Norman, 1999). One of the games we have used in my school to present colors is one called *Taste the color*. Students are divided into two teams and they have to line up. When the race starts, the first student in line has to run to the other end where he is blindfolded and then tastes something the teacher gives them (it might be a piece of lettuce, a piece of cheese, a strawberry, etc). After that, the student has to run to the line and shout out the color. The other members of the group have to find a card with the corresponding color. This activity is a lot of fun, makes children move and caters for the three learning styles (visual, auditory and kinesthetic).

There are various ways to start working with activities that are less structured. "Working with dialogues is a useful way to bridge the gap between guided practice and freer activities" (Scott & Ytreberg 1990:39). Some other freer activities are role play, pair work and dramatizations among others. These activities that are more spontaneous and with fewer rules, are very important as they are a way of making students aware that English is a language and that a language is used to communicate. One of the things that we use the language for is to communicate our feelings. Another good example of an activity we do in my school is called *check in*. As students enter the class they have to say how they feel that day and say why. So, for example if a student says: "*I am sad because my big sister moved to another city*", both the teacher and the rest of the class will understand the student. This activity promotes empathy and is recommended

because there is a sense of achievement when students use the language to communicate something which is important for them.

In conclusion, I would love to point out that even though teaching oral skills is a significant challenge, it is worth doing and using games is an excellent way of practicing oral skills. There is nothing more rewarding for a teacher than to hear students move on from basic greetings and simple vocabulary to spontaneous language expressing an opinion or comment like: *"Mrs Grimau I like your pink blouse"*. At that point, when they realize that students use the language with a real purpose to communicate something they want to say, teachers know they have achieved their objective.

2.2.1.1.7- *Acquisition of implicit competence.*

Games are a great tool to help students in the **acquisition of implicit competence**. According to Paradis (2004, 2009**)** implicit competence, governed by the procedural memory, and explicit knowledge, retained in the declarative memory, are two distinct aspects of how the brain works. There is no direct connection between the two. If there were a direct connection, then an individual would be able to speak the language with the simple knowledge of the rules of the language, and being able to speak the language would imply that the individual possessed knowledge of these rules. Additionally, explicit knowledge does not 'become' implicit competence. These findings have enormous significance for the conception of the NLA.

Implicit competence and explicit knowledge are two separate and distinct elements, and both are necessary for the development of communicative competence in a second language, but this is not related to identifying the way in which an individual learns a new language. From a neuro-linguistic perspective on learning a second language, the equation becomes: **implicit competence + explicit knowledge = ability to communicate**

How can both, implicit competence and explicit knowledge, be developed? Explicit knowledge does not present a problem as instruction has generally focused on declarative learning; however, implicit competence does. Paradis (2004, 2009)

indicates that frequent use of oral language is required to acquire the linguistic system in question.. Implicit competence is a non-conscious ability to use vocabulary and structures of the language in authentic communication. It is composed of pathways, or networks of neuronal connections which are developed by using the language to give messages, or transmit meaning. These language patterns are developed without any conscious attention on the part of the learner due to the non-conscious nature of implicit competence, which is developed when the learner concentrates on the message being transmitted, not on language forms, and it is created without any conscious effort on the part of the learner. Learners are not aware of the development of implicit competence, nor of using it when they construct an utterance in the L2/FL. N. Ellis (2011), who also indicates that it is language use that is fundamental to developing the ability to communicate, further specifies that the process takes place most effectively when a small number of structures are used repeatedly. These findings from neurolinguistics, as to how implicit competence is created indicate that implicit competence is a skill, not knowledge, and that there are defined conditions necessary to encourage the development of the skill. My research contains many examples of how this complex mechanism works. I have shown how the use of games helps develop implicit competence in the unconscious acquisition of language. Some traditional examples are drilling and repetition, which new educational methodologies rejected in favor of critical thinking and in this case it omitted the important role of implicit competence. For example, when we play bingo, even though numbers are repeated for the sake of winning the game, the brain detects a repetition of patterns transforming them into implicit competence vital for fluent communication.

2.2.1.1.8- Fun.

Games are fun and reduce stress lowering the affective filter as already discussed. As stated by Richard-Amato (1988:147) "Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely". Games are generally played in a friendly environment where students do not feel pressured or threatened. Mariale Hardinman (2012) in her book *The Brain-targeted Teaching Model* affirms that stress and threat have a strong impact which could impair long-term memory and deep learning. As neuroscientists report, the information that comes to the brain is processed first in the emotional center, and then in the cognitive center. As games

are nonthreatening activities, playing games in the classroom gives students the chance of storing new concepts in their long-term memory more effectively. Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Dahlberg (2010) in their book *Creating an Environment for Communication* explain that games are a well known method by which teachers create a friendly and stress free setting for second-language acquisition. They say that games provide both context and an emotional connection and a sense of play that brain research and teacher experience indicate can enhance both learning and memory. Teachers that understand this concept select or make up games for introducing and practicing language that students can afterwards use in natural contexts in order to communicate.

Learning through games makes the experience fun, and increases student engagement. When we include games, we are including strategies that are "brain-friendly". We can create brain friendly strategies by always providing a context for our teaching." In other words, learners of all ages still enjoy imagination, fantasy and heroes which are some of the elements of "fun."

2.2.1.2- Conclusions

Nearly 30 years of experience in the classroom have convinced me of the effectiveness of using games as the main teaching tool and in this lifelong process. I have also observed that games are fun and they make people happier.

However, it was just a few years ago that I discovered that what I had been doing all this time is in many ways supported by scientific research. I learned that over 80% of the neurons in the brain are interneurons, which are designed to detect patterns and create meaning, and not just absorb data that has already been processed. Consequently these interneurons are not only crucial for pattern detection and other large-scale population dynamics, but they are also linked to mechanisms mediating plasticity and learning. Games by their very nature promote this natural kind of learning.

Teachers are becoming more and more aware that games are a powerful tool in the modern language classroom. Students who learn playing a game enjoy any topic being taught (in this case language) much more because they are involved and also challenged

as they must use more than just one skill to play. Games foster the development of the four language skills, cater for the three learning styles and bring energy and enthusiasm into the classroom. Games are unique in that they motivate students, are fun, create a relaxed atmosphere and invite cooperation among students and teachers. They also promote friendly competition, help use the language with a different purpose than just practise, promote cross cultural understanding, and support the development of positive self-esteem and support learning for real communication: the language is studied not only grammatically but also functionally.

When teachers use games as a teaching resource, students are viewed differently. They are not just boys or girls sitting in rows doing paper and pencil activities and duly raising their hands, they are persons with different abilities that they exhibit in a myriad of ways: orally, physically, artistically and who experience the world through all their senses. A game is an experiential activity and according to Abraham Maslow, considered the Father of Humanistic Psychology, experience is the primary phenomenon in the study of human learning and behavior. He placed emphasis on choice, creativity, values and self-realization, all of them distinctively human qualities.

2.2.2- Qualitative Research

Observation of three classes.

MARSHALL and ROSSMAN (1989:79) define observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study". I have chosen observation as a tool for collecting data for my research. This tool has been very useful as I was able to observe both verbal and non verbal communication. Language is not only verbal, thus, watching how students interacted with each other and with the teacher in class was also a good point for collecting information when observing a class.

I observed three classes taking into account the education policy of my country. The education policy for English in Argentina varies according to the provinces as the educational system in this country is regulated by each province. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage. It is positive because the educational policies are chosen according to the needs of the area. (Argentina is a very large country with diverse realities and environments). The negative aspect is that not all the children of the country have the

same chances and/or equal opportunities. According to the Framework-Agreement for the Teaching of Languages (¨Acuerdo-marco para la enseñanza de lenguas¨) (1997:2) each province can choose from among several options in order to implement English in the different educational levels. The theory is always better than the actual practice.

In the province where I live, called Rio Negro, English starts as a compulsory subject in secondary school. According to the new laws English as a second language is to be taught at the elementary level but, this is not happening yet. Many students are enrolled in private institutes or they go to private schools where English is taught with a variable frequency according to each school's programme and there are also some bilingual schools where most subjects are taught in both languages. In the different provinces of Argentina English is becoming part of the school curriculum with varying degrees in response to the National Law of Education and to a general consensus that English is one of the main communication tools of this new century.

I will report on the experiences of different classes as I explored a number of theories and approaches presented in the Theoretical framework (multiple intelligences theory, (MI), Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, NLP Techniques and Neuroeducation). I did this within the context of my research group. The theoretical framework was used as a framework to make decisions about the plans used in each class. I consider that by using this framework the classes are more student-centered, and more engaging as they cater for individuals´ learning needs. Thus, the case provides insight into the nature of MI theory, NLP, Neuroeducation as well as Krashen´s Affective Filter Hypothesis. It shows how the theoretical framework can be used to make English language accessible to all students and to assist them in achieving the expected objectives.

2.2.2.1- Class one

Profile

I am going to refer to a group of students who successfully completed their first year of instruction in English last year. They are A1 level according to the ALTE (2008) framework. They are 10 students, 6 boys and 4 girls. They are eight and nine years old and this year they will be in their third and fourth grade of primary school. They do not have English as a subject at school so last year they were all true beginners. They had 2 hours a week of English in our institute and became a group of enthusiastic learners who

enjoyed and continue to enjoy playing games and watching videos. They also like singing and   play   acting.

I am not the teacher of this group but I have had close contact with them as I have been supervising this course very closely since last year. The group is energetic and physically active and the teacher has paid a lot of attention to this characteristic because physical movement is part of children's nature and they generally enjoy activities which involve moving. Activities that require movement favor students with a Kinesthetic Intelligence.

They completed a book and a workbook but it was only a guide because the teacher had adapted the book to the students needs. Children have been involved in a variety of activities and games that have helped them use their imagination. The teacher has been very resourceful in adapting the exercises suggested in the book to more creative activities. These activities included cooking, making puppets, and puppet shows, composing raps, making posters and models, dramatizing, among others. They also participated in a reading project in which the whole institute was involved. At the end of the year they were able to show their families all the activities they had done and they also shared with them their portfolios which included their best work collected throughout the year (collages, illustrated sentences, poetry, etc). I have noticed that at the end of the year they had not only learnt the contents and their performance was what was expected but they had also enjoyed the process immensely. The environment the teacher generated promoted opportunities for language use in a meaningful context and this was evident with simple observation of students' behavior. I am very proud of this group performance and very pleased with the passion that the teacher put into his work.

I observed a class of this group this year.

What a wonderful experience I had when I observed Mr. Domingo's class last month! I learnt many new things but mostly I confirmed once again that every student is different. It is a good point to be aware of each child's learning style and work with that for best results all around; not only is the teacher able to feel satisfaction for a job well done but this feeling of achievement is also reflected in the students' performance.

The class had a name which they had chosen at the beginning of the year. They were called: The Incredibles. (after the Pixar film) When the lesson finished I asked them why they had chosen that name and they answered that they were like a family and even

though they were all different they had *powers* that made them unique. There were ten of them : four girls and six boys and they had their English lesson twice a week after school. Most of them attended state schools and came from different backgrounds, yet the teacher had been able to foster a group identity. The class was arranged in a friendly way as all the chairs were in a circle and all students were able to see their faces. Although this classroom was shared by many other teachers and different groups, the walls were colorfully decorated and all that was displayed was arranged in a very neat and harmonious way.

The lesson started with the class routines (one of the characteristics of all the classes is that they all have a routine at the beginning of the class). Routines as Read (1998:1) says "establish patterns of familiar, expected behavior which help children feel secure". In this case the routines included a weather song and talking about feelings. All the students had a set of cards in their folders and they had to raise the corresponding one and say how they felt that day. This is an excellent activity to promote empathy. Then, the teacher invited students to sing a song called " I am a Scary Monster" which students knew from a previous class and this led perfectly well into the theme of the class: *Everyone is different.* The objective of the teacher for this class was to teach language to describe people making a point that we are all different. It was a pleasure to see how students made all sorts of body movements and danced to the song. The teacher understood that planning activities which involve not only the mind but also the body, help children experience the language holistically.

Sitting in this class was like sitting in a theatre watching a play. There were big surprises all the time. The teacher asked students to close their eyes and connect with the music. He played the background music of *Beauty and The Beast* and at the same time hung up huge pictures of different scenes of the movie all around the classroom. As students opened their eyes they felt they were inside the movie. The teacher introduced students into the subject by making them actively participate; using the vocabulary they already knew, she made questions about the situations in the pictures. It was a good introduction to the subject because fantasy is always a success with children and results are never disappointing. The teacher introduced the new vocabulary through this creative and wonderful activity which involved using various senses. This led to the main activity presented in the book, which was a dialogue in which the main characters were the main characters of the movie *Beauty and The Beast.* The teacher made pictures in different

sizes of the vocabulary presented in the unit: a big pair of boots, a small pair of boots, big feet, small feet, big head, small head, long arms, short arms. He placed all the pictures on the floor and made students stand up on the phrase he called out. It was lot of fun. This activity promotes movement, something most children have fun with.

After working with the dialogue and introducing the grammar point on the board, the teacher invited students to dramatize the situation making use of props he had brought. As students practiced the situation in groups the teacher took the role of a facilitator, walking around the different groups and being there for questions and doubts; at the same time, he corrected pronunciation in a very kind way and he also encouraged more timid students to participate. I am sure all students felt important as they took turns to represent their part in a non-threatening, stress free atmosphere.

Afterwards, the teacher invited students to play more games he had prepared. These games integrated the new vocabulary with the old one. I noticed that students had a sense of achievement .One of these games was a race which they played in the backyard. Students were divided into groups and they had to take slips of paper with words to the other end using a straw. When the teacher clapped his hands, the first team to make a grammatically correct sentence, using the words they had collected, got a point. After playing for several minutes, the teacher challenged the whole class to use the words to create a short dialogue. Thus, he turned this apparently competitive activity into a cooperative one.

After finishing the lesson, the teacher thanked the students for their participation and gave them a hunting game for homework. He asked them to search for pictures in magazines of big and small objects and bring them for the following class. All the students left the class with a smile in their faces. After thanking Mr. Domingo for the lovely time we had spent together, some questions came to my mind: "Do I always enjoy my work? Do I always prepare my lessons with such professionalism and love?"

Almost all the teachers truly believe that a well-planned class has more chances of being successful, nevertheless some teachers face difficulties in taking the time to plan their lessons. Mr. Domingo is clearly not the case, his class was an example of careful conscientious planning. I would love for his passion and enthusiasm to be catching so that all teachers could enjoy the same type of satisfaction. He reaffirmed what I already knew

that when you enjoy what you are doing, those who are in your care feel the same sense of enjoyment and fulfillment.

2.2.2.2- Class two

Student Profile

Observation of a class of adults

I also observed a class of adults where the same game-like activities were used. The teacher was teaching a unit called ¨The ARTS¨. She took drawing paper, paints and brushes into the classroom and had students paint a picture. Then, she made an art gallery in the classroom with students 'pieces of work, hanging them around the class. Students took part in a make-believe game, pretending that they were in a different setting. They were then invited to visit the "art gallery" and to use the vocabulary learned in the unit to criticize a work of art. In this classroom I also saw students who were enthusiastically participating in the learning process and having fun. This is a major shift in the traditional teaching approach, which is teacher-centered to one that is student-centered. This means that every step in the lesson plan was designed to facilitate students learning, and most often that means giving them a significant and interesting challenge and letting them go about solving it. Multiple pathways to a solution encourage divergent thinking; in this case, students constructed their own understanding, and then demonstrated it through their artistic creations.

After that, the teacher explained a grammar point on the board. She used inductive learning strategies taking into account students' responses to build the concept. In inductive methods students are actually involved in the learning process. The teacher provides examples of the concept being introduced and then follows up with exploration-type activities which allow the students to discover the rule being taught. Through this process and involvement, the student's learning is more effective than the old-fashioned deductive methods.

After that, the teacher asked students to work in two groups to play a card game that reinforced already learned grammar concepts, this proved to be an excellent activity because students felt involved as they practiced language naturally.

2.2.2.3- Class three

Observation of a class where games were not included

What do classes that don't use games look like in practice?

Student Profile

The report is about a Pre-intermediate English class. The class consists of 8 students. All the students are adolescents. They are 5 girls and 3 boys. This teacher is new in the institution. She has not been trained in the use of games. The group is also new, they have not been exposed to the methodology of the institute before so their expectations are those of a traditional English class. They come to the institute voluntarily twice a week for a class of one hour and a half. They are supposed to have a pre-intermediate level book but as this was the first week, the teacher prepared extra material and handouts in case they did not have their books.

The teacher started the lesson asking some questions about the previous weekend. Some students answered and some did not.

Then she wrote the following sentence on the board:

I have never eaten octopus.

Then she explained to them how the structure of the sentence is made. Next she gave other examples orally. She presented the use of the Present Perfect to students in a deductive way.

Afterwards she asked students to work on a worksheet she had photocopied from a book and assigned some exercises to practice what she had taught. She asked them to work individually and when they finished they corrected the exercises orally. This gave some students the chance of reading something in English. The interaction was very limited as it consisted of student/ teacher, teacher /student, no other interaction was required; furthermore she spent very little time with students individually and focused mainly on the content of the given task.

After that, she presented some food vocabulary using the pictures from her book. She did not bring any authentic material or visuals. She made students repeat the words and then she asked them to write sentences using the new words. It was merely a

substitution exercise as they substituted the word "octopus" by any other food item. Then, she made some questions using the same structure: have you ever eaten ravioli? Students raised their hands and answered the questions.

In my opinion students were not only bored but also frustrated. They had very little chance of speaking English during the lesson. The class was teacher-centered as the teacher not only decided what was to be learned and how the class was to be run, but there was practically no involvement on the part of the learners. Throughout the lesson the teacher stayed at the front of the classroom and she was also the center of her lesson imparting instructions. There was little input from her students, as only a few participated (two out of eight) or showed any interest in the lesson. I observed how the students constantly checked the time in their cell phones. Overall, I observed that all the students, although paying attention most of the time, were passive learners just watching or listening to   the   teacher.

Even though the teacher asked students to write questions, the questions were neither relevant nor meaningful to them as evidenced by their one one-word answers (yes, no, pasta, fish) and general lack of interest (yawing, fidgeting, etc).The students' performance seemed to be geared towards the only objective of pleasing the teacher and they were eager for the class to end.

2.2.3 - Quantitative Research

2.2.3.1- Analysis of Advantages 3 in classes

Even though qualitative research is often contrasted with quantitative research, in my work I tried to integrate both of them. I used the results of my qualitative research on the advantages of using games as a guide to collect data in the observation of three classes.

I used the chart below as a check list in order to see if the points considered in the advantages analyzed above were present in the three classes I observed. I marked them taking into account the following options: yes- no - ? (not sure).

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
1- Motivation	Yes	Yes	No
2- Meaningful context	yes	yes	No
3- Diversity	Yes	yes	no
4- Cooperation	Yes	Yes	no
5- Meaningful activities	Yes	Yes	No
6- Creativity and spontaneous use of language.	Yes	Yes	No
7- Acquisition of Implicit competence	Yes	Yes	?
8- Fun	yes	Yes	no

In the first two classes I observed all the advantages were present in the class. Students felt motivated and felt that the teacher led them into meaningful activities within a meaningful context. There was cooperation among students and teachers and students had chances of using the language in a creative way. Students learning styles were taken into account so students felt comfortable and were able to relax, have fun and enjoy the class. I think that there was acquisition of implicit language as students were able to use the new language spontaneously.

On the contrary, in the traditional class, none of the advantages was present. To begin with, students were not motivated. They were bored and checking their cell phones many times during the lesson. The activities were not designed to cater for diversity. The teacher planned the activities according to her own criteria not taking into account the student´s learning styles or predominant intelligence. There was no cooperation, as students were only asked to listen and solve exercises alone. The activities were not meaningful and they did not require students to be creative. I cannot say if there was acquisition of implicit competence as students were never asked to produce other sentences apart from the ones in the book. However, as this is something difficult to evaluate in a single class I gave it an interrogation mark.

The present study throws the following results:

- Classes using games are more appealing to students, who seem to really enjoy the learning process since they have fun and feel confident.

- Traditional classes are not only boring but also less efficient, students drop out of classes and learn less (as evidenced by teacher observation and formal testing) and they seldom produce anything new during the lesson.

2.2.3.2- Survey

Survey research involves the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions. I felt motivated to conduct this survey as I consider that students are the main characters in the learning process, so their opinion was really important for my research work.

When planning the survey, my goal was to identify the main reasons students had for preferring games as a main form of instruction. As these students are learning through games at the moment and I know they are both learning and enjoying the process, I wanted to find out which of the benefits were more important for them.

I made a list of five important aspects of teaching through games and I used **Likert**-type responses. These kinds of surveys generally ask respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements. The response categories list choices for respondents to select their level of agreement with a statement from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The format of a typical five-level Likert item which I used was the following:

1- Strongly disagree
2- Disagree
3- Neutral
4- Agree
5- Strongly agree

The statements I chose were whether students considered that games were good for learning vocabulary, for learning grammar or for learning functions. I also analyzed if games were good for having fun and for releasing stress. Several consistencies connecting these factors to games were found. Lists were made, choices were graphed, and general conclusions were formed from the raw data given.

I selected sixty students who are learning English through the use of games. In order to collect the data I conducted online surveys which are very practical and relatively easy to administer.

I sent the students the grid below and asked them to complete it.
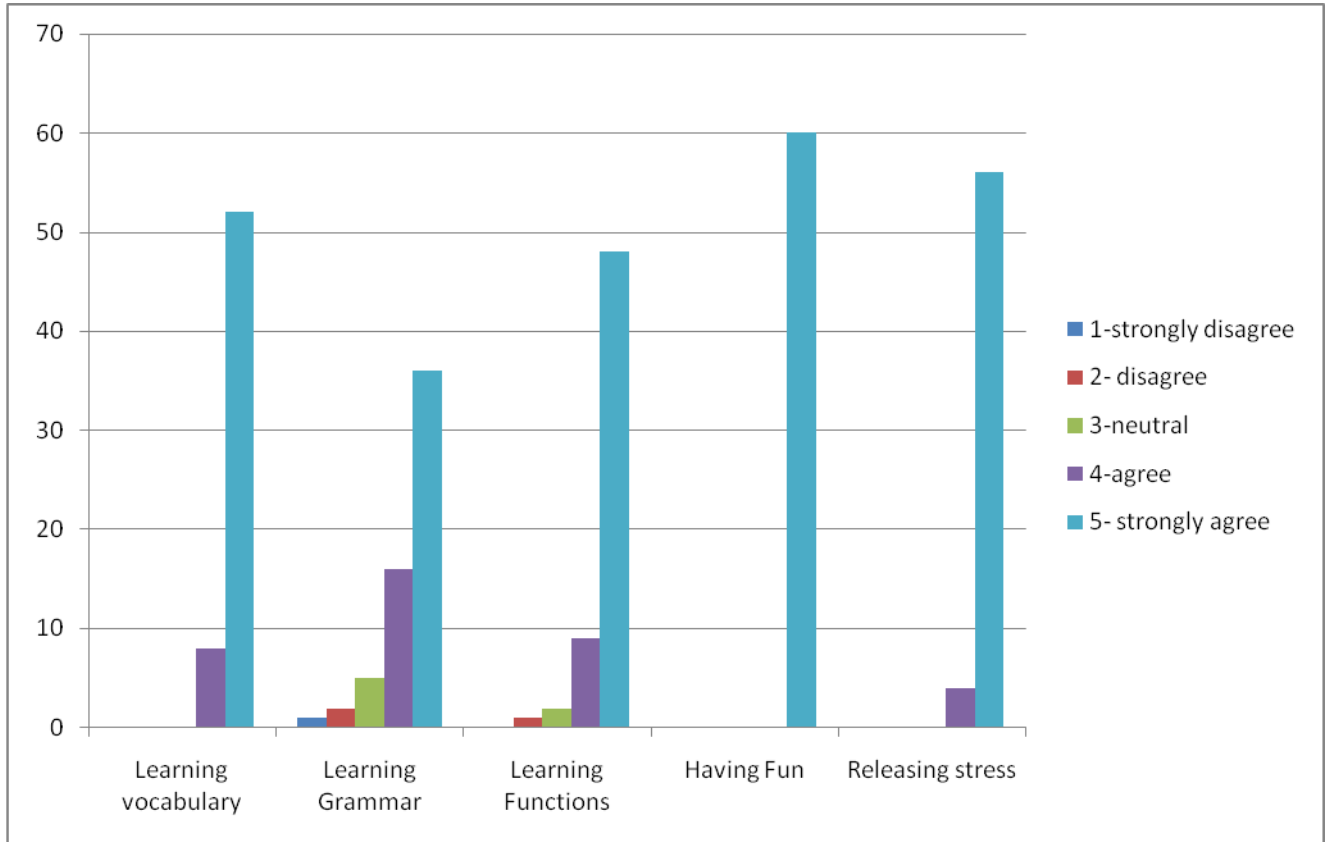
I consider that games are good for:

	strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	strongly agree 5
Learning vocabulary					
Learning Grammar					
Learning Functions					
Having Fun					
Releasing stress					

Many of respondents had problems in understanding the meaning of functions, but they called me and I explained the idea. After I collected all the results I arrived at the conclusions shown below

After the questionnaire was completed, each item was analyzed separately.

The graph below shows the results for each item.

2.2.3.3- Conclusions

My survey has brought me to the conclusion that games are important for students' ´learning processes. Emerging evidence has shown that the majority of the students who were asked to complete the survey consider that games adequately prepare them for a better academic learning experience. Games according to 100% of the students are good for having fun. A very high percentage of students said that they are perfect for releasing stress. However, the evidence shows that according to the students 'point of view, games play an important role in learning vocabulary, grammar and functions. For most of the students games are better for learning vocabulary or functions than for learning grammar. It should be kept in mind that these results were limited to the formal observation of three classes and my own experience using games in the classroom.

3- Discussion and Conclusions

Learning should be fun, in fact learning is fun, but why is it then that we are forced to learn and in turn we force students to learn? Any visit to most schools clearly demonstrates this, and any conversation with teachers currently employed in most schools systems will attest to this.

Current methods of teaching are seldom fun and, in fact, they are very successful in pushing children away from learning. The different theories analyzed, point to many factors that should be considered when teaching but strangely they are not. On the other hand, games contain all sorts of possibilities as they require all the skills that schools so strive to teach but fail miserably. Why is it then that schools continue to offer the same diet over and over again? Why are teachers - even when aware of the different theories regarding learning continue using the same old tired methods?

Playing a game, any game requires specific skills such as memory, the ability to process, logical reasoning, mathematical skills and even building social skills and yet, teachers rarely use this resource when tackling an academic subject. Why is this?

Education is a complex issue that has been the topic of many national and international conferences, and educators attending leave the workshops invigorated and enthusiastic. However, that enthusiasm and new ideas rarely reach the classroom. We only have to analyze how our schools are run nation wide.

This thesis presents one practical solution that has provided us with a rewarding experience. Although we believe our methods could be used successfully in other school settings, further studies should be made and possibly pilot programs implemented with short, medium and long term objectives. The concept of games and play could be misleading when connected to the academics with which education is mainly concerned and in this sense proper training and serious commitment are crucial.

More debate and discussion on this topic are needed, but in my opinion it makes sense to make a profound change in teaching methods and we have been making that much needed difference with games for close to 30 years.

In conclusion, teaching through games is one effective and interesting way that can be applied to any classroom. Games are a familiar method by which elementary and middle school teachers create a remarkable setting for second-language acquisition. In addition to context, games also provide an emotional connection and a sense of play that brain research and teacher experience indicate can enhance both learning and memory. Learning a foreign language has mostly been associated with conscious knowledge. However, if we want our students to be proficient and make connections in their brains we should consider activities that promote the acquisition of implicit competence. Teachers should promote oral production, favor meaning over form, provide authentic language communication situations and make students interact in the classroom encouraging brain-friendly activities like games. Experiences affect the types and amounts of synaptic connections. To develop the area of the brain responsible for higher-order thinking, students need to have good experiences that stimulate all of their senses. For a child, play is a critical path to those experiences that engage their senses and provide the basis for future learning. To have a successful teaching experience "Teachers choose or invent games for introducing and practicing language that students can later use in natural contexts for communicative purposes". (Curtain, H., & Dahlberg 2010:p.5)

The results of this research suggest that games are used not only for fun; learning is organic, emergent, experimental and based on cooperation. The fact that games are effective at motivating students has remained a fundamental rationale for using games in the classroom. Students' own emotionality may also affect their ability to learn. Games make students feel confident and causes them become the main characters in their learning experience.

Games in the classroom are effective because they provide motivation, lower students' stress, and give them the opportunity for real communication. They not only have a motivational value but they also are an enjoyable kind of activity and provide a context in which the language is embedded. This context is "authentic" while the game is on and it substitutes external reality by the reality of the game. While students are playing the game they are part of this imaginary world. Games then are hands-on experiences.

Games also cater for the importance of integration of the arts which encourages meaningful connection to concepts, helping teachers to pair visual, kinesthetic, and musical thinking with linguistic learning tasks. In his book Frames of Mind, Howard Gardner (1983) discusses the importance of the abilities which are involved with the arts. He refers to sculpture, painting, drama, mime, use of the body and music and says that they all represent a separate set of cognitive skills. Cognitive learning and higher-order thinking can be enhanced with meaningful connection to the arts through such activities as musical performance, role-playing, visual representations, creative movement, drama, poetry, and creative writing. I think that it is very important to provide learners with the right type of interaction to foster language development. The best setting is the one which is not threatening for students because when students feel comfortable they learn more. When we include fun, we are including strategies that are "brain-friendly." We can create brain friendly strategies by always providing a context for our teaching.

Through my research I could see that games can be used as a way of teaching, thus leading toward the goal of improving learners' communicative competence. It seems that both traditional classes and classes using games bring results with respect to levels of language competence. However, using games is more effective as it encourages students to communicate and create a positive attitude to the subject. Games engage and empower students who learn in different ways. Learners bring assets for learning based on their individual experiences so when their background or previous experiences are taken into account students have more chances to learn. Students learn more and learn better when they take control of their learning by enjoying the process. Education is rapidly changing. Both the roles of the teachers and of the students have changed. My research indicates that the majority of the students consider games, movement and fun more motivating. As Albert Einstein´s famous quote states "Creativity is intelligence having fun." Games promote creative fun and make students use the language in a creative way. Creativity should not be unevaluated. According to UNESCO, "the encouragement of creativity from an early age is one of the best guarantees of growth in a healthy environment of self-esteem and mutual respect — critical ingredients for building a culture of peace."

I also want to refer to the fact that people have been learning English in a traditional way for ages and they have learnt anyway. These students have mastered the use of the foreign language in quite an effective way. However, it has implied a lot of effort and dedication on the part of the students as the focus was on form rather than on

meaning. They did not feel motivated to learn the language and in most of the cases they did not enjoy learning it as they did not feel confident when trying to speak the language. Unfortunately many students dropped out as their full potential was not considered. The students who did not drop out learnt the language after making thousands of grammar exercises and drilling. It is therefore argued that these students learnt the language in spite of the traditional methodology.

Teaching through games, on the other hand, is definitely the best option. It considers the person as a whole, and the student´s predominant intelligence. It helps students and teachers to be present. Today in the era of the internet, playing a game with our students is one of the best gifts we can give them. Teaching through games encompasses a broad range of goals for teaching and learning which extends well beyond academic learning into fields of social and cooperative learning as well as emotional wellbeing. While this can, at first, seem overwhelming, teachers can find the small opportunities in their day to day practice to incorporate and extend games that promote a sense of connection, community and wellbeing. When teachers and students discover the power of play and games and implement them on a regular basis, the reward is enormous. As Cook (1996:231) says, "What is needed for the beginning of the twenty-first century is a recognition of the complexity of language learning: that is sometimes play and sometimes for real, sometimes form-focused and sometimes meaning-focused, sometimes fiction and sometimes fact. This would be a real change of fashion: one which could provide the richer and more complex environment for learning, which after a century of being pushed and pulled in all directions, both learners and teachers deserve."

Taking into account different methods and methodologies which have all contributed to the teaching of languages, we can conclude that "the art of teaching does not lie in accessing a checklist of skills but rather in knowing which approach to adopt with different students, in different curricular circumstances or in different cultural settings" (Klapper 2001:17). My own research leads me to claim that we can adapt the use of games to any teaching method, adapt traditional games into language games or invent new games creating, in this way, **the *art of teaching through games.***

Appendices

In this section I will present a collection of games I regularly play with my students. These games have been published in my e-book Vitamin Shock Games which is being used at the moment by more than 300 teachers with excellent results. The practice of these games on a regular basis and the success of them in my lessons is fundamental to demonstrate my research work on teaching through games. I will explain the teaching purpose of each game and give the corresponding instructions. I will also suggest the ideal number of participants and the material needed if any.

1- Curious Duck Duck Goose

MATERIALS: none

TEACHING PURPOSE: personal information questions

INSTRUCTIONS   As in the popular *Duck Duck Goose* game, participants sit down in a circle facing each other. One person is "it" and walks around the circle. As he/she walks around, they tap people's heads and say whether they are a "duck" or a "goose". Once someone is the "goose" they get up and try to chase "it" around the circle. The goal is to tap that person before they are able sit down in the "goose's" spot. If the goose is not able to do this, they become "it" for the next round and the play continues. If they do tap the "it" person, the person tagged has to sit in the center of the circle and has to answer a personal question. Then the goose becomes it for the next round. The person in the middle can't leave until another person is tagged and they are replaced.

2- Spin the Bottle

MATERIALS: a plastic bottle

TEACHING PURPOSE: personal information questions

INSTRUCTIONS:

Participants sit in a circle. Put a plastic bottle in the center. Each player takes turns spinning the bottle. The student spinning the bottle has to ask a personal question to the person who the bottle is pointing at.

3- Flip a Coin

MATERIALS: a coin every two participants

TEACHING PURPOSE: simple present for routines

INSTRUCTIONS:

Participants get in pairs and take turns flipping a coin. Before starting the game have them decide if they are *heads or tails*. Then they flip the coin. If they get their favourite side of the coin they have to say something about their daily routine. The first participant to say 10 sentences is the winner.

4- The Wolf

MATERIALS: none

TEACHING PURPOSE: present continuous

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is a very popular game children play. You can bring it into the classroom to practise present continuous.

Tell participants to stand in a circle with the "Wolf" in the center. Students call "Wolf, Wolf, are you ready?" Wolf answers "No, I am not¨. So students say in chorus¨ What are you doing?¨ The WOLF says¨ I'm putting on my shoes" and pantomimes putting on his/her shoes. The others imitate him. Again they ask "Wolf, Wolf, are you ready?" and he/she replies,¨ No, I am not¨ and the participants say, What are you doing?¨ He/she says that he is putting on his/her coat, tie, hat, etc. each time pantomiming putting on the item. Whenever he/she wishes, the Wolf answers with "Yes, I'm ready, and here I come". The

players rush to a goal line and the Wolf tries to tag them. If any player is tagged, he/she becomes the Wolf.

5- **Human Spot the difference**

MATERIALS: instruction cards

TEACHING PURPOSE: imperatives/ parts of the body

INSTRUCTIONS:

Give each pair of students a card with instructions. They have to make a human picture following the instruction. After they practice, the rest of the class looks at the human picture and tries to spot the differences. The student to write down the 5 differences first wins the game.

Examples of cards

Student 1

Stand up with your legs crossed to the right

Touch your left ear

Open your mouth

Wink you left eye

Touch you left knee with your elbow

Student 2

Stand up with your legs crossed to the left

Touch your right ear

Stick out your tongue

Wink you right eye

Touch you right knee with your elbow

6- Blind Picture

MATERIALS: For each player: pencils, sheets of paper, blind folders (e.g. A scarf), cards with words.

TEACHING PURPOSE: What's this? Vocabulary.

INSTRUCTIONS: All participants should be sitting with their eyes blindfolded and their pencil and a sheet of paper. Before participants are blindfolded the teacher hands out a different secret card to each player, who should read it to themselves and not let anyone see it. Then, they put on their blindfolds and draw what they have read on the card. After everyone has finished they remove their blindfolds and they have to guess the other players´ picture.

7- Dancing with a Ball

MATERIALS: A blindfold, some music and a ball.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Personal information.

INSTRUCTIONS: All players stand in a circle except for "it". Choose one person to be "it" who is blindfolded and stands in the middle of the circle holding a ball. Play some music and tell all the players to dance to the music. It¨ must dance with the ball. When the music stops "it" throws the ball. The person nearest "it" catches the ball and "it" says: "What's your name?". The person says either his/her real name or any name from the members of the group. "It" tries to guess if the person is telling the truth or not. If the guess is correct, that person now becomes "it" in the middle.You can also use this game to ask about personal information.

8- EARTH, AIR, WATER AND FIRE

MATERIALS: A ball or a bean bag.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Vocabulary of animals.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask all participants but one to sit in a circle. The participant who is not in the circle must stand in the center holding a ball or a bean bag. The person in the middle throws the ball or the bag at someone and shouts: ¨ Earth, Water, Air or Fire!¨ If it is Water,

for example the chosen participant must reply with the name of a water animal. If it is earth they must reply with an earth animal and if it is air, they must reply with an air animal. If they say fire they must whistle for the fire engine. Once an animal has been named, it may not be called again. If the chosen participant cannot reply in time, they change places with the thrower.

9- IMAGINARY OBJECTS

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MATERIALS: A sheet of paper and a pen for each participant or for each group.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Vocabulary. What is it? It is a .....

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask Participants to sit in a circle with paper and pen in front of them. Hold an imaginary bag and start taking out imaginary objects and mime them as you take them out. Participants should write down their guesses. The participant who has more correct guesses is the winner. Encourage participants to write down complete sentences (eg: It is a pencil).

10- PASS THE ALARM CLOCK

MATERIALS: An alarm clock, a list of questions.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Answering questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: Ask participants to sit in a circle. Set an alarm clock and start passing it around. When the alarm rings, the person holding the clock must answer a question. Repeat the procedure until all the questions have been answered. This game is great to correct homework. Instead of a list of questions students must say an answer from their homework

11- PASS THE PARCEL

MATERIAL: Parcel with questions, some music.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Answering questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: Prepare a parcel with many layers of paper. Paste a slip of paper with a question on each layer. Students sit in a circle and as they listen to the music they pass the parcel. When the music stops the student with the parcel removes a layer of paper and answers the question that is pasted there. The student who takes off the last layer gets the prize (usually candies to share).

12- TENNIS BALL OUT OF THE CIRCLE GOSSIPING

MATERIAL: Ball.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: All the participants get into a circle. They stand close to each other. The teacher is in the center of the circle. The players pass the ball behind their backs so that the teacher can't see it. The teacher must guess who has the ball in his/her hands. The teacher points at the player who (to his/her mind) has a ball in his/her hands. This player must hold out his/her hands forward at once if he/she really has a ball in his/her hands. If this student has the ball he/she has to answer a personal question the teacher will ask but if he/she has not got the ball he/she is allowed to ask a personal question to the teacher.

13- GRAB A TOY OR ANSWER A QUESTION

MATERIAL: Small toys, some music and a list of questions.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: Put the same number of students but one of small toys on the floor. Ask students to walk around the room to the sound of the music. When the music stops everyone must grab a toy. The person who has not picked up a toy has to answer a question. The game continues this way until all the questions have been answered.

14- NUMBERS MUSICAL CHAIRS

MATERIAL: Chairs, a bag with numbers, a number for each chair, some music and a list of questions.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: Place a chair per student back to back forming a circle. Stick numbers on each chair. Play some music. When students listen to the music they have to walk

around the chairs. When the music stops they have to sit down. The teacher draws a number from the bag and reads it out loud. The player seated on the chair with this number must answer a question. The music is started again. This procedure is repeated until all the questions have been answered.

15- NEWSPAPER ISLANDS

MATERIAL: Pieces of newspaper with the form of islands, some music and a list of questions.

TEACHING PURPOSE: Questions.

INSTRUCTIONS: Place the newspaper islands on the floor. But remember to place one piece of paper less than the number of players. (Ex. If there are 10 players, place 9 pieces of paper) Tell participants to dance and move to the music around the ocean (room). When the music stops they have to run to an island to save their lives. The person who can not get to an island has to answer a question. Continue this way until all the questions have been answered.

16- WHAT´S THE TIME, MR. WOLF?

MATERIAL: Box, cardboard clocks.

TEACHING PURPOSE: The time.

INSTRUCTIONS: One student is the wolf and the rest are sheep. Give students cardboard clocks with different times (depending on the level of the students) Each clock should be repeated at least once. The wolf has to stand at one end of the room. All the sheep at the same time shout: "What's the time Mr Wolf?" Mr Wolf tells a time (for example:" It is 4 o´clock"). The students holding these clocks must run and put the clock in a box located in a certain place in the room. The wolf has to chase these sheep before they can place the clocks into the box. If one student is caught they become the wolf, and the game continues in the same way.

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Glossary

- Approach: method

- Acquisition: a gradual cognitive process of acquiring a skill or knowledge

- Brain-friendly: brain-compatible learning.

- Case study: the collection and presentation of detailed information about a particular or small group.

- Communicative performance: the appropriate use of language in a communicative situation

- Competence: capacity

- Data: recorded observation.

- Deductive Method: a method of reasoning by which concrete applications or consequences are deducted from general principles. The teacher gives the students a new concept, explains it, and then has the students practice using the concept.

- Game: an activity that you do for fun that has rules, and that you can win or lose.

- Implicit competence: it is what the capacity and skills students have of the language and can use naturally.

- Inductive Method makes use of student "noticing". Instead of explaining a given concept and following this explanation with examples,

- Interneuron: is a neuron that forms a connection between other neurons.

- Hypothesis: A tentative explanation based on theory to predict a causal relationship between variables.

- Method: approach

- Methodology: set of practices

- Motivation: a feeling of enthusiasm or interest that makes you determined to do something.

- Neuroeducation: is an emerging scientific field that brings together researchers in cognitive neuroscience, developmental cognitive neuroscience, educational psychology, educational technology, education theory and other related disciplines to explore the interactions between biological processes and education

- Performance: the process of doing an action

- Play: an activity engaged in for enjoyment.

- Qualitative Research: focuses on gathering mainly verbal data rather than measurements. This information is then analyzed in an interpretative or subjective way

- Quantitative Research: generates numerical data or information that can be converted into numbers.

- Reward: something good that happens or that you receive because of something that you have done

- Survey: A research tool that includes at least one question which is either open-ended or close-ended and employs an oral or written method for asking these questions.

- Traditional Class: all students sit facing the board and the teacher who imparts information.