

IMPLEMENTING GAMES IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: EFFECTS ON STUDENTS' LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the possible benefits of implementing games to enhance the foreign language acquisition process. In this research, the participants were 45 students enrolled in the fifth grade of Primary School in the Basque Country. Participants took part in a pedagogical intervention in which the English coursebook was adapted aiming at improving students' academic results as well as their learning engagement, anxiety, participation and oral production in the foreign language classroom. The results show that games improved students' proficiency in the foreign language, especially in the oral aspect. Findings also reveal that games contributed to an increase in students' learning engagement and a decrease in their learning anxiety, resulting in heightened participation and oral production of English. The paper concludes that implementing games can be helpful for the acquisition of the foreign language.

Key words: foreign language acquisition, games, learning anxiety, learning engagement, participation, oral production.

LABURPENA

Lan honek, jokoak atzerriko hizkuntza eskuratzeko prozesuan izan ditzakeen abantailak aztertzen ditu. Ikerketa honetan, parte hartzaileak Euskal Herriko lehen hezkuntzako bostgarren mailako 45 ikasle izan ziren. Ikasleek esku-hartze pedagogiko batean parte hartu zuten. Bertan, ingeleseko testuliburua egokitu zen, ikasleen emaitza akademikoak hobetzea xede izanik, bai eta haien ikaskuntzarako konpromezua, antsietatea, parte-hartzea eta ahozko ekoizpena atzerriko hizkuntzako ikasgelan ere. Emaitzek jokoek ikasleek atzerriko hizkuntzan zuten gaitasuna hobetu zutela erakusten dute, batez ere ahozkoan. Era berean, ebidentziek, jokoek ikasleen ikaskuntzarako konpromezua areagotzen eta haien antsietatea murrizten lagundu zutela, eta horrek ingelesezko parte-hartze eta ekoizpen handiagoa ekarri zuela erakusten dute. Lanak atzerriko hizkuntza eskuratzeko jokoak ezartzea onuragarria izan daitekeela ondorioztatzen du.

Hitz gakoak: atzerriko hizkuntza eskuratzea, jolasak, antsietatea, ikaskuntzarako konpromezua, parte-hartzea, ahozko ekoizpena.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo se centra en los posibles beneficios de la implementación de juegos para mejorar el proceso de adquisición de la lengua extranjera. En este estudio, los/las participantes fueron 45 estudiantes matriculados en quinto curso de Primaria en el País Vasco. Los/las sujetos participaron en una intervención pedagógica en la que se adaptó el libro de texto de inglés con el objetivo de mejorar los resultados académicos del alumnado, así como su compromiso de aprendizaje, ansiedad, participación y producción oral en el aula de lengua extranjera. Los resultados muestran que los juegos mejoraron la competencia de los estudiantes en la lengua extranjera, especialmente en el aspecto oral. Los resultados también revelan que los juegos contribuyeron a aumentar el compromiso de los estudiantes con el aprendizaje y a reducir su ansiedad, lo que se tradujo en una mayor participación y producción oral en inglés. El trabajo concluye que la implementación de juegos puede ser beneficiosa para la adquisición de la lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: adquisición de la lengua extranjera, juegos, ansiedad, compromiso hacia el aprendizaje, participación, producción oral.

1. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world, the importance of foreign language acquisition has become more pronounced, leading to a growing number of researchers and teachers focused on exploring effective approaches and techniques for language learners. The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which encompasses 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focused on enhancing various aspects of life across all sectors, places significant emphasis on education. Education plays a central role in addressing social inequalities and preventing poverty, making it essential for achieving the SDGs (UNESCO, 2023).

In this context, the implementation of meaningful learning environments through games effectively contribute to the goal of providing equitable and high-quality education for all students. Traditionally, games have been perceived as a form of entertainment and used as warm-up activities or time fillers in language classrooms. However, it is argued that language games should be viewed as central components of foreign language learning, rather than supplementary elements, due to their positive effects for promoting effective language acquisition (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016).

Therefore, this study aims at analysing whether implementing games following scientific evidence has an impact on students' language acquisition. For that, games were introduced in a classroom with low learning engagement and limited English oral production. The research will investigate the effects of implementing games specifically in students' performance in written and oral tests, as well as in their learning engagement, learning anxiety, participation and English oral production. These results will also be contrasted with a control group following English coursebook based lessons.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section is intended to provide an overview of the current theoretical notions that have been considered in designing and implementing the experimental intervention focused on the effectiveness of using games in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

2.1. Key issues in foreign language learning

In recent years, the discussion surrounding the teaching of English as a foreign language has generated considerable interest within the education field, with particular emphasis placed on exploring diverse approaches, methods, and theories to uncover more optimal and productive language teaching techniques. Willis (1996) emphasised four key conditions necessary for effective language acquisition in a classroom setting: exposure to the target language, opportunities to apply language skills in real-life situations, motivation, and a focus on form.

Firstly, it is essential for learners to receive a rich but comprehensible input through authentic materials and real-world language situations (Spada, Ranta & Lightbown, 2013; Willis, 1996). This exposure helps learners develop their comprehension skills, expand their vocabulary, and acquire natural language patterns. However, the provided input must be slightly above the learner's linguistic level to facilitate natural processing and acquisition of new language structures (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

Learners need both input and output. Therefore, it is vital that students are provided with ample and high-quality opportunities to use the language. As Zhang (2009) mentioned, in the same manner of input and output, interaction also plays a significant role in the process of the second language acquisition. Similarly, Leslie (2021) supported the idea that interaction, particularly with peers, have beneficial impacts on language acquisition. Indeed, language is a social action that exists in communication and interaction (Hall, 2001). According to Ayu (2019), one of the effective tools to promote interaction are interactive activities, since they encourage students to engage in authentic conversations with their classmates.

Regarding self-determined motivation, Bureau, Howard, Chong and Guay (2022) advocated that competence is the strongest factor in predicting it. Next in importance is

having autonomy, followed by relatedness. In the context of self-determined motivation, relatedness reflects the extent to which students experience a feeling of inclusion, acceptance, and connection within their learning environment. Likewise, according to Willis (1996) the achievement of completing a task is itself a motivating factor. Moreover, learners who are intrinsically motivated and have a genuine interest in the language are more likely to invest time and effort into their learning (Dörnyei, 1998). Fostering autonomy of the learners by allowing them to set goals, make choices, and take ownership of their learning process further enhances motivation and engagement.

On the other hand, while meaningful communication is important, a balanced approach that also includes a focus on form is crucial. This involves explicit instruction on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and other language components (Long, 1991). Targeted language instruction helps learners develop accuracy and refine their language production skills. Integrating form-focused activities and providing corrective feedback support learners in acquiring more precise language use. Similarly, Ellis (2015) described the role of focus on form by asserting that language teaching must not only focus on intentional learning, but also on incidental learning by providing learners with enough exposure to the target language and, essentially, by having their attention drawn to linguistic features that they may otherwise overlook. The focus-on-form and the focus-on-forms approaches are commonly viewed as oppositional. Notwithstanding, “clearly, learners can benefit from intentional learning but equally clearly much of learning will have to be incidental. A curriculum that incorporates both approaches is surely desirable” (Ellis, 2015, p.10).

Finally, another crucial condition that needs to be met to ensure effective language learning is a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere. Teachers should establish a positive classroom atmosphere that encourages students to take risks, make mistakes, and engage in meaningful interactions with their peers and teachers (Freeman, 2000). Richards and Rodgers (2014) corroborated that in a foreign language classroom it is essential to create a supportive environment that fosters a sense of psychological safety, encourages risk-taking and embraces mistakes as part of the learning process.

2.2. Use of games in foreign language teaching

As Juan Rubio and García Conesa (2013) argued, language should be learned in a natural and enjoyable way through real-life experiences. Therefore, they suggest different resources that simulate everyday situations, such as music, songs, rhymes,

audio stories, material for making theatre costumes, creating books, using figures and games. This section will be focused on the resource of games as a particularly effective tool for teaching English as a Foreign Language. According to Gozcu and Caganaga (2016), games can be considered as one of the most important elements in EFL classrooms. Additionally, these authors remarked that foreign language games provide a meaningful context for acquiring a language with significance.

2.2.1. What is a game?

According to Hadfield (1990) games can be defined as activities with rules, a desired objective to achieve and a sense of enjoyment. Similarly, Rixon et al. (1991) described a game as “form of play governed by rules” (p.3). Furthermore, Talak-Kiryk (2010) reported that games are fun activities that encourage interaction, critical thinking, learning and the development of problem-solving skills. All these authors share the idea that games encompass a variety of factors, including rule-based structures and making learning fun.

As stated by Juan Rubio and García Conesa (2013) games have conventionally been used as a source of entertainment. This idea is supported by Gozcu and Caganaga (2016), who mentioned that teachers use games to escape from the monotony, as warm-up activities or as a way of filling extra time at the end of a lesson. However, games should be given a central role in foreign language learning, rather than being considered as a supplementary aspect of the program, since their impact on the teaching of learners goes beyond simply creating fun in the classroom. Therefore, teachers should integrate games into the centre of their foreign language teaching plans (Yolageldili and Arikan, 2011).

2.2.2. Advantages of using games in EFL classrooms

Extensive research has revealed that the use of games in EFL classrooms provides numerous advantages for students. Foreign language learning games can serve as a framework that offers a purposeful context for acquiring language (Gozcu & Caganaga, 2016). Games increase students' proficiency, since they are highly valuable for developing all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, either individually or in combination with one another (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006). Similarly, Constantinescu (2012) emphasised that games allow learners to improve their understanding of written and spoken English by learning words and structures in a

contextualized manner. Additionally, he claims that games can be adaptable for different levels of knowledge.

Working through games fosters a constructivist classroom setting that enhances students to be in the centre of the learning process. This feature of learner-centeredness is regarded as crucial in empowering students to take responsibilities and work autonomously, which improves the quality of language learning in the classroom (Talak-Kiryk, 2010). Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) corroborated it by stating that games "create a successful and positive classroom environment where students and their learning are central" (p.127).

Furthermore, using games in the classroom provides students with meaningful opportunities to purposefully use the language in different situations. Games create a link between students and the real world, since they provide opportunities for learners to practice language in realistic and authentic situations, simulating real-life conversations and promoting effective communication (Deesri, 2002; Talak-Kiryk, 2010). Moreover, Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) added that this allows learning unconsciously, as the focus of the students is not on the language, but on the message.

Motivation and enjoyment are also significant benefits associated with the use of games in EFL classrooms. Students require a certain level of challenge in the foreign language classroom in order to learn. Games can provide a break from routine, offer challenges and motivate students to want to learn more (Deesri, 2002; Krashen, 1982; Lee, 1995). Additionally, the effectiveness of games in capturing students' attention and encouraging their active participation is evident, as they have the ability to convert a boring lesson into an engaging and stimulating learning environment (Deesri, 2002). Mei and Yu-Jing (2000) highlighted how even shy and reluctant children react positively to games. Games also increase the desire for self-improvement (Constantinescu, 2012).

Regarding psychological benefits, games have a positive impact on learners' stress levels. In a language learning atmosphere, stress-free environment should be provided (Crookal, 1990). Nonetheless, foreign language classrooms frequently exhibit a notable level of stress, causing students to feel uncomfortable and lacking in confidence, which inevitably affects their ability to learn. At this point, Crookal (1990) affirmed that games are advantageous because of the fact that they lower anxiety, increase positive emotions and boost self-confidence. Therefore, working through games students feel more confident and comfortable when speaking in a foreign

language, reducing their fear to make mistakes or be judged (Crookal, 1990; Deesri, 2002). Consequently, when students are relieved from worry and stress, they have the opportunity to enhance their fluency and develop a more natural speaking style.

Interaction and communication are other key advantages of implementing games in a language class (Lee, 1995). In the field of education, the development of oral language skills is seen as crucial to acquire language proficiency and to engage actively in social interactions within society (Damhuis & de Blauw, 2008). However, these authors underlined that it is important to note that only higher quality interaction leads to significant improvements in language and knowledge acquisition.

When working through games students work together towards a common goal, justifying their answers, listening to their teammates' rationales, and engaging in spontaneous discussions. Therefore, collaboration and teamwork are encouraged through games, fostering trust, self-esteem and oral proficiency (Talak-Kiryk, 2010). Constantinescu (2012) added that even if games are of great help to foster collaborative learning, they allow at the same time students to progress at their own pace and cognitive level. Additionally, these authors remarked that games promote critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, imagination, independence and decision-making skills. Finally, on the one hand, Constantinescu (2012) mentioned the interdisciplinary approach as an extra benefit of games, due to the chance students have to use knowledge from other subjects. On the other hand, Talak-Kiryk (2010) mentioned Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, claiming that given the diversity in how individuals receive and process information, it is crucial for teachers to employ varied strategies and styles. According to this author, games are an optimal choice to fulfil so, since they cater to different learning styles and intelligences, incorporating logical reasoning, kinesthetics, communication, spatial relations and visual stimulation.

2.2.3. How to use games effectively

Incorporating games into the foreign language classrooms has been recognized to have numerous advantages. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that simply incorporating games does not automatically ensure effective learning outcomes for students. To maximize the advantages of using games, teachers must approach their implementation with careful consideration and proper strategies (Zhu, 2012). In order to implement games effectively, it is essential for teachers to establish a connection between the games and the learning outcomes outlined in the curriculum, alongside ensuring that

students understand the benefits they can gain from engaging in the game (Simpson, 2015).

Games should have a clear learning objective and purpose, going beyond mere entertainment (Constantinescu, 2012; Talak-Kiryk, 2010). Teachers must choose games that suit the class size, English proficiency level, and age group of the learners, ensuring that the games are clear, engaging and easily comprehended, taking into consideration that what may be considered simple for adults might not be the same for younger learners (Simpson, 2015). Constantinescu (2012) also emphasised the importance of ensuring that the content of the games is appropriate, promoting positive values and avoiding violence.

Involving every student and creating an inclusive environment where all students have a role and an opportunity to participate is essential. Encouraging learners to congratulate and appreciate each other's efforts, as well as reflecting on the achieved learning outcomes, makes the game experience rewarding (Simpson, 2015; Talak-Kiryk, 2010). Time management, thorough preparation, and effective classroom management are also essential for successful game implementation, since they can significantly impact the engagement and effectiveness of the game (Simpson, 2015; Zhu, 2012).

Furthermore, Yolageldili and Arikan (2011) recommended not to interrupt a game with the objective of correcting learners' mistakes. Such action is considered to detract their attention and interest. Therefore, waiting until the game is over to discuss and correct the students' mistakes is preferable. Additionally, Zhu (2012) emphasised that it is advisable to promote collaborative work in pairs and groups whenever possible, as this will enhance student engagement and provide a higher level of language use for each student.

2.2.4. Oral production and games

Bygates (1991) stated that oral production is the capacity to produce sentences in various real-life contexts. Similarly, O'Malley and Valdez (1996) affirmed that oral production is the way people communicate information related to things they are familiar with, while considering the specific context of the conversations.

Leong and Ahmadi (2017) suggested that speaking skills appear to be one of the most challenging aspects of language learning, leading to difficulties for many students

in expressing themselves effectively in spoken English. Therefore, it is crucial to create well designed educational activities to support students in overcoming challenges with spoken English and enhance oral production. According to Bailey (2005), there are several key principles to consider when designing and implementing speaking activities.

The first principle is to provide meaningful contexts. Language teachers should ensure that the topics provided for speaking activities are interesting, useful, and thought-provoking, addressing learners' needs and reasons for communication in the target language. Additionally, speaking activities should promote interaction through groupwork or pairwork. Indeed, groupwork and pairwork activities create opportunities for verbal and nonverbal communication, with pairwork often allowing for more extensive student participation compared to group settings.

Furthermore, Bailey (2005) underlined the importance of manipulating physical arrangements. Modifying the physical environment of the classroom can enhance oral production and reflect real-world communication. Implementing seating arrangements like the round robin, where students placed in a circular table share their thoughts one by one until all of them have had the chance to speak, can effectively encourage speaking. Similarly, inside-outside circle and mix and match are also effective arrangements for promoting speaking skills.

Moreover, personalizing speaking tasks helps engage learners by relating the content to their interests and circumstances. This can involve discussing personal topics such as names, favourite sports, jobs, and preferences. The last principle mentions encouraging learners to take reasonable risks. Language teachers should create an environment that encourages learners to take reasonable risks in English, promoting language acquisition and growth experiences.

Games, if well designed, have the potential to meet all the guidelines for improving oral skills and inspiring learners to actively use English. According to Zhu (2012), games inherently involve communication, and incorporating them into English teaching could well represent the central idea of the communicative language teaching approach, which is focused on the reciprocal process of communicating to learn and learning to communicate. This author stated that such approach is proven to be effective in enhancing students' communicative skills compared to traditional teaching methods, since students express thoughts, concepts and feelings based on their own life experiences instead of being just knowledge receivers.

It is worthwhile to mention that even if using games in the classroom is an effective method to encourage all the students to speak (Altun, 2015; Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006), it is particularly advantageous for the shyest students. Games provide extra chances for them to engage actively in classroom activities, enabling them to reduce the anxiety that often impedes their willingness to speak (Dewi et al., 2017).

2.3. Learning engagement

Engagement in students' learning is widely recognized as an essential factor for academic success (Kahu & Nelson, 2018). It involves active participation, effort, and attention in meaningful learning activities while experiencing positive emotions and a lack of anxiety or anger (Schuetz, 2008). Philp and Duchesne (2016) emphasised the effectiveness of active participation in academic activities using practical and cognitive approaches for acquiring knowledge and skills. According to this author, engagement can be defined as a state where individuals are highly attentive and involved, demonstrating active participation not only in cognitive aspects but also in social, behavioural, and affective dimensions. It is characterized by constructivism, enthusiasm, willingness, positive emotions, and cognitive focus during various tasks (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012).

According to Philp and Duchesne (2016), engagement encompasses three distinct dimensions: cognitive engagement, behavioural engagement, and emotional engagement. Cognitive engagement involves sustained attention and mental effort (Helme & Clarke, 2001), while behavioural engagement encompasses the active participation and involvement of students in academic activities, as well as their positive attitudes during the course of activities. This dimension of engagement is demonstrated through various actions, such as regular attendance, timely completion of assignments, actively participating in classroom discussions and arriving prepared for class. It is directly linked to learning outcomes (Philp & Duchesne, 2016).

Emotional engagement, on the other hand, focuses on students' emotional connection to their school environment, including their feelings about the school, its functioning, and the people within it (Yazzie-Mintz, 2007). Skinner et al. (2009) defined emotional engagement as a state of motivated involvement that learners experience in learning tasks, with enthusiasm, interest, and enjoyment being positive indicators, while anxiety, frustration, and boredom indicate negative emotional engagement.

Actively engaged students, who actively participate in purposeful activities, are more likely to persist and successfully graduate compared to their disengaged classmates (Braxton et al., 2004). In the context of language learning, one effective approach to engage students and foster positive attitudes is by providing them with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge. Neglecting students' willingness to communicate can have a negative impact on their engagement and motivation (Leslie, 2021). Therefore, teachers need to be mindful of fostering an environment that values and encourages students' active participation and communication.

Motivation and engagement are closely related, playing vital roles in enhancing the learning outcomes of all students (Philp & Duchesne, 2016). Nonetheless, Blumenfeld, Kempler and Krajcik (2006) stated that even if motivation is necessary, motivation alone is not enough for academic success. Ryan and Deci (2000) defined motivation as being moved or inspired to take action, distinguishing individuals who lack the impetus to act from those who are energized and activated toward a goal.

A study by Kuh et al. (2008) examined the relationship between student engagement and academic outcomes. The findings indicated a positive correlation between engagement in purposeful educational activities and students' grades. The study also revealed that effective educational practices had greater benefits for the students with more learning difficulties and students of colour compared to white students.

Games can be considered one of such purposeful and effective educational practices, since they have a positive impact on students' engagement (Rivera and Garden, 2021; Whitton, 2011). According to Whitton (2011), the use of games can be optimized to enhance students' engagement and create a more effective learning experience by focusing on three key concepts: promoting interaction and collaboration among learners, incorporating project-based activities that are relevant to the real world, and assigning relevant, authentic and meaningful work outside the traditional classroom setting. Additionally, Muntean (2011) asserted that the main aim of integrating games into educational contexts is to blend intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, ultimately enhancing overall motivation and engagement. The goal is to take advantage of the elements of games, such as challenges and interactive experiences, to create an attractive learning environment that engages students' interest and encourages their active participation.

2.4. Foreign Language learning anxiety

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is defined as a “distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). According to these authors, it is one of the biggest obstacles that EFL students encounter. Likewise, Krashen (1982) advocated that anxiety associated with learning a foreign language can act as a barrier, obstructing language acquisition. Students experiencing anxiety in their language learning do not enjoy the process and it has a negative impact on their performance and achievement. Therefore, FLA can significantly impede students' progress in their language learning process, affecting their future career (Chapell et al., 2007).

More than half of second language learners experience anxiety, leading to a decreased sense of enjoyment in language learning (Ali & Anwar, 2021; Anwar & Louis, 2017). Students' anxiousness can appear in different aspects of language learning, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, speaking anxiety is often the most noticeable and provocative form of anxiety experienced (Hashemi, 2011).

According to Hu and Wang (2014), anxiety is influenced by social elements, learners' psychological conditions, and the learning environment. While some language researchers suggested a positive mode of anxiety (Hu & Wang, 2014), most research highlights its debilitating effects on the language learning process, causing frustration, self-doubt, and tension (Hu & Wang, 2014; Woodrow, 2006). In foreign language classrooms, students face the demands of communicating in an unfamiliar language. Therefore, Cebros (2003) concluded that anxiety is more likely to occur in foreign language classrooms rather than in any other subjects' classrooms.

Woodrow (2006) provided a classification of anxiety into two categories: trait anxiety and state anxiety. On the one hand, trait anxiety is characterized by a long-lasting tendency to experience anxiety across different situations, indicating a stable trait in one's personality. People with trait anxiety are likely to feel anxious in a variety of circumstances. On the other hand, state anxiety is a temporary form of anxiety that arises in specific situations. Research suggests that state anxiety is particularly prevalent among students in language learning contexts.

In the foreign language classroom, it is essential for students to engage in various activities that enhance their confidence in speaking and writing within relevant contexts (Cook, 2001). Confidence plays a crucial role in any learning environment, and teachers can help students reach an ideal level of learning by creating a supportive and non-threatening atmosphere (Shabani, 2012). If students are constantly criticized and interrupted for their mistakes, they become more reserved and less communicative, failing to produce the desired results and inhibiting their fear of negative responses from the teacher. Additionally, Brantmeier (2005) claimed that in a foreign language classroom, it is beneficial for teachers to establish a friendly relationship with their students, providing a safe space for discussions and addressing any concerns or difficulties they may have. Conversely, an uncomfortable, cold, and unhelpful classroom environment is likely to increase learning anxiety (Hu & Wang, 2014).

Different researchers have attempted to reduce learners' anxiety in English language learning by incorporating various learning strategies and technologies, with a particular emphasis on learning methods based on games (Reinders & Wattana, 2014; Verkijika & De Wet, 2015). The use of games in the language classrooms has been found to be an effective approach for lowering students' learning anxiety due to the enjoyable, interactive, and dynamic nature of games (Huang, Huang, & Wu, 2014).

There is much research in the topic. However, all this could still be further analysed to bridge the existing gaps. In this regard, this study had the following objective and it has been designed in order to answer the following research questions:

Objective:

The aim of this research is to analyse the effectiveness of using games in EFL classrooms in terms of language acquisition, specifically regarding learning engagement, language anxiety, participation and English oral production.

Research Questions:

- **RQ1:** To what extent do games affect EFL students' language acquisition?
- **RQ2:** What are the effects of using games on students' anxiety and learning engagement in the EFL classrooms?
- **RQ3:** What is the impact on students' participation and oral production of English when they work through games?

3. METHODOLOGY

The following section presents the methodological instruments employed to address the research questions of the study. Firstly, the context where the study was carried out will be presented. Secondly, the participants of the study will be described. Finally, the procedure of how data was collected and analysed will be explained. The methodology used in this study is mixed; qualitative and quantitative.

3.1. Research context

This research was conducted in a big public school in the Basque Country. The school caters for students between the ages of two to eighteen. The study took place in a multilingual environment where one of the primary goals of the school is to bring up multilingual students having Basque on the centre of their learning process. Therefore, according to the linguistic model D, Basque is the language of instruction while English and Spanish are taught as subjects. At this school, English language instruction starts in the first year of Primary Education. This study was conducted in 5th grade of Primary Education, where English language teaching predominantly follows a grammar and vocabulary-oriented methodology, using a coursebook.

3.2. Participants

The study comprised a total of 45 participants who were enrolled in the fifth grade of Primary Education. They were divided in two groups: experimental (n=23) and control (n=22) for the purpose of this study. Participants in the experimental group took part in a game-based pedagogical intervention while participants in the control group continued with their regular textbook-based lessons. The participants of both groups were 10-11 year-old students. These students had the same teacher and used the same textbook in English lessons. All the participants had three hours of English per week. In terms of gender, it was quite balanced, just over a half of the students were male (n=24) and the rest of the participants were female (n=21).

3.3. Instruments

In order to gather the data required to answer the research questions, different instruments were used: (1) a background questionnaire before the intervention, (2) pre-tests, (3) a proposal of an adaptation of the book, (4) an observation chart for the teacher, (5) a background questionnaire after the intervention (6) post-tests and (7) a final questionnaire.

1. Background questionnaire before the intervention

The students in the experimental group completed a questionnaire showing their level of agreement with different statements regarding their learning engagement, anxiety, participation and production of English (see *appendix 1*). The questionnaire was designed in Basque to ensure the understanding of all students and to avoid misunderstandings.

2. Pre-tests

Before starting with the implementation of the adapted lessons, the students in both groups were asked to complete a written pre-test to know their knowledge about what was going to be taught (see *appendix 3*). In order to get a better understanding of their current level of English, the students also had to take an oral test by answering questions about their daily life.

3. Proposal of an adaptation of the book

A proposal of an adaptation of the coursebook was done in order to implement games and evaluate their benefits in the English lessons. The proposal consisted of a three-lesson intervention. The lesson plan of a week in a regular class using the book was taken and modified to give the same contents in the same number of lessons in the experimental group, but using games (see *appendix 4*).

4. Observation chart

An observation chart was used first in regular lessons before the intervention and then in each of the lessons of the intervention with the aim of gathering information related to the quantity and quality of the interventions of the students in both groups. Moreover, their attitudes towards the different lessons proposed were observed, tracking motivation, learning engagement and anxiety as well in the chart. (see *appendix 5*).

5. Post-tests

At the end of the intervention, students in the control and the experimental groups completed the same written and oral tests they did before the intervention to evaluate their improvement.

6. Background questionnaire after the intervention

After the intervention was finished, students in the experimental group completed another questionnaire to see whether there had been any changes in their perceptions regarding learning engagement, anxiety, participation and production of English (see *appendix 2*).

7. Final questionnaire

A final questionnaire was given to the students in the experimental group in order to collect qualitative information about their impressions, thoughts and feelings towards the English sessions using games they had attended. The questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions to let students express themselves in a freer and more extensive manner (see *appendix 6*). The questionnaire was designed in Basque to ensure the understanding of all students and to avoid misunderstandings.

3.4. Data collection and analysis

The data was collected from January 2023 to February 2023. The effectiveness of implementing games in EFL classrooms in order to improve students' language acquisition was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The data was gathered through seven main steps. Initially, the researcher observed the regular English lessons in both groups for weeks and tracked information about the attitudes and interventions of the students in an observation chart. Subsequently, the participants filled a background questionnaire in order to collect personal information related to foreign language learning and lessons. After the background questionnaire, the students in both groups underwent a written and an oral pre-test.

The research proceeded with a proposal of modification of the coursebook "Amazing Rooftops" by *Oxford (2019)* by implementing games and analysing the effects of such change. It was observed that the existing activities in the coursebook "Amazing Rooftops" by *Oxford (2019)* were not enough to guarantee all the students' participation and English oral production and to promote learning engagement among the students. Therefore, the lesson plans of a regular week using the coursebook were modified to design lessons for the experimental group that created the need and motivation to use the language. The intervention consisted of three lessons in each of the groups.

In the control group, students worked individually, while the intervention in the experimental group was aimed at promoting language use through peer interaction and group work. The intervention included different classroom arrangements, distinguishing it from the control group.

As an example of part of the intervention, Figure 2 displays a comic from the English coursebook used in this school's lessons. In the control group, students individually read the comic and completed related exercises (see Figure 3). Conversely, the experimental group engaged with the comic through three games.

Figure 1 exhibits the two vignettes assigned to each student from the comic. By describing their pictures without revealing them, students had to move around the classroom to find classmates with matching vignettes. In the following game, students in groups had to participate in a debate to arrange the vignettes in the correct order. Finally, students needed to deliberate and collectively decided on the correct option to the proposed questions about the comic, to assess their comprehension. Thus, the intervention aimed to provide every student with the chance to interact and use the language in a more engaging manner (for further details on the entire intervention, see appendix 4).

Figure 1

Vignettes used for a game in an experimental lesson



During these six lessons, the same observation chart as the one at the beginning was used by the researcher to compare any changes in students' participation, English oral production, learning engagement and anxiety.

After the intervention week, all the involved students completed the same written and oral tests that were administered before the intervention with the aim of assessing their improvement. Additionally, another background questionnaire was filled by each student in the experimental group to identify any changes in their perceptions towards English language and lessons. Finally, the students in the experimental group also completed a final questionnaire containing open-ended questions to ascertain their perspectives on the lessons through games and whether they had noticed any personal changes.

In the end, an analysis was conducted on both quantitative and qualitative data. The answers of the background questionnaires and the pre- and post-tests were compared and statistically analysed. The observation charts completed both in the control and experimental English lessons, along with the final questionnaire, were contrasted and interpreted in order to compare the outcomes. It is worth mentioning that all information collected throughout the study was treated confidentially.

4. RESULTS

In the following section, the results obtained from the data collected during the research will be analysed. The results will be presented following the order of the research questions. The first research question of this study aims to assess the impact of games on the language acquisition of EFL students by examining their performance in written and oral tests. The second and third research questions focus on the effects that using games had on different aspects that influence the acquisition of a foreign language. Specifically, the second research question analyses the effects on students' anxiety and learning engagement in the Foreign Language classroom, while the third research question focuses on the impact on students' participation and oral production of English.

4.1. The effects of games in students' language acquisition.

The first research question was:

To what extent do games affect EFL students' language acquisition?

The first research question aims at investigating the impact that working through games in the English classroom has on students' language acquisition regarding their academic results.

Figure 4 summarises the academic results that students in the control group obtained in the written pre- and post- tests. Seven of the students failed the pre-test and only one of them obtained an excellent mark. After the book-based lessons, the students in the control group improved their previous knowledge and marks, as can be seen in Figure 4. The number of failures was reduced from seven to four. Another notable change was the number of students who got a very good mark, increasing from four to seven. However, only two students obtained an excellent grade. Additionally, almost half of the students, ten precisely, scored fair or good in the written post-test.

Figure 4

Comparison of written tests in the control group

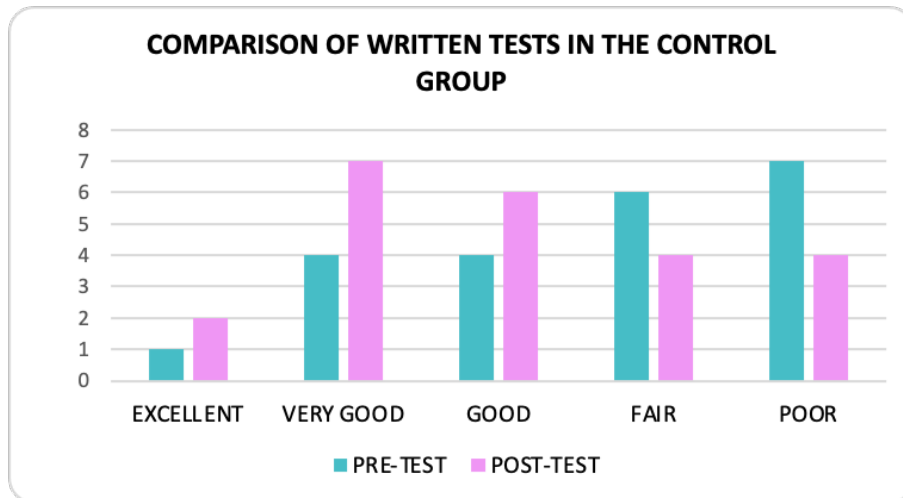
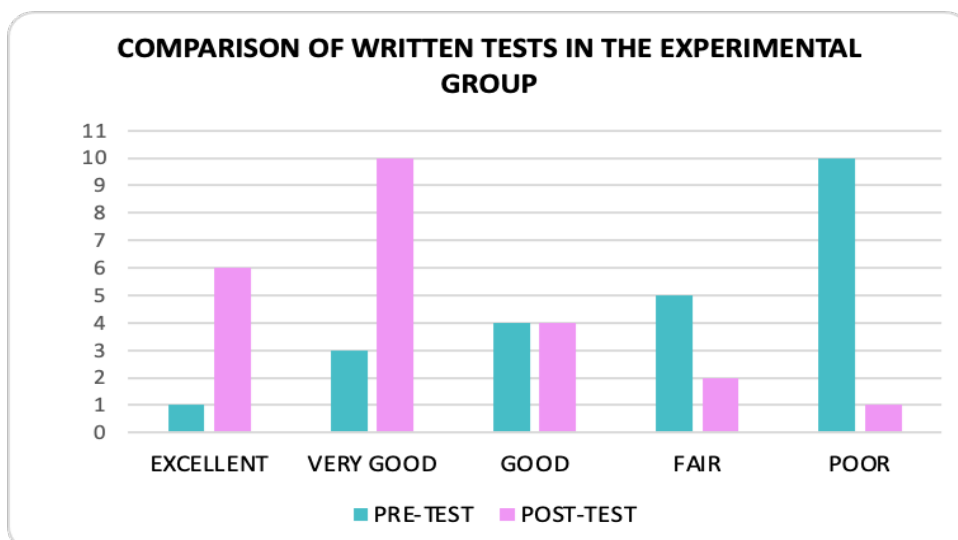


Figure 5 illustrates a comparison of the grades the students in the experimental group scored both in the written pre- and post- tests. Almost half of the students, ten concretely, got a poor grade in the pre-test. In addition to this, only four students achieved more than a good grade, including one excellent and three very good grades. Figure 5 shows a remarkable change in test scores after the intervention through games was implemented. The number of failures was almost completely reduced, decreasing from ten to one. Furthermore, almost three thirds of the students in the experimental group scored excellent or very good in the post-test. The number of goods was maintained and the number of fairs was reduced from five to two.

Figure 5

Comparison of written tests in the experimental group

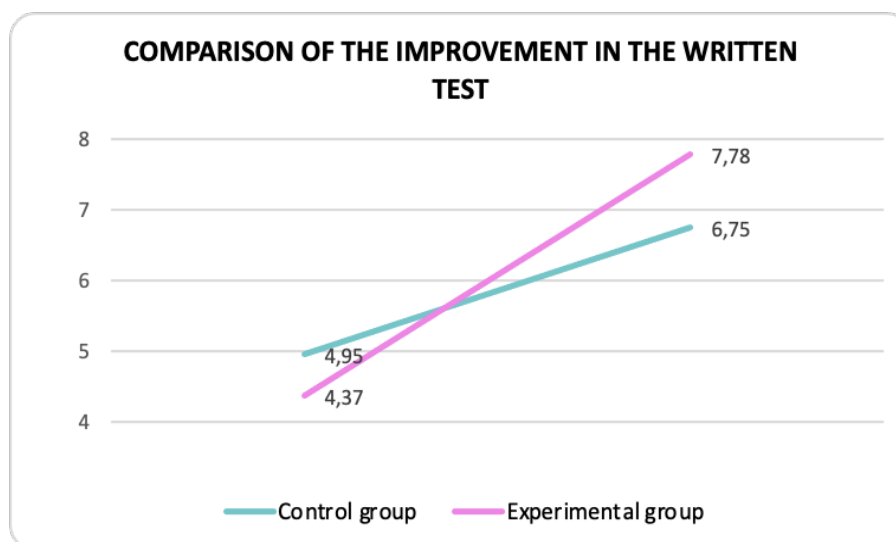


In both groups the main noticeable tendency is an increase in students' marks in the written test. However, in the control group, the number of failed tests was reduced by three students, with 18,18% of students remaining unsuccessful. In the experimental group, on the other hand, there was a reduction of nine students, with only 4,35% of the students with a poor grade.

Regarding the mean scores, both the control group and the experimental group failed the pre-test, demonstrating a lack of knowledge about what was to be worked on. Even so, as shown in Figure 6, the mean score of the control group (4.95) was slightly higher than that of the experimental group (4.37). After the intervention, both groups improved their knowledge and scored a higher mean in the post-test. However, it is worth noting that it was the experimental group that obtained a better average in the written test, scoring 7.78 compared to 6.75 for the control group. Therefore, as Figure 6 shows, the experimental group had a higher improvement than the control group. Specifically, the control group improved its average mark by 1.8 points, which means a 18%. The experimental group, on the other hand, improved its mean score by 3.41 points, which is a 34,1%.

Figure 6

Comparison of the improvement in the written test



Regarding the students' speaking ability in English, Figure 7 displays the comparison of the pre- and post- oral tests carried out in the control group. Only three of the students obtained a poor grade in the oral pre-test. The number of students with an excellent mark was also three. Additionally, more than half of the students (54,54%) ranged between good and very good. The results of the post-test indicate that the

number of excellent grades increased by one student, changing from three to four. Similarly, the number of very good marks was reduced from six to five. The number of students who obtained a good, fair and poor grade remained unchanged from the pre-test. Therefore, after the intervention there was minimal alteration observed in the control group regarding English oral skills.

Figure 7

Comparison of oral tests in the control group

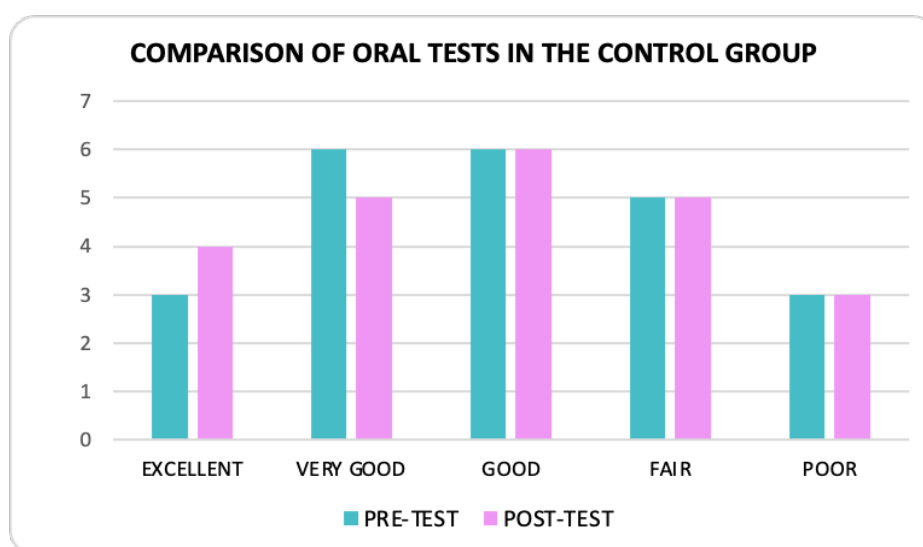
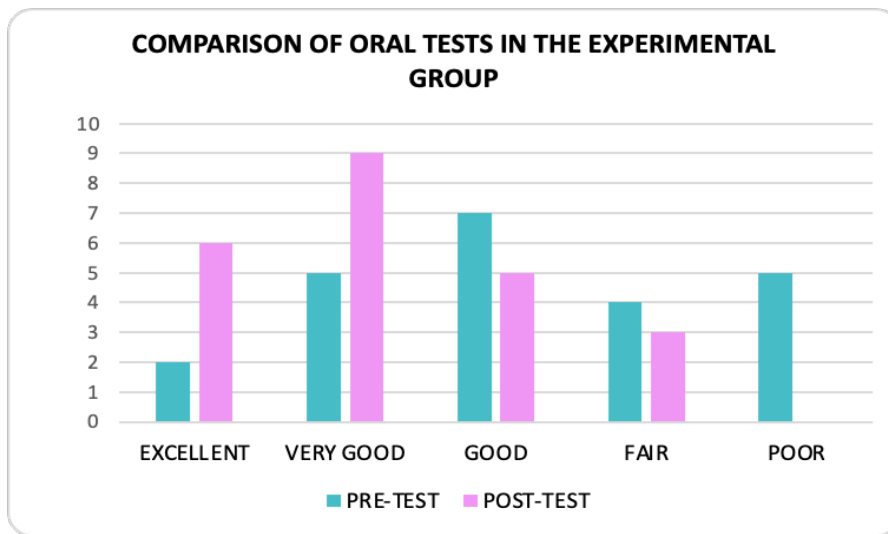


Figure 8 represents the results scored by the students of the experimental group in the pre- and post- oral tests. Regarding the grades of the oral pre-test, it is worthwhile to mention that there was a diverse range of scores observed. Five students obtained a poor grade and four achieved a fair mark. On the other hand, there were two students with an excellent grade and five with a very good grade. The rest of the participants of the experimental group (seven) scored a good mark. After the intervention through games was implemented, the post-test results improved, reducing the number of failures completely. In addition, the number of excellent scores tripled from two to six. Likewise, Figure 8 shows that more than a third of the students scored very good in the post-test, four students more than in the pre-test. The number of good grades was five and only three students scored a fair mark.

Figure 8

Comparison of oral tests in the experimental group

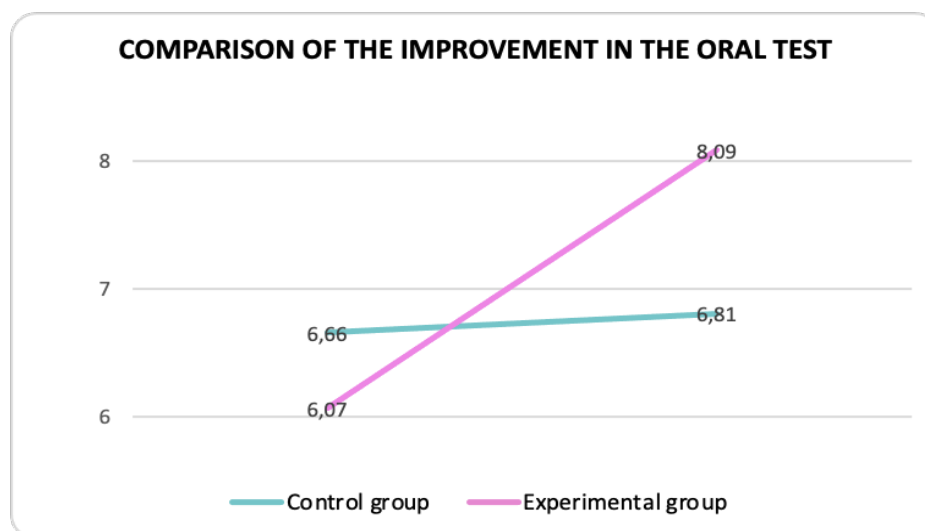


In both groups the scores improved from the pre-test to the post-test. Nonetheless, in the experimental group, the number of failed tests was reduced by five students, with none of the students remaining unsuccessful. In the control group, however, the number of failures remained the same as in the pre-test. Therefore, three students, which means a 13,64% of the students in the control group, were not able to obtain more than a poor grade.

Regarding the mean scores, both the control group and the experimental group passed the oral pre-test. Nevertheless, Figure 9 indicates that the average score of the control group (6,66) was slightly higher than that of the experimental group (6,07). After the intervention, the control group increased its average by only 0.15 points, which means a 1,5%. The experimental group, on the other hand, increased its mean by 2.02 points, rising a 20,2%. Therefore, although before the intervention the control group demonstrated better English oral skills, the group did not show high improvement after the book-based lessons, as Figure 9 displays. The experimental group, however, initially began with an average score 0.59 points lower than the control group. Nonetheless, after the game intervention they exhibited a significantly higher improvement in their mean score compared to the control group, surpassing the control group by 1.28 points.

Figure 9

Comparison of the improvement in the oral test



In conclusion, Figure 6 and Figure 9 show that after having worked through games, the participants in the experimental group were able to acquire better the language than the participants in the control group working through book-based lessons. It is worth noting that apart from students' improvement in terms of academic results in the written tests, the most noticeable growth was observed in the oral aspect. The students were able to communicate better in English after the implementation of the lessons using games.

4.2. The effects of games in students' anxiety and their learning engagement.

The second research question was:

What are the effects of using games on students' anxiety and learning engagement in the EFL classrooms?

This question aims at analysing the impact on students' anxiety and learning engagement in the English classroom when they were exposed to games.

4.2.1. Learning engagement

Table 3 (see Appendix 1) presents among others, the results gathered regarding the learning engagement in the English lessons of the students in the experimental group before the intervention. Less than a quarter of the students (17,39%) was willing to attend the English lessons. Additionally, only 21,74% of the students stated to feel motivated in

the English lessons, while a large number of them admitted feeling unmotivated (65,22%). Similarly, over a half of the participants (52,17%) acknowledged feeling unmotivated to speak in English. It is worth noting that although 60,87% of the students claimed that learning English is useful, only 17,39% were interested in learning the target language.

Regarding participants' attitude towards the English lessons of the school, just over a tenth (13,04%) stated to like the foreign language lessons. Additionally, a large proportion of students (69,57%) admitted that they did not find the exercises in the English subject interesting while just around a quarter (26,08%) considered that the activities were challenging. Therefore, regarding students' engagement, only 30,43% of them reported being involved in the English lessons while almost a half (47,82%) confessed that they did not make a big effort to accomplish the tasks. Finally, over a half of the students (56,52%) found it hard to concentrate in the English lessons.

After the intervention, another background questionnaire was completed by the students in the experimental group in order to analyse whether the results changed. Table 4 (see appendix 2) summarises the results obtained. Almost all the participants were willing to attend the English lessons through games (95,65%). Furthermore, a large number of the students (86,96%) stated to feel motivated when they worked through games, 65,22% more than in the first background questionnaire. Moreover, after the implementation, 95,65% of the students liked the English lessons and reported that in their opinion more English is learned through games. While before the intervention only 17,39% of the participants admitted being interested in learning English, after the intervention more than three quarters (78,26%) showed interest in the language.

Table 4 (see appendix 2) also shows how almost all the participants (91,30%) found the games interesting and challenging. Additionally, a large number of students (86,96%) acknowledged being completely involved in the games while none of them reported not making a big effort in the English lessons when working through games. Likewise, it is worthwhile to mention that all the participants reported that they found it easier to concentrate in the English lessons when they worked through games.

In order to gather a deeper insight about the topic, all the students were asked about their attitude regarding the experimental lessons. Table 1 displays part of the answers to the eighth question in the final questionnaire (see appendix 6) that portray how students' attitude changed after the intervention, since they expressed feeling more motivated and engaged in the English lessons.

Table 1

Answers about students' attitude towards the lessons through games

Teacher: Jolasen bidezko Ingeleseko klaseetan, zure jarreraren aldaketarik nabaritu al duzu? Zein? **(Have you noticed any change in your attitude in the English lessons through games? Which?)**

S1: Bai. Klase hauek interesgarriagoak izan dira neretzat eta hori motibatu dit inplikatua goa egoten eta gehiago parte hartzen. **(Yes. I have found these lessons more interesting and this has motivated me to be more involved and participate more).**

S2: Bai. Jolasen bidezko Ingeleseko klaseetan motibatuagoa egon naiz eta gehiago saiatu naiz ingelesez hitz egiten zeren eta Inglesa behar genuen jolasak burutzeko. **(Yes. In the English lessons through games I have been more motivated and I have made a bigger effort to speak in English because we needed English to complete the games).**

S3: Bai, aldaketa handia. Lehen zaitasun asko nituen kontzentratzeko eta orain klaseak gustoko ditudala sentitzen det, zerbait daukat egiteko jolaseetan eta nire klasekideen laguntzarekin errezagoa egiten zait kontzentratzea. **(Yes, a big change. Before I had many difficulties to concentrate and now I feel I like the lessons, I have something to do in the games and with the help of my classmates I find it much easier to concentrate).**

S4: Bai, klase hauek interesgarriak dira niretzako eta reto bat bete behar dugula sentitzen dut, horregatik arreta gehiago jartzen dut eta motibatuagoa nago. **(Yes, these lessons are interesting for me and I feel there is a challenge to fulfill, so I pay more attention and I am more motivated).**

S5: Bai, pixka bat aldatu da. Lehen ez zitaidan ingeleseko klaseak gustatzen, aspergarriak ziren niretzako eta ingelesez hitz egitea ez zela beharrezkoa sentitzen nuen. Orain, gogo gehiagorekin joaten naiz ingeleseko klaseetara eta gehiago hitz egiten dut ingelesez. **(Yes, it has changed a bit. Before I did not like the English lessons, I found them very boring and I felt it was not necessary to speak in English. Now, I am more willing to go to the English lessons and I speak more in English.)**

4.2.2. Learning anxiety

The background questionnaire completed by the students before the intervention was also intended to gather data related to the students' anxiety in the English lessons. The results obtained are shown in Table 3 (see appendix 1). A large proportion of the students (69,56%) reported feeling more tense in the English lessons than in any other lesson. Furthermore, 65,22% of the participants stated to feel nervous when they had to speak in front of their classmates while only 21,73% of them admitted feeling comfortable speaking in English. Similarly, an important proportion of the answers (78,26%) reported that the students felt anxious when they had to speak aloud without any previous preparation.

Regarding students' worries, almost three quarters (73,91%) felt worried about what their classmates might think about them. It was also noticeable that a high number of students (82,61%) worried about making mistakes in the foreign language lessons.

Additionally, more than a half (56,52%) acknowledged the absence of a respectful atmosphere in the English lessons and only a small minority of the participants (17,38%) admitted feeling confident to speak in English.

After the implementation, the experimental group completed another background questionnaire. Table 4 (see appendix 2) summarises among others, the results gathered regarding participants' learning anxiety. As such table displays, after having worked through games, students' anxiety towards English lessons significantly decreased. A large proportion of the students (78,26%) reported to feel comfortable when they had to speak in English in front of their classmates, exactly 56,53% more than before the intervention. Additionally, only 4,35% of the students stated to feel more tense in the English lessons than in any other lesson. Moreover, students' anxiety caused by the lack of previous preparation decreased, as 86,95% reported that they did not feel anxious anymore about speaking spontaneously.

In comparison to the results obtained before the intervention, a large number of the participants (91,31%) admitted that they did not feel worried anymore about making mistakes in the English lessons. Furthermore, all the students stated that they did not feel worried about what their classmates think about them after working through games. Finally, there was a notable increase in the number of students who felt confident to speak in English (82,91%) and none of the participants acknowledged the absence of a respectful atmosphere in the foreign language lessons.

In order to gather deeper insight about the topic, all the students were asked about their learning anxiety before and during the intervention through games. Table 6 (see appendix 7) illustrates part of the answers to the fourth and fifth questions in the final questionnaire. Such answers show a significant decrease regarding their anxiety after the implementation.

4.3. The effects of games in students' participation and oral production of English.

The third research question was:

What is the impact on students' participation and oral production of English when they work through games?

This research question aims to evaluate the effects that working through games in the English classroom has in students' participation and oral production of English.

4.3.1. Participation

Before the intervention, the students in the experimental group completed a questionnaire in which they were asked, among others, about their participation in the English lessons. Table 3 (see appendix 1) illustrates how students view their participation as low. Only a small minority of the students (17,39%) reported that they participate a lot in the English lessons. Moreover, 60,86% of the participants admitted preferring to be quiet during the lessons while only 13,04% of them stated that they liked participating in the English lessons.

In order to gather more data about students' participation, the regular lessons were observed using an observation chart. The number of turns each student took in the lessons observed was limited, in some cases non-existent. It was also remarkable that the turns taken by the teacher prevailed over the turns taken by students. Although most of the class time was teacher-centred, there was little attempt to interact among the students. In addition to this, regarding the number of turns taken, a significant difference from participant to participant was observed.

After the experimental lessons, the students completed the second background questionnaire in order to analyse whether the results changed. Table 4 (see appendix 2) shows that the students' quantity of interventions and willingness to participate significantly increased when working through games. A large proportion of the students (91,30%) admitted having participated a lot in the experimental lessons, 73,91% of them more than in the regular lessons. Additionally, after the implementation only a small minority of participants (8,69%) reported to prefer to be quiet during the lessons while a large number of them (86,96%) stated that they liked participating in the English lessons.

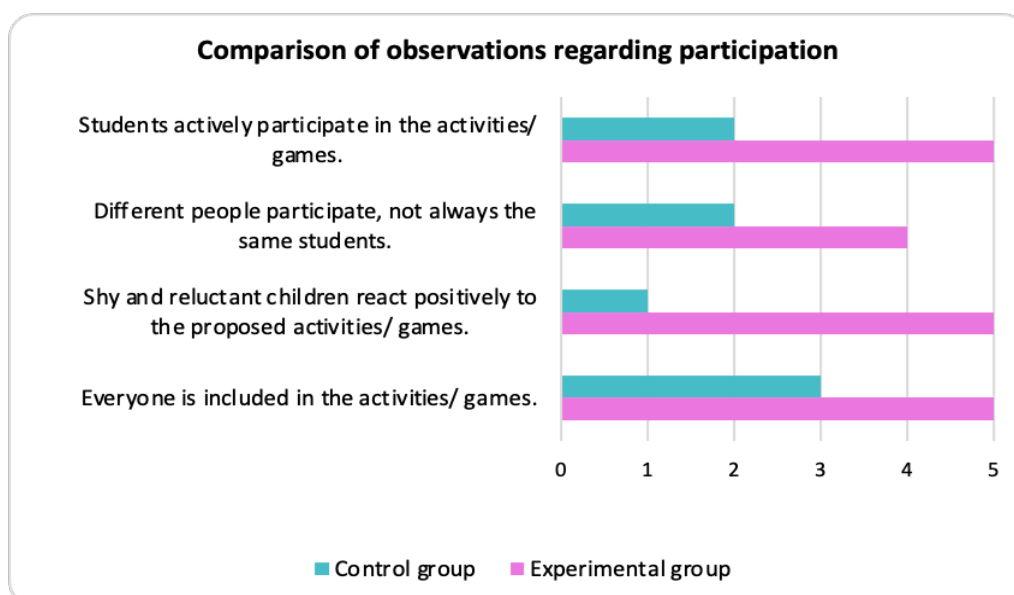
Regarding the observations and notes gathered in the experimental lessons, it was noticeable that there had been an increase in the number of students' interventions. Students did not usually participate more than five times before the intervention. When working through games, however, students were involved and constantly participating, even the shyest and more reluctant children. Furthermore, the difference on the number of turns taken between the participants noticeably decreased. Not only that, but the interventions of the teacher decreased, leading to more student-centred lessons that promoted interaction between the participants.

In order to analyse students' participation deeper, Figure 10 shows a comparison of the results obtained through observation of the lessons in the control group and the

experimental group using the observation chart (see appendix 6). The researcher rated each of the aspects regarding participation from one to five, with one meaning complete disagreement and five meaning complete agreement. As Figure 10 illustrates, in the lessons of the experimental group, participation was notably higher than in the ones of the control group. Additionally, the experimental group showed a greater diversity in terms of the people who participated. The biggest difference between the two groups was observed in the participation of shy and reluctant students. Those students did not react positively to the proposed activities in the lessons of the control group. However, they responded correctly to the lessons through games of the experimental group, showing a higher participation. Finally, the results also indicate that all the students are more included when working through games in the English classroom.

Figure 10

Comparison of observations regarding participation



4.3.2. English oral production

Before the implementation based on games was carried out, it was observed that students used considerably more Basque than English in the foreign language lessons. These observations are consistent with the results shown in Table 3 (see appendix 1), as only 17,39% of the students admitted using English to participate in class. It is worthwhile to mention that when the students used English, it was usually only when they had to share their answers at the time of correcting the book activities or when they wanted to address the teacher. Almost a half (47,82%) used English to address the teacher while only a small minority of the students (13,04%) used English to

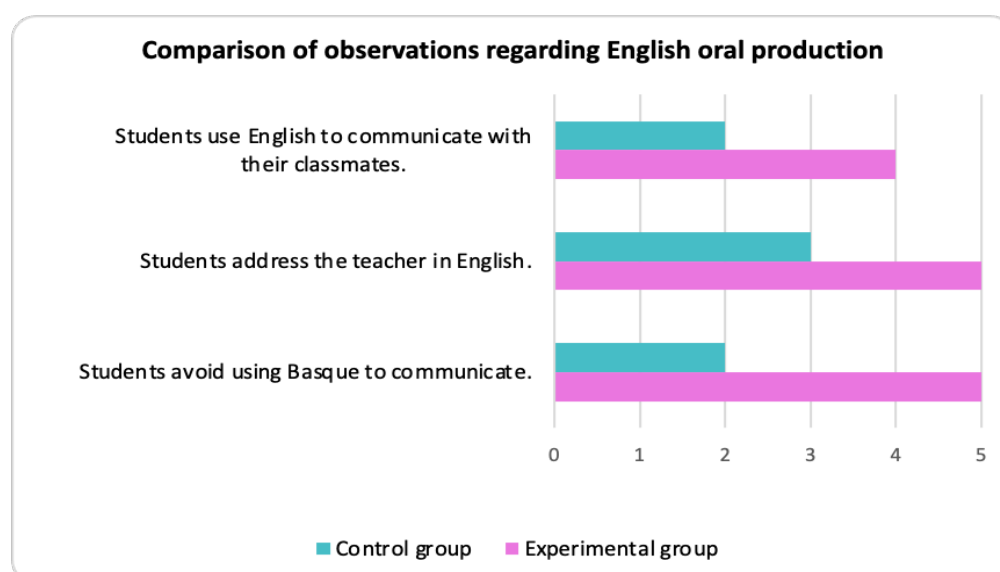
communicate with their classmates. Additionally, less than a quarter of the participants (21,74%) stated that they tried to avoid using Spanish or Basque in the foreign language lessons while 65,22% of them reported they did not make a big effort to speak in English.

Table 4 (see appendix 2) summarises among others, the results gathered regarding students' oral production in English when working through games. In addition to using more the language and therefore producing more, students in the experimental group reduced the use of Basque increasing the use of English. A large proportion of the students (91,30%) admitted speaking in English in the lessons through games, 73,91% of the participants more than before the intervention. Besides, it was observed that the students started not only using English to communicate with the teacher, but also to interact among them. As Table 4 (see appendix 2) displays all the students confessed addressing the teacher in English and 86,96% of them reported using English when working with their classmates in the lessons through games. Moreover, almost all the students (95,66%) claimed to make a big effort to avoid using Spanish or Basque and speak in English in the foreign language lessons through games.

In comparison to the control group, Figure 11 shows that the experimental group exhibited higher levels of English production. This was evident when students communicated with their classmates, as well as when they addressed the teacher. Similarly, it was observed that students in the control group did not avoid using Basque to communicate while students in the experimental group made a high effort to speak in English, instead of in Basque.

Figure 11

Comparison of observations regarding English oral production



Furthermore, in order to better understand these results, the students in the experimental group were asked about their perception regarding their English oral production in the experimental lessons. Table 2 illustrates that having worked through games in the foreign language lessons, the participants had the opportunity to use more the language and increase their production of English.

Table 2

Answers about students' English oral production in the experimental group

Teacher: Saio hauetan zehar ingelesez normalean baino gehiago hitz egin duzula esango zenuke? Zergatik? (**Would you say you have spoken more English than usual in the experimental lessons? Why?**)

S1: Bai, askoz gehiago. Horrela lan egitean aukera gehiago ditut hitz egiteko, espresatzeko eta nire gelakoekin debatzeko, orduan ingeles gehiago praktikatu dezaket. (**Yes, a lot more. Working in this way I have more opportunities to speak, to express myself and to discuss with my classmates, so I can practice more English.**)

S2: Bai, zeren eta izen inglesen lehenengo jolasa eta marra magikoa gurutzatzearena asko motibatu ninduen ingelesez hitz egiteko. (**Yes, because the first game of the English names and having to jump over the magic line motivated me a lot to speak in English.**)

S3: Bai, ze lehen ez nuen arrazoirik ikusten saioetan ingelesez hitz egiteko, baina jolasentzako hitz egin behar genuen eta inglesa erabili behar genuen. (**Yes, since before I did not find any reason to speak in English in the lessons, but for the games we needed to speak and use English.**)

S4: Bai, ingelesez hitz egiteko seguroago eta ez hain epaitua sentitzen nintzelako. Gainera, nire taldekoen laguntza nuen eta horrek nahiko lasaitzen nau. (**Yes, because I felt more confident and less judged to speak in English. Besides, I had the help of my teammates, which is quite reassuring for me.**)

S5: Bai klaro. Ingeles gehiago hitz egin dut aukera gehiago izan ditudalako nire klasekoekin komunikatzeko modu interesagarriago batean eta zentzu gehiagorekin. (**Yes of course. I have spoken more English because I had more opportunities to communicate with my classmates in a more interesting and meaningful way.**)

5. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the discussion of the study will be presented by analysing the results obtained in comparison to previous studies in the field of using games in foreign language classrooms, while answering the research questions. The first research question studies the effects that working through games has on language acquisition, focusing on academic results. In order to further assess the effectiveness of games in enhancing language acquisition, the second research question analyses the impact that games have on students' learning engagement and learning anxiety, regarding the EFL classroom. Furthermore, the third research question focuses on the effects of working through games on students' participation and oral production of English.

Therefore, the purpose of the study was to analyse the outcomes of the implementation of games in the foreign language classroom. To do so, a pedagogical intervention based on games was carried out in a big public school located in the Basque Country. The research was conducted in two fifth grade classrooms of Primary Education, one worked as a control group and the other one as an experimental group.

The results of our study display that the students in the experimental group exhibited a more significant improvement in the written tests, with a decrease in failures, a tripling of excellent grades, and a higher average score compared to the control group. Regarding the oral tests, while the control group initially demonstrated better English oral skills, they did not show high improvement after the book-based lessons. The students that worked through games, however, showed a remarkable improvement, with none of students remaining unsuccessful in the oral post-test. These results are in line with previous studies of Constantinescu (2012), who found that using games enhances students' written and spoken English. Overall, the students who worked through games in the English lessons exhibited better language acquisition regarding their outcomes in both tests. Consequently, our results seem to support the idea that games increase students' proficiency (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 2006).

Bureau, Howard, Chong and Guay (2022) advocated that competence is the strongest factor in predicting motivation. Our results are consistent with those authors, as the students in the experimental group who increased their proficiency also increased their motivation. This stands in contrast to the pre-intervention phase, where motivation levels were low. However, during the intervention through games almost all the participants showed a willingness to attend English lessons and reported feeling motivated. Additionally, they expressed enjoyment and found the lessons challenging.

Therefore, our results corroborate the idea that games can offer challenges that effectively motivate students (Deesri, 2002; Krashen, 1982; Lee, 1995).

Furthermore, as Crookal (1990) stated, when working through games students are encouraged to engage in their own learning. Our findings support that perspective, as all the participants in the experimental group acknowledged being completely involved in the games. As a result, none of them reported not making a big effort in the English lessons when working through games. These results are consistent with Leslie (2021) who claimed that offering learners opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge is an effective approach to engage students and foster positive attitudes.

Before the intervention, the majority of students expressed heightened tension in English lessons compared to other subjects, along with nervousness about speaking in front of their classmates and concerns about making errors. Our findings align with the conclusions of Cebrero (2003), who affirmed that anxiety is more likely to occur in foreign language classrooms rather than in any other subjects' classrooms. However, when working through games students felt more confident speaking in English and their worries about making mistakes and concerns about classmates' perceptions significantly diminished. Consequently, it was concluded that the implementation of games led to a significant reduction in students' anxiety levels. This conclusion was also drawn by Crookal (1990), who advocated that working through games make students feel more confident and comfortable when speaking in a foreign language, reducing their fear to make mistakes or be judged.

Moreover, students' participation in the English lessons before the intervention was found to be low, with only a small minority actively participating and the majority preferring to remain quiet. Nonetheless, Philp and Duchesne (2016) emphasized the effectiveness of active participation for acquiring knowledge and skills. Therefore, games were implemented in the experimental group to analyse if they increased students' participation. The results displayed that there was a significant increase in students' quantity of interventions and willingness to participate when they worked through games. These conclusions are in line with Zhu (2012), who stated that games promote participation since they inherently involve communication.

These increase in participation in the experimental group may be due to the fact that games foster greater student-centeredness, as Gozcu and Caganaga (2016) and Talak-Kiryk (2010) reported. Significantly, our results also revealed that even the shyest

and more reluctant students responded positively to games, demonstrating increased involvement and participation. These findings align with the studies of Mei and Yu-Jing (2000) and Dewi et al. (2017) which highlighted how games offer additional opportunities for shy and reluctant children to actively participate in classroom activities, leading to a positive response of those students to games.

Regarding English oral production, it was found that the students working through games showed a substantial increase in using English to communicate with both the teacher and their classmates. They made conscious efforts to avoid using Spanish or Basque and expressed a greater willingness to speak in English. These outcomes support the idea put forth by Talak-Kiryk (2010) that that games offer opportunities for high quality interactions, since in a foreign language classroom it is crucial for students to practice speaking with their classmates.

The students who took part in the experimental lessons through games reported that they produced more English because they had increased opportunities to speak, express themselves and engage in discussions with their classmates. They also mentioned that the games provided a reason to speak and use English, which was lacking in the lessons before the intervention. All these justifications are consistent with the perspective of Deesri (2002), who emphasised that games serve as a bridge connecting students to real-world experiences by offering them valuable chances to practice language skills in authentic situations. Students also stated to have produced more because of the fact that they found the context of lessons through games more interesting and enjoyable. That concurs well with the view of Juan Rubio and García Conesa (2013), who argued that language should be learned in a natural and enjoyable way.

6. GENERAL CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The aim of the current paper is to examine, by means of classroom-based research, the effectiveness of implementing games in a primary foreign language classroom. In this chapter the general conclusion will be presented. After carrying out the study, a change was noticed from the regular lessons' situation to the experimental lessons' ones. As a matter of fact, that change was given by the implementation of educational actions that were based on evidence of social impact.

The implementation of games contributed to bringing about this change. A correlation between the use of games and the improvement in students' language acquisition was observed in the research. After the implementation, students who worked through games improved their academic results in both written and oral aspects. However, regarding the result in our study, it was concluded that games benefited more the oral aspect.

Furthermore, students' learning engagement increased, thus, a more active attitude towards the games proposed and higher motivation and involvement was perceived among the students. Additionally, the use of games led to a more student-centred classroom in which students were more engaged to use the target language to interact among them. Moreover, participants' learning anxiety was significantly decreased so the students' language learning process was not hampered by discomfort or worries anymore.

These findings suggest that lowered participants' anxiety levels due to playing games contributed to an overall increase in their participation, including those shyest and more reluctant students. Students' interventions considerably increased since the students found the need to use the language to accomplish each game successfully. All that contributed to a significant increase in students' English oral production.

All things considered, it can be concluded that using games as a tool for teaching EFL is noticeably effective in terms of students' acquisition of a foreign language. This conclusion was reached after analysing quantitative data and interpreting qualitative data from students' background and final questionnaires. Nevertheless, just using games is not enough, teachers have to take special care on their implementation, due to the fact that the way games are prepared, implemented and then analysed is crucial for ensuring their effectiveness when learning a foreign language.

Regarding all the research period, despite it being the first time of the researcher conducting such type of study, it has been an enriching experience aiming at help improving students' language acquisition in that specific school context. The research has provided valuable opportunities to observe the reality of foreign language learning from within, to analyse student behaviours, to apply theoretical concepts in practice and to witness the growth of students through a proposed intervention.

In terms of the limitations, the number of participants could be interpreted as a limitation since the intervention was only applied in two classrooms, with a total of 45 students. Therefore, having carried out the study based on a larger sample size could have given more accurate results. Likewise, it is important to take into account that these results have been analysed in one school. Consequently, they may not be representative of the whole Basque Country.

As for further research, there is a need to explore the use of manipulative and non-electronic games as tools for teaching EFL, considering that many existing studies focus on games requiring electronic devices. Further research should also investigate optimal strategies for implementing games to ensure their effectiveness in language learning. It is essential for such studies to be accessible to all teachers and education professionals. Additionally, examining teachers' perspectives on using games in the EFL classroom would provide valuable insights.

Lastly, this research was done in a big public school. In order to draw more accurate conclusions on the effects of games, it could be beneficial to carry out the research in other types of schools as well, including both subsidised and private schools, along with bigger and smaller schools. Exploring different grade levels within Primary Education would further enhance the generalizability of the findings.

7. REFERENCES

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8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Table 3

Students' results in the background questionnaire before the intervention

BEFORE THE INTERVENTION					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
GENERAL QUESTIONS					
1. I like learning English.	8,69%	21,74%	17,39%	30,43%	21,74%
2. I like the English lessons of the school.	0%	13,04%	8,69%	30,43%	47,83%
3. I think learning English is useful.	39,13%	21,74%	13,04%	13,04%	13,04%
4. I think that my level of English is good.	8,69%	21,74%	8,69%	39,13%	21,74%
5. I am able to make contributions in English.	4,35%	13,04%	17,39%	39,13%	26,09%
6. Working individually helps me to successfully complete the work in English.	0%	8,69%	13,04%	26,09%	52,17%
7. I learn a lot from my classmates.	52,17%	39,13%	8,69%	0%	0%
LEARNING ENGAGEMENT					
8. I look forward to going to the English lessons.	4,35%	13,04%	21,74%	39,13%	21,74%
9. I feel motivated in the English lessons.	0%	21,74%	13,04%	43,48%	21,74%
10. I am interested in learning English.	4,35%	13,04%	17,39%	34,78%	26,09%
11. I feel unmotivated to speak in English.	17,39%	34,78%	21,74%	21,74%	4,35%
12. The exercises we do in the English subject are interesting to me.	0%	17,39%	13,04%	26,09%	43,48%
13. I involve myself completely to do each activity.	8,69%	21,74%	17,39%	34,78%	17,39%
14. I do not make much effort to complete the activities.	13,04%	34,78%	17,39%	21,74%	13,04%
15. I find the activities we do challenging.	8,69%	17,39%	17,39%	39,13%	17,39%
16. I find it hard to concentrate in the English lessons.	17,39%	39,13%	13,04%	17,39%	13,04%
PARTICIPATION					
17. I participate a lot in the English lessons.	4,35%	13,04%	8,69%	47,83%	26,09%

18. I prefer to be quiet during the English lessons.	30,43%	30,43%	13,04%	17,39%	8,69%
19. I like participating in the English lessons.	4,35%	8,69%	13,04%	43,48%	30,43%
ENGLISH ORAL PRODUCTION					
20. I speak in English in the English lessons.	4,35%	13,04%	21,74%	34,78%	26,09%
21. I address the teacher in English.	17,39%	30,43%	13,04%	26,09%	13,04%
22. I use English when working with my classmates.	0%	13,04%	8,69%	52,17%	26,09%
23. I try not to use Basque or Spanish in English lessons.	4,35%	17,39%	17,39%	34,78%	26,09%
24. I make a big effort to speak English in class.	4,35%	21,74%	8,69%	39,13%	26,09%
LEARNING ANXIETY					
25. I feel more tense in the English lessons than in any other lesson.	30,43%	39,13%	8,69%	17,39%	8,69%
26. I feel confident when I have to speak in English.	8,69%	8,69%	17,39%	43,48%	21,74%
27. I feel anxious when I have to speak in English without any previous preparation.	34,78%	43,48%	4,35%	13,04%	4,35%
28. I feel nervous when I have to speak in front of my classmates.	26,09%	39,13%	8,69%	17,39%	8,69%
29. I worry about what my classmates might think about me.	34,78%	39,13%	8,69%	13,04%	4,35%
30. I worry about making mistakes in the English lessons.	39,13%	43,48%	4,35%	8,69%	4,35%
31. I feel comfortable speaking in English in front of my classmates.	8,69%	13,04%	13,04%	34,78%	30,43%
32. I think there is an atmosphere of respect in English lessons.	4,35%	26,09%	13,04%	39,13%	17,39%

Appendix 2

Table 4

Students' results in the background questionnaire after the intervention

AFTER THE INTERVENTION					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
GENERAL QUESTIONS					
1. I like learning English.	26,09%	39,13%	21,74%	13,04%	0%
2. I like the English lessons we had through the games.	65,22%	30,43%	4,35%	0%	0%
3. I think more English is learned through games.	60,87%	34,78%	4,35%	0%	0%
4. I think learning English is useful.	73,91%	17,39%	4,35%	4,35%	0%
5. I think that my level of English is good.	21,74%	39,13%	17,39%	21,74%	0%
6. I am able to make contributions in English.	21,74%	56,52%	13,04%	8,69%	0%
7. Working in a team helps me to successfully complete the work in English.	82,61%	13,04%	4,35%	0%	0%
8. I learn a lot from my classmates.	86,96%	13,04%	0%	0%	0%
LEARNING ENGAGEMENT					
9. I was looking forward to going to the English lessons through games.	78,26%	17,39%	4,35%	0%	0%
10. I have felt motivated in the English lessons though games.	60,87%	26,09%	13,04%	0%	0%
11. I am interested in learning English.	26,09%	52,17%	13,04%	8,69%	0%
12. I feel unmotivated to speak in English.	0%	8,69%	8,69%	56,52%	26,09%
13. The games we have done in the English subject are interesting to me.	78,26%	13,04%	8,69%	0%	0%
14. I have involved myself completely in each game.	60,87%	26,09%	8,69%	4,35%	0%
15. I have not made much effort to do the English games.	0%	0%	8,69%	43,48%	47,83%
16. I have found the games challenging.	34,78%	56,52%	0%	8,69%	0%
17. I find it easier to concentrate in the English lessons when I work through games.	78,26%	21,74%	0%	0%	0%
PARTICIPATION					

18. I have participated a lot in the English lessons through games.	60,87%	30,43%	4,35%	4,35%	0%
19. I prefer to be quiet during the English lessons.	0%	8,69%	4,35%	65,22%	21,74%
20. I like participating in the English lessons.	43,48%	43,48%	13,04%	0%	0%
ENGLISH ORAL PRODUCTION					
21. I have spoken in English in the lessons through games.	73,91%	17,39%	4,35%	4,35%	0%
22. I have addressed the teacher in English in the lessons through games.	78,26%	21,74%	0%	0%	0%
23. I have used English when working with my classmates in the lessons through games.	56,52%	30,43%	8,69%	4,35%	0%
24. I have tried not to use Basque or Spanish in the lessons through games.	47,83%	47,83%	0%	4,35%	0%
25. I have made a big effort to speak English in the lessons through games.	52,17%	43,48%	4,35%	0%	0%
LEARNING ANXIETY					
26. I feel more tense in the English lessons than in any other lesson.	0%	4,35%	0%	65,22%	30,43%
27. I feel confident when I have to speak in English.	43,48%	39,13%	13,04%	4,35%	0%
28. I feel anxious when I have to speak in English without any previous preparation.	0%	8,69%	4,35%	52,17%	34,78%
29. I feel nervous when I have to speak in front of my classmates.	0%	4,35%	8,69%	43,48%	43,48%
30. I worry about what my classmates might think about me.	0%	0%	0%	34,78%	65,22%
31. I worry about making mistakes in the English lessons.	0%	8,69%	0%	47,83%	43,48%
32. I feel comfortable speaking in English in front of my classmates.	34,78%	43,48%	13,04%	8,69%	0%
33. I think there is an atmosphere of respect in English lessons.	34,78%	65,22%	0%	0%	0%

Appendix 3

Pre- and post- test

Name: _____

Class: _____

1) Write the names of the following routines:



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

2) Answer the questions.

1. How often do you watch TV?

2. How often do you have a shower?

3. How often do you eat fruit?

4. How often do you do sport?

3) Complete the text with the words in the box. There are 3 words that you don't need to use.

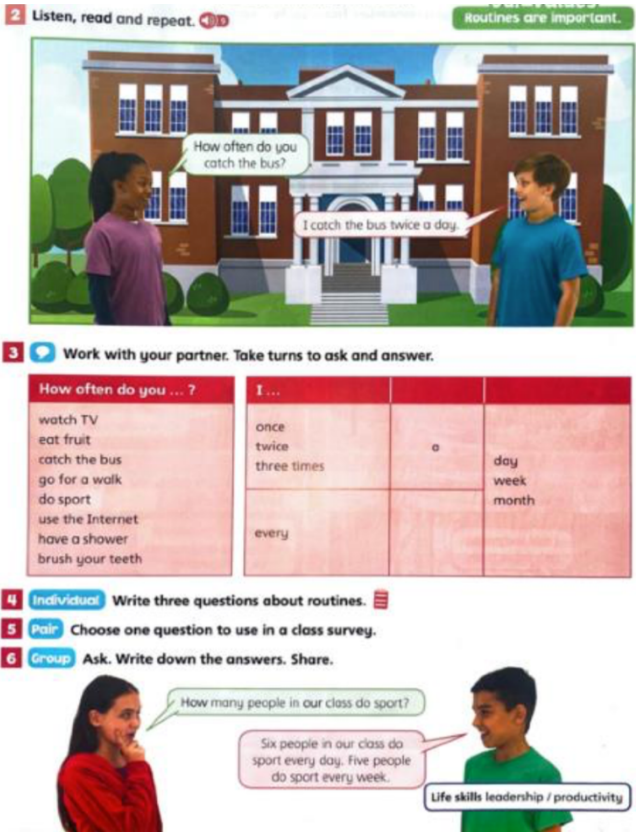
Winter	Warm	About	Foggy	Footprints
Snowing	Leaflet	Timetable	Spring	O'clock

On Saturday Joe and Mary woke up at _____ eight o'clock and they looked out of the window. They saw dad making a snowperson in the garden. "It's _____!" said Joe. Joe loves snow and cold weather, his favourite season is _____. So, they put on their jackets and went outside. They opened the door, but they couldn't see well outside. "It's _____" said Mary. Joe and Mary started walking and saw some _____ on the snow. "Mary, we can follow them to find dad" said Joe. They continued walking until they found a train _____ on the floor. "Look Joe, this train leaves to Portland at ten _____" said Mary. Mary and Joe go skiing in Portland every year. Suddenly, dad appeared and said: "Good morning kids! You've found my surprise. Tomorrow we are going skiing to Portland!".

Appendix 4

Table 5

Proposal of an adaptation to the books based on games

BOOKS' PROPOSAL	RESEARCHER'S PROPOSAL																									
1st LESSON																										
<p>1. EXERCISES FROM THE STUDENTS' BOOK:</p> <p>Students have to complete the activities two, three, four, five and six from the students' book, aimed at learning how to express how often they do routines.</p>  <p>2 Listen, read and repeat. <i>Routines are important.</i></p> <p>How often do you catch the bus? I catch the bus twice a day.</p> <p>3 Work with your partner. Take turns to ask and answer.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="140 1487 746 1688"> <thead> <tr> <th>How often do you ... ?</th> <th>I ...</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>watch TV</td> <td>once</td> <td rowspan="3">day week month</td> </tr> <tr> <td>eat fruit</td> <td>twice</td> </tr> <tr> <td>catch the bus</td> <td>three times</td> </tr> <tr> <td>go for a walk</td> <td>every</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>do sport</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>use the Internet</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>have a shower</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>brush your teeth</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>4 Individual Write three questions about routines.</p> <p>5 Pair Choose one question to use in a class survey.</p> <p>6 Group Ask. Write down the answers. Share.</p> <p>How many people in our class do sport? Six people in our class do sport every day. Five people do sport every week.</p> <p>Life skills leadership / productivity 11</p>	How often do you ... ?	I ...		watch TV	once	day week month	eat fruit	twice	catch the bus	three times	go for a walk	every		do sport			use the Internet			have a shower			brush your teeth			<p>1. MAGIC LINE AND ENGLISH NAMES:</p> <p>In order to increase students' language engagement and promote oral production in English, each student will be given an English name which they will keep throughout the whole intervention. To do this, the teacher will create a line on the floor at the classroom door with tape. All the students will go outside the classroom and one by one they will have to jump over the magic line, which will take them into an English-speaking space, and get an English name sticker. In this way the students will enter the classroom with a new name and a motivation to speak English.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping: whole group • Material: tape, stickers with English names
How often do you ... ?	I ...																									
watch TV	once	day week month																								
eat fruit	twice																									
catch the bus	three times																									
go for a walk	every																									
do sport																										
use the Internet																										
have a shower																										
brush your teeth																										

2. EXERCISES FROM THE WORKBOOK:

Students have to complete the activities two and three from the workbook individually.

2 Write notes about your routine.

Every day	Twice a day	Once a week	_____ times a month
_____	_____	_____	_____

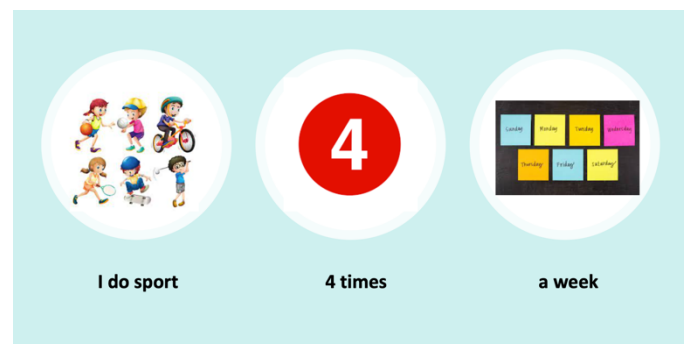
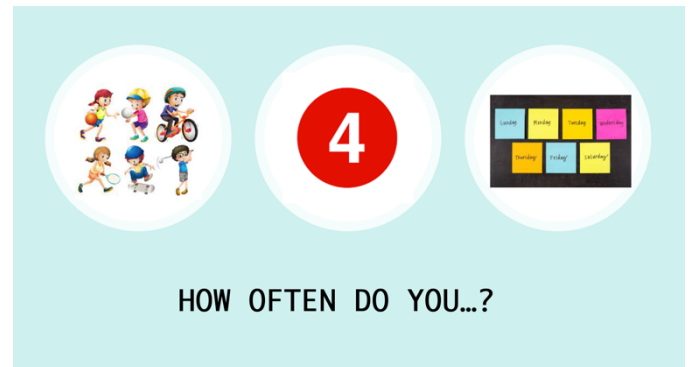
3 Write questions and answers about your routine. Use your notes from Activity 2.

- 1 _____ do you use the Internet? _____
- 2 _____ do you _____? _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

2. GUESS ABOUT ME!:

This game is aimed to introduce “How often do you...? Once/twice, X times a day/week/month or every day/week/month”.

Students have to guess information about the routines of the teacher, through pictures. In each slide of the Power Point there will be three pictures. Students, in heterogeneous groups, have to talk to each other and try to make a sentence from the pictures. Once they think they know the answer, one person of the group has to raise his/her hand and say the answer. If it is not correct, the turn will be passed to another group.



- Grouping: heterogeneous groups of 4-5 students.
- Material: Power Point.

3. TRUTH, TRUTH, LIE:

Each student will write three sentences talking about how often they do a routine. For example: I do sport four times a week. Two of the sentences have to be a truth for them. However, one of the sentences has to be lie. That will have to be done individually, without showing the sentences to any classmate.

Once all the students have their three sentences written, in pairs they will have to read them to their partner and their partner will have to guess which one is the lie. Then, they will change pairs.

- Grouping: pairs
- Material: paper and writing utensil

2nd LESSON

1. READING AND COMPREHENSION OF A STORY:

Students will listen to a story with vignettes from the students' book, after having read it individually. Then, they will complete activities two, three, four and six to ensure they have understood the story.

1. LOOKING FOR MY PARTNERS:

In this mingle game each student will have a card with two vignettes of the story in the student's book. In total there will be four different pairs of vignettes. Students have to stand up and look for those who have the same vignettes as them without showing their pictures. To do this, they have to describe their images. If two students match after describing their pictures, they should shake hands and keep looking for more classmates who have their same cards, until the four groups are complete.

1 Lesson 5 Vocabulary and Story

YOUNG DETECTIVES
Footprints in the Snow

- 1 Tell your partner what you remember from the last episode.
- 2 Read the captions quickly. How many clues do the children find in the envelope?
- 3 Read and listen. Which phrases are in the story?

it's snowing it's foggy it's wet
the sun is shining it's raining it's warm

1 Mrs Rose is missing. The police are busy looking for a robber. The children look for Mrs Rose. They start their investigation at her house.



2 Inside, Annabel and Joey start looking for clues. Something is different in the kitchen – but what?



3 It isn't snowing now. Gaia notices some footprints in the snow.



4 Matt and Gaia follow the footprints for a while. Suddenly ...



12 Vocabulary weather

5 Matt has got a map.



6 Back in Mrs Rose's garden, Annabel sees something where the snow is melting.



7 Inside the envelope there are five clues to help them find Mrs Rose.



8 Later ... Footprints to the train station and a train timetable. Is Mrs Rose going on a trip?



- 4 What's your favourite part of the story?
- 5 Which sentences are in the story? Say A or B.
 - 1 A It doesn't snow. B It isn't snowing now.
 - 2 A It rains every day. B It's raining.
 - 3 A ... the footprints disappear. B ... the footprints are disappearing.
- 6 What season do you think the story takes place in? Why? Check with your partner.
Spring Summer Autumn Winter

5 Matt has got a map.



6 Back in Mrs Rose's garden, Annabel sees something where the snow is melting.




- Grouping: whole group
- Material: cards with two vignettes of the story

2. EXERCISES ABOUT THE STORY:


Students will complete exercises one, two, three and four about the story from the workbook individually.

1 Lesson 5 Vocabulary and Story


1 Look at the pictures. Remember and correct the sentences. Read the story again and check.



It's foggy.



It's snowing.



The sun is shining.

2 Tick ✓ the six clues in the story.

a clock <input type="checkbox"/>	a train timetable <input type="checkbox"/>	a list of strange numbers and letters <input type="checkbox"/>
a pencil <input type="checkbox"/>	an umbrella <input type="checkbox"/>	an advert from a newspaper <input type="checkbox"/>
a banana <input type="checkbox"/>	an empty notebook <input type="checkbox"/>	a leaflet about an art exhibition <input type="checkbox"/>

3 Read and match.

1 The police are	a in the kitchen.
2 The children are	b looking for a robber.
3 The clock isn't	c disappearing in the rain.
4 The footprints are	d catching a train at the train station?
5 Is Mrs Rose	e looking for Mrs Rose.

4 Complete the information about the story. Circle the correct words.

Episode: _____


Title: _____

Main characters: _____

Places: _____

Rating: _____ /10

¹ Annabel / Mrs Rose is missing. The children go to her ² house / school to look for her. It's ³ foggy / snowing. A clock is missing from the ⁴ kitchen / living room. Now ⁵ the sun is shining / it's raining and the footprints in the snow are disappearing. The footprints go to the ⁶ train / police station. Annabel finds ⁷ an envelope / a clock on the ground. There are ⁸ four / five clues in the envelope.



2. STORY FORMATION:

Once the four groups are formed, the teacher will take one student from each group to form new groups. In this way each new group of four will have all the vignettes of the story. Each student will have to read aloud their vignettes while their peers actively listen. Afterwards, they will need to debate to put the vignettes in the correct order.

- Grouping: groups of four
- Material: cards with vignettes of the story

3. RIGHT OR LEFT?:

For this game, students will be in the same groups of four as in the previous game. The teacher will draw a line in the middle of the board and the floor. Different questions will be asked to review the story and the vocabulary about weather and seasons. In each case, the teacher will write two possible options, one on the right side of the line and another one on the left. Students in each group will talk and

decide which they think it is the correct option and choose a spokesperson in each turn to go to the board. That students will have to place themselves on the side where they think the correct answer is and be able to justify their position. The spokesperson will change every turn, with all members of the group having to go to the board at least once. If the answer is correct and well justified, the team will receive one point. The winning team will be the one with the most points.

The following are some possible questions:

- In the story.... It's snowing // It's foggy
 - The story takes places in... Spring // Winter
 - Who is missing? Annabel // Mrs. Rose
 - Which is a clue in the story?
A leaflet about an art exhibition // An umbrella
 - In the story... The sun is shining // It's raining
 - What can Gaia see in the snow? Footprints // A snowperson
 - The footprints go to the... Police station // Train station
 - How many clues are there in the envelope?
Four // Five
-
- Grouping: groups of four
 - Material: chalks

3rd LESSON

1. THE USE OF ABOUT:

The teacher will explain the use of “about” for time and students will complete activity three from the students’ book, by writing individually sentences with “about” in their notebooks.

Writing

3 Match and make sentences with *about*.

1 On school days, I wake up at	A ... half past three.
2 I arrive home at	B ... nine o'clock.
3 I usually go to bed at	C ... seven o'clock.

4 Complete the writing task in your Activity Book. **AB page 14**

about

Use *about* when the time of an activity isn't exact.

Example: I usually get up at about eight o'clock.

1. RUNNING DICTATION:

The teacher will explain that he/she has a friend in Australia called Jacob. Jacob has written his routine in Sydney and sent it to the teacher. After contextualizing the situation, the teacher will post the writing about Jacob’s routine in the four corners of the classroom.

MY ROUTINE By Jacob

Hello! I am Jacob and I live in Sydney (Australia). I usually wake up at about seven o'clock, then I have a shower. I always have eggs and fruit for breakfast. I leave home at five minutes to eight and I walk to school. I usually have lunch at school at half past twelve. In the afternoon, I sometimes go surfing and I play rugby three times a week. I have dinner at about seven o'clock. My favourite food is meatloaf and I eat it twice a week. How is your routine in Spain?



Students will be grouped in pairs. When the teacher gives the signal to start, one student from each pair will have to get up and go to the far corner to read and memorise as much of the text as possible and then dictate it to their partner, who will have to write it correctly on a piece of paper. Then, the roles will change and the one who has written will run to read, memorise and dictate the text, and so on until the pair has the complete correct text on their paper. When that happens, they must raise their hand. The first pair to do it correctly will be the winner of the

game. However, the game will continue until everyone has completed their text.

In the text some sentences will include “about” when speaking about time. At the end of the game, the students with the help of the teacher will together reflect on its meaning and use.

- Grouping: pairs and whole class
- Material: paper and writing utensil

2. ROOFTOPS WRITING:

Students will complete activities one, two and three in their workbooks, in which they will have to read and order a text about a routine, make notes about their own routines and do a writing explaining them. All that will be done individually.

1 Lesson 9 Communication
Rooftops Writing

Preparation

1 Read and number the pictures in order.

Tara's routine
By Layla

Tara usually wakes up at about seven o'clock, then she has a shower. She has a shower once a day. She always makes her bed. She leaves home at five minutes to eight because she usually walks to school. She sometimes catches the bus to school. She usually has lunch at school at about one o'clock. She never watches TV in the afternoon and she sometimes uses the Internet in the evenings.

Plan

2 Look at Tara's routine. Write notes for your routine.

	Tara:	Me:
	about seven o'clock	_____
	once a day	_____
	always	_____
	five minutes to eight	_____
	about one o'clock	_____
	sometimes	_____

Write

3 Write about your routine. Use your notes from Activity 2.

14 **More practice**
Complete your Bilingual Dictionary and the Dictionary Skills on page 76.

Challenge
Underline *about* used with a time in Activity 3. Swap with your partner and check it's used correctly.

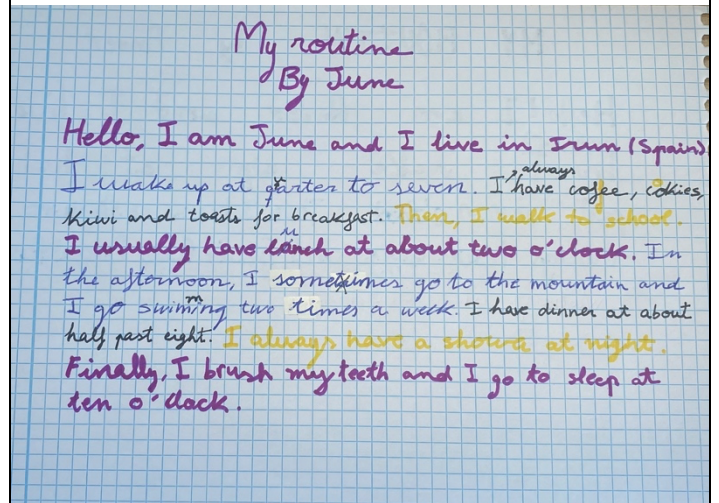
2. LET'S ANSWER JACOB!:

Instead of doing a writing about their routines individually, students will cooperatively write about how their routines in Spain are, to answer Jacob. They will have the example of writing of the running dictation as a scaffold.

First, back seated in their heterogeneous groups of four students, each student will pick up a paper and a color pen. All the pens in the group have to be of different colors. On the paper each student will write the first thing he/she does when the day starts (for example, I wake up at 7 o'clock). When the teacher indicates it, the students should rotate their sheets in the direction of the needles within the group. Now, the students have to read what their classmate has written, correct it if there is any mistake, and write a new sentence about their routine from starting the day to going to bed.

The paper will continue to rotate several times and the students will read correct and write in their color. At the end, each student will receive their original paper and in each group there will be four writings of

complete routines that should be read aloud to their groupmates.



- Grouping: groups of four
- Material: papers and writing utensils

Appendix 5

Observation chart

Day: _____

Group: _____

1= Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neither agree nor disagree 4= Agree 5= Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Students show interest in doing the proposed activities/ games.					
Students show interest in learning the language.					
Students seem to find the activities/ games challenging.					
Students are doing what they have been asked to do and not other tasks (such as painting, talking to other classmates...).					
The proposed activities/games stimulate students' interest.					
Students are excited to start the activities/ games.					
Students actively participate in the activities/ games.					
Different people participate, not always the same students.					
Shy and reluctant children react positively to the proposed activities/ games.					
Everyone is included in the activities/ games.					
Students use English to communicate with their classmates.					
Students address the teacher in English.					
Students avoid using Basque to communicate.					
There is a stress-free environment.					
Students seem to feel confident to speak in English.					
Students respect their classmates and the teacher.					
Students are paying attention while the activity/ game is being explained.					
There is a successful and positive classroom environment.					

Notes:

Appendix 6

Final questionnaire

Mesedez, jolasen bitartez emandako Ingeleseko klaseei buruzko ondorengo galderei erantzun:

1. Zer iruditu zaizkizu jolasen bidezko saioak?
2. Zer da gehien gustatu zaizuna? Zergatik?
3. Zer da gutxien gustatu zaizuna? Zergatik?
4. Nola sentitzen zinen jolasen bidezko saioen aurretik klasean Ingelesez hitz egin behar zenuenean? Zergatik?
5. Nola sentitu zara jolasen bidezko saioetan Ingelesez hitz egin behar zenuenean? Zergatik?
6. Saio hauetan parte hartzea kostatu zaizu? Zergatik?
7. Saio hauetan zehar normalean baino ingeles gehiago ikasi duzula pentsatzen duzu? Zergatik?
8. Saio hauetan zehar ingelesez normalean baino gehiago hitz egin duzula esango zenuke? Zergatik?
9. Jolasen bidezko klase hauen ondoren, zure jarreran aldaketarik nabaritu al duzu? Zein?

Eskerrik asko!

Appendix 7

Table 6

Answers about students' anxiety when they spoke in English before and during the experimental lessons

Teacher: Nola sentitzen zinen jolasen bidezko saioen aurretik klasean Ingeleseaz hitz egin behar zenuenean? Zergatik? (**How did you feel before the lessons through games when you had to speak in English in class? Why?**)

S1: Tentso eta deseroso ze beldurra nuen akatsak egiteko eta gauzak ongi ez pronunziatzeko. (**Tense and uncomfortable because I was afraid of making mistakes and not pronouncing things correctly.**)

S2: Oso urduri. Esan behar genuena ez genuenez planifikatuta, ez nekien esaten ari nintzena ondo zegoen. Gainera, beldurra ematen zidan besteek nitaz pentsatu dezaketena. (**Very nervous. Since we had to speak spontaneously, I did not know if what I was saying was correct. Besides, I was afraid of what others could think about me.**)

S3: Urduri eta gaizki. Ez nekien gauzak ingelesez nola esan. (**Nervous and bad. I did not know how to say things in English.**)

S4: Pixka bat lotsatuta. Ez nuen asko hitz egiten zeren eta ez naiz oso seguru sentitzen nire gelakoan aurrean ingelesez hitz egiten. (**A bit shy. I did not speak much because I did not feel very confident speaking in English in front of my classmates.**)

S5: Oso tenso ze ez nituen akatsak egin nahi eta nire gelakoek eta irakasleak epaitzea. (**Very tense since I did not want to make mistakes and be judged by my classmates and teacher.**)

Teacher: Nola sentitu zara jolasen bidezko saioetan Ingeleseaz hitz egin behar zenuenean? Zergatik? (**How did you feel in the lessons through games when you had to speak in English? Why?**)

S1: Nahiko segura ze nire taldearen laguntza neukan. (**Quite confident because I had the support of my team.**)

S2: Lasai zeren eta nire klasekoekin gehiago hitz egin dut ingelesez eta konturatu naiz kapaza naizela ingelesez espresatzeko. (**Calm because I have spoken more with my classmates in English and I have realised that I am able to express myself in English.**)

S3: Oso ondo. Jolasen bidez lan egiten dugunean ez dut presioa sentitzen dena perfektu esateko eta besteek ez dute nitaz barre egiten. (**Very good. When we work through games I do not feel I have the pressure to say everything perfect and the others do not laugh at me.**)

S4: Lehen baino hobeto. Ingeleseaz gehiago hitz egin degu eta hobetu dudala eta konfiantza hartu dudala uste dut. Gainera, modu honetan lan egitean ez naiz epaitua sentitzen irakaslearengandik eta nire gelakoengandik. (**Better than before. We have spoken more in English and I think I have improved and gained confidence. Besides, working in this way I do not feel judged by the teacher and my classmates.**)

S5: Lasai, zeren eta ikusi dut denok egiten ditugula akatsak eta hemen ikasteko gaude. (**Calm, because I have seen that we all make mistakes and we are here to learn.**)