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**LICENCIATURA EN EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS**

**IMPROVING THE SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH TWO COMMUNICATIVE  
ACTIVITIES: PICTURE DESCRIPTION AND INTERVIEWS ON STUDENTS  
FROM FOURTH GRADE AT INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA OCTAVIANA DEL C.  
VIVES C.**

**MILEIDIS PATERNINA SOSSA  
YARLIDIS GREGORIA VILLA CARILLO**

**CARTAGENA DE INDIAS D. T y P.**

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**Trabajo de grado para optar al título de  
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2016**

**NOTA DE ACEPTACIÓN**

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**JURADO**

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**JURADO**

**AUTHOR DECLARATION**

This thesis is dedicated to our parents, whose love, blessings and wisdom influence us to be better every day. We want to say thank you to all that people who believe in us, who always expected the best from us, this research was as a learning process to us for that reason we can express that anything is impossible, what we need is to be patient and also give and demonstrate what we are.

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We would like to dedicate this thesis to our mothers and fathers, for believing in our success. Last but not least, thanks to our brothers and all our family who are always motivating and blessing us to be happy and to be a professional.

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## ABSTRACT

In this document, the main idea is to use the picture description and interview activities in the teaching and learning process of students from fourth grade at Octaviana del C.Vives C. School to improve their speaking skill. This project is based on communicating through the target language; those activities are from communicative language teaching approach because this approach is one of the most appropriate in this context to use the language to communicate, due to allow students use the language to keep in touch with others and be active in the society.

**Key Words:** communicative language teaching approach, foreign language, speaking skill.

## RESUMEN

En este documento, la idea principal es usar las actividades Picture Description and Interview en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de los estudiantes de cuarto grado del colegio Octaviana del C.Vives C. para mejorar la habilidad del habla. Este proyecto es basado en comunicarse a través de la lengua meta; esas actividades provienen del enfoque comunicativo porque este enfoque es uno de los más apropiados en este contexto para usar la lengua para comunicarse, debido a que permite a los estudiantes usar el language para permanecer en comunicación con otros y ser activos en la sociedad.

**Palabras claves:** enfoque comunicativo, lengua extranjera, habilidad oral.



## **Introduction**

We live in a society that is in constant development; socioeconomic, philosophic, technological, political etc. For that reason it is necessary to be active in our contexts and know how to act in the different situations of the life. One way being active is being bilingual, because bilingual people have more opportunities to get all the goals planned and be competent in mentioned society that is why it is important to learn or to improve our command of a second language, in this case English.

In the teaching and learning process there are four skills to develop in order to be competent, these are speaking skill, writing skill, reading skill and listening skill; they are very important to produce a good level of English, but this project is going to be emphasized in the Speaking skill because after a diagnosis that was done, this was the Skill that students from fourth grade at Octaviana del C. Vives C. needed to improve the most because of the students' problem to communicate through the target language (English) .

On the other hand, nowadays there are many authors who have written about how to improve and develop speaking skills; those authors have created different strategies to develop that skill, in this opportunity this research is going to mention the importance of the two communicative activities to improve the speaking skill on students from fourth grade at Octaviana del C. Vives. C school, they are Picture Description and Interview communicative activities which help the teacher to facilitate the teaching process and help the students to develop the learning process in an appropriate way. This research reviews all the different strategies that every single author postulate about the aspects mentioned before, and the

intention is to analyze how teachers can help their students to improve their speaking skill based on these strategies.

Therefore, due to the lack of listening and speaking practice that the students have, nowadays teachers are still searching for the best methodology to improve their student's communicative competence. English teaching in Colombia has not shown good results in the last 50 years, According to Sanchez (2013), Colombia is a country with a low level of English among the students population. This report establishes that more than the 92% of the students do not have a basic level of English, this problem could be because of the content of the instruction or the way how the foreign language is taught which most of the times is based on grammar, without offering a useful usage to all that knowledge the students are exposed to. This does not mean that grammar is not important in this learning process; actually, grammar is an essential component of the linguistic competence which is at the same time part of the communicative competence.

However, using just grammar is not meaningful because as Agudo (2004) determines “to have a good communication it is important to use the competences (pragmatic, sociolinguistic and linguistic) not using a competence more than another, but use all of them in a good way to do not get a sterility communication when students use the target language” , (p. 231). Also as Halliday (1973), pointed out that language is a social phenomenon and that is why being able to communicate means more than only mastering the formal aspects of it. Consequently, the students from Octaviana del C. Vives. C in fourth grade, present some difficulties to interact using the foreign language. These difficulties were evidenced through some observations in the classroom, interviews with teachers and students, and during some activities in which they needed to use the target language to communicate. One of those activities was: the teacher asked students: *What Time is it?* , but they did not answer because

the students said that they did not know what to say in English, just because they showed insecurity, they felt they do not possess the knowledge required to participate, ceasing to be active in class and delaying the teaching and learning process. Those failures arise from the methodologies used by teachers, because some of them just do activities with the grammatical competence and setting aside pragmatic competence. For that reason, It is very important that teachers use good strategies in which the three competences (linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic) are used to get a great learning process. Following this, Agudo (2007), states that “the pragmatic level seems to overtake theoretical, because the pragmatic level takes into account the factors that the student has to deal with, such as: the situation or the context where is produced the communicative act” (p. 159). In fact, according to Herington (1992), it is important to adapt learns for functional language, to speak in their real life, because they need to learn what they are going to use in their daily routine to be active in their contexts.

Additionally, due to the difficulties that students present in the learning English it is important to consider that teachers need to promote communicative strategies among students for them to be able to communicate through the target language and lose the insecurity that the students have. Based on this, Lopez (2009) highlights the importance of creating strategies that promote dialogues in the classroom. This author mention that this technique may improve the communicative competences of the students that is why it is very necessary to use the communicative approach. Also, Halliday (1970) stress the importance of communicative approach to language teaching, particularly the communicative acts underlying the ability to use language for different purposes and the relationship between linguistic systems and their communicative values in texts and discourses. For these reasons, it is essential to consider Communicative Language Teaching as a good approach to teach, using some strategies like Picture Description and Interviews which can help students to develop speaking skill.

In the communicative model of language teaching, the teacher helps the students to communicate in the real life, they help their students to develop the ability to produce grammatically correct, logically connected sentences that are appropriate to specific contexts.

According to Krashen (1982) English and learning process for children need to be natural, where the outside world gives them the opportunity to understand the use of the language.

Krashen & Terrell (1995) explain that “The general goal of the natural approach is communication skills, considering as the ability to communicate with native speakers of the target language.” (p. 58). That is why it is fundamental that all the skills be developed in the teaching and learning process and work in the pragmatic competence.

Alcaraz (1993) highlights that the pragmatics perspective is one of the most important linguistic theories used in the teaching and learning of the foreign language. As a matter of fact, this new vision has opened horizons and different lines of thought, as Anderson expressed (1993, cited by Memari, (2013) indicates that “despite the difficulties that may hinder innovation, there is a growing recognition among teachers and learners of the advantage of using a communicative approach in order to get a good result of the learning and teaching process”(p. 434) According to Alarcon & Lopez (1992), the contents depend on the students’ needs but depending on the context. For this reason, Gardner & Lambert (1972), consider that “when a learner is interactively motivated, he wants to study a language “to learn more about the cultural community, because he is interested” (p. 3). This means that they are learning to do something useful according to Freeman & Anderson (2011). For that reason, it is vital that students know why they are studying the language and why it is useful for them, so that they are motivated to learn; the motivation is essential in the teaching and learning process because it allows people to get their goals and satisfy themselves.

After analyzing this situation and wanting to resolve this problem there arises a question:

*To what extend are the activities Pictures description and Interview useful for the development of speaking skill through the Communicative Language Teaching approach?*

On the other hand to carry out this project and result the main problem it is important to propose an objective, that is why the principle objective of this project is to improve the speaking skill on students from 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Octaviana del C. Vives C. through some communicative approach's strategies.

Therefore to achieve the main objective, it is vital to develop some subsidiary objectives that help to achieve the main one, which are: to identify the student's level of oral competence, to design picture description and interview activities that respond to the conditions of the context and to determine the impact of the implementation of picture description and interview activities on students to improve the speaking skill.

Besides, there are some Background Studies that consider, developing speaking skill is meaningful to create methodologies as Picture Description and Interviews to get a good result in a teaching and learning.

This research was carried out at FKIP Universitas Lambung Mangkurat Banjarmasin/ Indonesia. What Emma Febriyanti wants to communicate in her research is about teaching speaking English considering that Speaking is one of important skills that need to be acquired by students of EFL because sometimes success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a Conversation in the (target) language. Emma mentions some problems and solutions which can be useful to develop speaking skill; these problems are:

- “ Students do not want to talk or say anything,”
- “ Students keep using their own language”
- “It is difficult to handle students in large classroom.”
- “Students are misbehaving in classroom.”
- “The materials do not fulfill the need of students”

And the solutions are in relation to this research because one of the problems during the teaching and learning process it is that students have low motivation to learn and to participate because they feel that not know how to pronounce in English; for this reason it is necessary to create strategies to change this conduct. Some examples of these solutions according to Emma are:

“Some Activities to Promote Speaking”:

- Discussions
- Role Play
- Simulations
- Interviews
- Picture Describing

Khameis (2006) in her research describes the use of creative strategies to promote speaking skills in a Girls’ Primary School in Fujairah. The research was carried out in a classroom of twenty fifth graders Arabic-speaking girls where English is taught as a foreign language. Khameis decided to investigate the teaching of speaking, and this topic was chosen because she noticed over the four years of teaching practice placements in her degree program that reading and writing skills are mostly emphasized in EFL classrooms in Emirati state schools, but speaking and listening are largely ignored.

In this research, Khameis motivates to create strategies to encouraged participation, she states that teacher should include many activities. For this reason she cites Murcia (2001)

“Activities need to be child centered and communication should be authentic. This means that children are listening or speaking about something that interests them, for their own reasons, and not merely because a teacher has asked them to” (p.13). Because in the teaching and learning process of English activities are important in order to improve English and also if you create different ways to teach English you are creating dynamic class.

Usma, Giraldo, Gomez (2013) in their research describe how is the teaching and evaluating process of the speaking skill is in a 10<sup>th</sup> grade class of a public school from Pereira. Also, to show the perceptions English teachers and learners have about the teaching and learning of the speaking skill. In their research they mention some activities to promote speaking skills these activities are: Photographic competition, Role – play, portrait interview, Information-gap game and also they present the difficulties and solutions to develop oral skills.

Jiménez, Quintero, Riess, Ross (2012) their study titled “speaking activities and pedagogical strategies to promote oral participation among 5th grade introverted students” is a descriptive and interpretative case study. To respond to the research questions three methods were used during the investigation. (Interviews, observations and journals). The objective is to diagnose and analyze the current situation, implement speaking activities and strategies to generate oral participation among introverted students. The current study took place in Pereira, Colombia where a plan of bilingualism is being carried out; therefore, there is a strong interest in the pedagogical processes, methods, and approaches in relation to foreign language teaching. The educational institution where this investigation took place goes by the name of “El pueblito”. This primary school has an agreement of bilingualism with the University of Pereira. In order to build the bases of this thesis project and analyze data, various points of view will be mentioned by related authors that are involved in the field of personality factors in learning, the role of speaking activities in EFL and the relationship it has with introverted language students. The results provided by the findings in this study are guided towards answering the following research questions: what do speaking activities

proposed for a 5th grade course from a public Pereira school tells us about introverted student's English oral participation? What pedagogical strategies should be considered when designing and implementing speaking activities for a 5th grade Pereira public school group with introverted students? The most important in this study was that, activities are necessary and help to promote the speaking skill, because of the pedagogical strategies which fostered among students the participation.

There are some authors who give some contributions about this topic: principles of Communicative Language Teaching and Task-Based Instruction: Richards and Rodgers, (2001) stressed that "the communicative language teaching is generally considered as an approach to language teaching". Therefore, the communicative approach reflects a particular model or paradigm of research and also a theory is based on the theory that the primary function of language use is communication. Communicative Language Teaching is used for the teaching of a second and foreign language and emphasizes interaction as the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It is also known as "communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages" or simply the "communicative approach". (Celce Murcia 2001). "The goal of language teaching is to develop communicative competence (Richard and Rodgers, 1999, p. 69).

Another valuable contribution by Halliday (1970) emphasized the importance of the communicative approach to language teaching, especially communicative acts and the purpose of the use of the language for different purposes.

Hymes (1972) determines that communicative competence is the knowledge and ability to use language, to determine precisely what to say, to whom, why, how, where and when, and includes the correct and appropriate use of this.



On the other hand “Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are depending on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (linguistic competence), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language” (sociolinguistic competence) (Nunan 1999, p.216).

Ur (1996) argued that “speaking is the most important skill in learning a foreign language. Such a large demand of speaking skill creates such opportunity to improve speaking fluency”. That means that it is essential to improve speaking skills and looks for strategies which help students to develop the speaking and choose the best methodologies and materials depending on the context to produce a good speaking. Through speaking people can construct and receive information using different ways taking in count the context. According to Macaro, (2001) stated that “effective speakers do not give up or hesitate for too long when they cannot think of how to say something. Most of the time they find ways to solve the problem or ask the person they are speaking with to help them. In this way they are involved in much more exposure and interaction with the L2. When they are not directly involved in the interaction, successful learners seem to use strategies to help them stay focused in the classroom. The more active ones will use strategies to attract the teacher’s attention to them.” (p. 38).

In a teaching and learning process, it is important to create strategies to motivate students to speak, for that reason, these strategies need to be contextualized, in order to create interaction between classroom and in their daily life where they use the language to communicate and in this way they can improve their speaking skill. According to this,

working in groups is an excellent strategy because everybody has different knowledge and students can learn from each other's; among teachers-students and students-students to get a comprehensive learning, as Essberger (2000) highlights that learners need opportunities to speak, to interact with their classmates and teacher because this can be useful to learn English.

About Kayi (2006) states why it is important teaching speaking

- Produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns
- Use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.
- Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter.
- Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.
- Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.
- Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency.

According to Johnson & Johnson (1999, p. 62) communicative competence is “the knowledge which enables someone to use a language effectively and their ability to use this knowledge for communication.”

Nunan (1991 p. 279) lists five characteristics of communicative language teaching:

1. An emphasis of learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
2. The introduction of authentic text into the learning situation.
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the grammar but also on the learning process itself.

4. An enhancement of the learners own personal experiences as important contribution elements to classroom learning.
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

In this research, various concepts that emphasize the goal of this project are highlighted; such as:

The competences is defined as the set of knowledge, skills and individual characteristics that allows a person to perform actions in a certain context, following this there are four types of competences: communicative competences: involves knowing / Flexible do, updated in meaningful contexts and which is the ability to use knowledge about the language in various situations, both inside and outside life schoolchild. Thus, following grammar and pragmatic competence and defining the first as the acquisition of knowledge, formal resources of the language as a system and the ability to use them in the formulation of well-trained and meaningful messages (lexical, phonological, syntactic and spelling among others), and pragmatic competence: such as functional use of language linguistic resources. Therefore, the development of these competences is needed to create strategies that can support activities planned for a particular purpose with an order of time. In this case to develop the communicative competence on students from 4 grade at Octaviana School; to use foreign language (English) which is one that is not spoken in the immediate local environment and therefore social and everyday conditions do not require permanent use for communication by applying methodologies that facilitate the process of teaching and learning which are defined as the procedures used to achieve a goal.

Other important concepts are: Second Language that according to the National Ministry of Education “It is one that is essential for government, commercial, social and educational activities or that is required for communication of a country..” and Foreign

Language as “any language used in a country other than one’s own; a language that is studied mostly for cultural insight”. The Standard determined by the BSI Education (2008) “is a published specification that establishes a common language, and contains a technical specification other precise, criteria and is designed to be used consistently, as a rule a guideline or a definition” Another important contribution is by the ED Glossary, it is defined as “what students should have learned by the end of the course, grade level or grade span, but they do not describe any particular teaching practice.” According to the dictionary reference, methodology is “a branch of pedagogics dealing with analysis and evaluation of subjects to be taught and of the methods of teaching them.”

Bilingualism is “the ability to speak two languages fluently” by the dictionary reference.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This section presents the procedures of the research about improving the students' speaking skill in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Octaviana del C. Vives C. through the implementation of two communicative activities: Picture Description and Interview. According to Tolich (1999, p. 25) cited by Vongxay (2013) "we talk about methodology, what we are talking about is a certain order to of philosophical commitment".

This research is a participatory action research, according to Kemmis & McTaggart (2007) participatory research "is an alternative philosophy of social research associated with social transformation in the third world." (p. 273) Kemmis and McTaggart propose material changes like:

- What people do.
- How people interact with world and with others.
- What people mean and what they value.
- The discourses in which people understand and interpret their world.

Therefore this project was worked out through the Qualitative research; aims to demonstrate the factors that influence the low level of communication in the foreign language (English) and thus propose the use of Picture Description and Interview communicative activities as a basis to improve speaking skill on students from 4th grade at Institución Educativa Octaviana del C.Vives.C. According to Best & Khan (1989 p. 89-90) cited by Cristina Hughes who defines that qualitative research is related to events and the subject researched. And quantitative research refers to those studies that involve numbers.

The way to carry out this project is through communicative language teaching approach improving the speaking skill by using different strategies and didactic materials depending on the context to students be able to communicate through the target language.

At the beginning stage, activities should be easy but good enough for students to use the target language. There are some Activities like Interviews and Pictures Description to Promote Speaking skill according to Robin & Oxford (1992) “participation in communicative tasks and activities, such as paired and small group activities, would enhance meaningful and interesting interactions as well as provide more opportunities to speak”. as Ernenwein (2002) explained that “the way a language is spoken in a classroom is often different than the more informal style of speaking used in everyday life.” (p.1).

Essberger (2000) stated that “students should take the chance to communicate with teachers and other learners at school or university because people cannot develop their speaking skills alone” (p.14).

The research was carried out by two researchers. The researchers have an essential role, they interact with people who belong to the research, this means, the students and the teacher. To carry out any project, it is important to analyze the context where it is going to be worked, to know how to develop all the activities proposed, in this case, this research was carried out at Institución Educativa Octaviana del C. Vives. C. It is located in Amberes neighborhood, it is a private school. The students attend to class in the morning and in the afternoon. Teachers do not use a specific book; they have to create their own resources. The Institution has a library, a computer room and a soccer field that is the same where they go to the break. It has students in different grades (1<sup>st</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>), the classroom is big and has enough chairs, and there are two fans and two lamps.

Moreover the participants involved in this research were students from 4th grade; they are 20 students. They were male and female and were about 8-9 years old; they had participated in English classroom at Octaviana del C. Vives C. and they can attend classes in the morning. The students were selected as participants because they were our students

before, when we were doing our internship. The teacher was selected as a participant because is the only primary English facilitator.

The data collection was class observation and Interviews to learners and to teachers. These Instruments are relevant to this research because they help us to have a better view and better perspective about the students and their problems; then we will be able to find good ways to resolve them, by doing some activities which be useful having in count the context.

Consequently as it was said before there were used two communicative activities; Picture Description and Interviews to improve the students' knowledge specifically on their speaking skill. The first activity was using Picture Description, students had to make groups and an students from each group needed to take a flashcard with a picture on the floor and say what they see on the picture (describe the picture), and the student who say more detail of the picture will be the winner and his/her group will get a point.

For Interviews activities, students were exposed to an interview about their own information to identify their speaking level, then they needed to organize a talk show where they (students) have to present, other interviews and other answers to the questions which help not just to know the students speaking level but also to practice and improve this speaking skill.

In addition, people who were analyzed, were the students and the teacher; they were 20 students and one teacher, students have a low level of English, they attend English classes twice a week, on Tuesday two hours and on Thursday one hour, they do not have a specific material to work, some of them have a dictionary and a little book where they get some vocabulary and grammar, the teacher does not have a guide, she uses some documents to get information depending on the topic that she is going to teach.

The teachers who participated in this research do not have enough knowledge teaching English because their specializations were in different careers, for that reason the process of English for those students were not what was expected. They explained that they are not English teachers but they know what the Basic English is. To work out in our research, teachers were required if they wanted to participate, this contact was not difficult because they met us before when we were doing our internship in this School.

Besides, the instruments are those elements used to facilitate the teaching and learning process of the students depending the different styles of learning and the context. The instruments used in the classes were: video, observations and interviews.

### **Observations:**

Observation is a method of a research that allow to the researchers to identify all the situations that happen in a specific context by observing all the possible things, including participants and the environment where the research is being carried out. this instrument was chosen to execute this research because it is one of the most appropriate in this context considering that it is close to the students, and the real situations that happen in the classroom are observed clearly.

### **Interviews**

Interview is a good strategy to get information about some situations depending on the objective that the research wants to achieve, according to.Dicicco &Crabtree (2006), they determined interview as a data collection strategy to get any information. In this project it is an instrument to know and identify the students' problems and to use as a strategy to improve the teaching and learning process.



## Video

For researchers video is a good strategy to provide information, for this reason Health, Hindmarsh and luff (2010) stated that “is the first methodological book to provide practical guidance on the use of video in social sciences, with a particular focus on situated.

Interactional analysis social interaction in everyday life. It is based on the authors’ substantial experience of qualitative video-based studies of a wide range of organisational environments, as well as less formal public environments, all of which draw on ethnomethodology and conversation analysis” in a qualitative research.

On the other side it is important to know according to Banciu & Jireghie (2012) that “the classroom activities maximize opportunities for learners to use target language in a communicative way for meaningful activities.” During the process of the teaching and learning process at Fourth grade at Octaviana del C. Vives, C; different activities were developed, one of these are two lessons in order to improve the speaking skill through two communicative activities: *Picture Description And Interviews*. The teacher and students roles during the activities are according to many authors: Breen & Candlin (1890) , cited by Vongxay, ( 2013) the teacher has two main roles: the first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first role and arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher; first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities. A third role of the teacher is a researcher and a learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities. (p. 99). Littlewoods (1981) mentioned that teacher act as coordinator, language instructor for the teaching process. Jin, Singh & Li (2005, p. 95-96) cited by Vongxay (2013) stated that

the role of the learners “those of negotiators for meaning, communicators, discoverers, and contributors of knowledge and information”. The next paragraph will be describing the activities realized with students from fourth grade at Octavian del C Vives C.

Before to describe the strategies for language teaching Picture Description and Interviews it is necessary to highlight that to prepare the classes to the students from fourth grade, were designed some lesson plans one for each activity and also for a diagnostic class.

### **Lesson Plan**

A lesson plan is a teachers plan to teach a lesson. Milkova is a guide for teachers about what students should learn; include objectives, Teaching and learning activities, materials, the time and also the methodologies how will be the class. These lesson plan are at appendixes, classify by Lesson Plan A and Lesson Plan B.

### **Description of the Activity A: Interview Activity- Diagnostic Class**

Students can conduct interviews on selected topics with various people. It is a good idea that the teacher provides a rubric to students, so that they know what type of questions they can ask or what path to follow, but students should prepare their own interview questions. Conducting interviews with people give students a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in class, but also outside and helps them becoming socialized. After interviews, each student can present his or her study to the class. Moreover, students can interview each other and "introduce" his or her partner to the class. According to this activity Interview was realized at fourth grade at Octaviana del C. Vives. C. Before to start any activity it is important to get students attention; for that reason first students sang a song, the song was “Happy and you know it” after the song students were waiting for the

instructions of the day. The activity was “Interview” as you can see in the chart above, it was about personal information. Some of them were prepared but for some student were difficult because they felt insecure to speak and they made some mistakes.

Some examples of the questions that were realized as interview were:

1. What is your name?
2. Where do you live?
3. Where are you from?
4. What’s your favorite color?
5. What’s your favorite TV show?
6. What’s your favorite food?
7. Where do you study?
8. Why do you think English is important?
9. What are your parent’s names?

In the example mentioned above, the interaction among the students and the researchers at the first time were difficult because they felt shy and nervous, they did not want to participate but then some of them understood the activity and they participated. They made some mistakes in some questions when the participants asked to someone: Where are you from? And the learners just repeat the question and did not answer, suddenly, the participants explained again what she/he had to do. According to this, Li Xiaojun (1984) stated that “A communicative approach presupposes that students take the central role in learning. The idea of student centeredness is first of all embodied in the design of the syllabus. We claim that our communicative syllabus is student-oriented because it gears its objectives to what students actually need.” (p. 9).

**(See Appendix D)**

## Picture Description

In this activity to make use of pictures in a speaking activity it is necessary to give students one Picture and having it he needed to describe what the picture shows. For this activity students can make groups and to each group is given a different picture. Students discuss the picture with their groups, and then a spokesperson for each group describes the picture to the whole class. This activity fosters the creativity and imagination of the learners as well as their public speaking skills. According to this Littlewoods advise that “During the activities the teacher acts as an advisor, answering students’ questions and monitoring their performance. He might make a list of their errors to be worked on at a later time during more accuracy-based activities. At other times he might be a ‘co-communicator engaging in the communicative activity along with students (Littlewoods 1981).

(See appendixes A, B, C.).

## Description of the Activity B Picture Description:

Above there are the different flashcard that were used to realize the activity. The topic was “Modern Life” students had to describe what they can see and they used expression such as “” *I can see...*” or “*It is, that is, these are...*” There were different flashcards. Each student had to pick up one picture; then the student had to think what they could see from the picture. This activity involved listening and speaking, since the students first had to listen the instructions how to describe and describe the pictures; finally students had a short conversations. At the end of the class were expressed “To us it is important that you (students) enjoyed and achieved the lesson. It is not difficult to learn English but not too easy, the idea is that you feel motivate to speak and learn in every English classes.” Heather remarks “that learners with previous language learning experience are expected to bring with them expectations of how language classes should be organized and taught.

In any classes with differences in expectations, it is advisable for a teacher and students to negotiate what and how to learn” (1999. p. 3).

Before do all this activities they were planned a lesson to use during the sessions classes.

**(See appendix E)**

## RESULTS

After carrying out this project, the results were analyzed to know if they were positive or negative, the first one was to identify the student's level of oral competence which was identified by some observations to the English classes, doing some activities where students needed to speak, talking with the teacher about the student's competences, and talking with students about their knowledge about English. Taking into account those activities already done, as a result it is possible to say that students had some weaknesses with English subject, specifically with the speaking skill; these weaknesses were discovered during the observation and during the activities, they made mistakes during interview activity when one of the researchers asked a student to response the question where are you from? And the answer of the students was, just repeating the question and also, they did not understand the questions, for that reason the students turn to his mother tongue the first time of the activity students did not enjoy the participation because they felt shy and nervous to make mistakes.

In the activity mentioned above four students wanted to participate but first the researcher had to translate the questions like what's your favorite TV show ¿Cuál es tu programa de televisión favorito? In order to let the students understand the question. In this activity the English teacher was recording the class and then the researcher transcribes, this was as a diagnostic level of the oral competence, they presented weaknesses, but they tried and participated. The purpose was to examine the fluency and pronunciation.

The grammar here was not the most important thing because what we really wanted to do was to improve their oral competence. Some of them made mistakes in the pronunciation but, this is the process, they have to learn from their mistakes, the most important is that they feel motivated to learn and to speak English. Based on the observations from the activity it is important to explain that the participants showed a low

level to speak English, of course this is not easier but it is not too difficult; these activities can be implemented in different English classes, in different ways through CLT because students liked to work through this approach to improve and developed their oral competence. This activity involved repeating expressions and memorizing; the expressions that they repeated were: What is your name? Where do you live? Where are you from? What's your favorite color? What's your favorite TV show? What's your favorite food? Where do you study? Why do you think English is important? What are your parent's names?

During the the second activity of the research (Picture Description activity) the materials used were some flashcard, having in count the way as students used to take classes this was a different class . The classroom was organized making a circle, students needed to take a flashcard about the modern gadgets from the floor and describe the picture, they described what they looked on the picture and they said the activities that they can do using those gadgets illustrated on the pictures. The result from this activity demonstrated the students low oral competence, but then this activity helped to improve it, when these activities are done students felt motivate to learn English because they enjoyed it and they learn new words but if they do not continuous receiving activities like these to promote Speaking skill during their classes, the objective of these research won't continue giving a good result.

Through the implementation of the two communicative activities; picture description and interview, it could be shown that the students have improved their speaking skills because they were able to participated, they felt the motivation to learn and to describe new words, they no just got a better level of speaking skill but they also are motivate to

continuous learning English to communicate with others. These activities were conducted by using some flashcards about the students' gadgets and their own information to help students feel confidence because they were working with instruments from their daily routine and in that way they can notice that English is useful in the society and in their daily life.

Nowadays, students have improved their speaking skills through the activities mentioned above. This study also showed teachers' lack of knowledge to teach using a communicative approach, the lack of materials and the use of the language during the classes. Teachers need to create their own resources to motivate students to speak, to participate and to learn English. For these reasons, teachers need to be contextualized and should know students' needs and their different styles of learning.

CLT (communicative language teaching) arouse more communication-interaction among teachers-students, this approach change what was known as the traditional model, because students feel more secure with their teacher to participate in the different activities, this approach could motivate students in speaking English, they can learn English with the different strategies that the teacher needs to create, and this finally can be an excellent motivation to learn English.

On the other hand, a video was made during some classes to show the activities done by the students and the results of these activities, this video also helped to motivate the students to participate, even though, some of them were not confident, were shy and did not want to appear on the video, but later they did and they enjoyed it.

### **Description of the Video Recording**

In the first place students were organized in their own chair waiting for the instructions, after this they understood what they had to do. Through the activities done



during the classes the video was used to motivate the students to participate, this video was recording by the teacher, while were doing the activity of picture description. After make two groups students from each group needed to describe some pictures, One student from each group was select to describe the picture, this student at the first time felt insecure, but then he decided to speak using phrases like “ I can see in the picture” sometimes they unknown some picture, for this reason this student determined to use they mother tongue to ask to the teacher “Como se dice esta palabra en Ingles” ; the next student from the other group was easy to describe the picture because she was listening what the first students said, she used the phrases like “ This picture means”; in this ways were realized the activities for four grade. The video shows the students describing the pictures. The flashcards had a number, the students had to say a number and take the flashcards which this number, then the students describe pictures and the activities that can be done with the object that the picture had; the pictures were about the gadgets students usually use. This video was made to create a dynamic class, to make a different class because student felt motivated to speak and to learn, this is not a short process, if this strategies were implemented in some schools, most of the students will learn and teachers will get a favorable result.

In a part of the video an student from a group took a picture and she was describing the picture, she made some mistake, but their classmates correct her, then she told me: “teacher i want to participate again, i want to do a good work”, and this time the students described the picture in a better way and she said more detail about the picture, she improved her speaking skill through of the description that she did to the picture; the picture was a Table. **(See appendix F).**

Students A: It is a tablet.

Teacher: Very good, UH huh

Students A: It is Black...

Teacher: This is black and?

Students A: Blue

Students A: I use tablet to play game

Teacher: Is big or short?

Students A: It is big

A similar case happened with a boy, but the different was that the boy could describe the picture at the first time in a good way, the student improved his speaking skill but faster than the girl did, which means that every student has a different process and different learning style. **(See appendix G).**

Teacher: What is that?

Student B: This is an MP3, it is blue and yellow. It is short. I use it to listen to music.

Teacher: Very good, sit down.

Another situation showed in the video is when students were talking about their own information, they were making and answering questions by themselves, where they live, their favorite gadgets and colors (it was for the interview activity), and in that way they started talking about the modern life using the pictures which they were going to work on the picture description activity. **(See appendix H).** All the activities were planned and done with a sequence, the idea was to start with Interview activity and close with Picture Description activity and work on the two strategies.

These activities can be useful in the teaching and learning process, most of the students like to do new and funny things because they do not like to be quiet, they like to do different things in different ways, and in this way students can improve their competences, learn and also they can have fun.

## CONCLUSION

It is important to state that communicative language teaching is an effective approach for students to be able to communicate, this approach can be useful for teachers who want to develop communicative skills in their students so they will be able to answer in any situation of in their daily life, that is why it is important the functions and the use of the language, not just learning grammar and vocabulary but learning how to communicate in the real context. The first implications that this research showed was for students from Fourth grade at Octaviana del C. Vives. C, which showed that teachers have not the enough hours assigned for English classes, for this reason they need to manage the time during the class and create strategies which can be useful for students to learn English, the other thing is that there are not resources available to teach, teachers have to create them. Materials and activities are some of the most important aspects in education, because they support the theory, facilitate the teaching and learning process, and allow students to use different strategies to learn, as Picture Description and Interview that are two communicative activities which are useful in the classes specifically to use the target language to communicate, because these activities give students the opportunity to speak using the second language and improve the speaking skill, as happened with the students from fourth grade at Octaviana del C. Vives C, school where the students had the opportunity to work with these activities and they could improve their speaking skill and communicate in a better way with their classmates.

Finally, it is important that teachers are prepared to teach English, they need to speak through the target language, teachers need to plan the classes taking into count the student's needs, the students wants, their learning styles and their context to choose the appropriate content to teach, the materials, strategies and the activities to use during the classes as Picture Description and Interview communicative activities which showed a good

result helping to improve the speaking skill of the students from fourth grade at the Octaviana Del C. Vives C.

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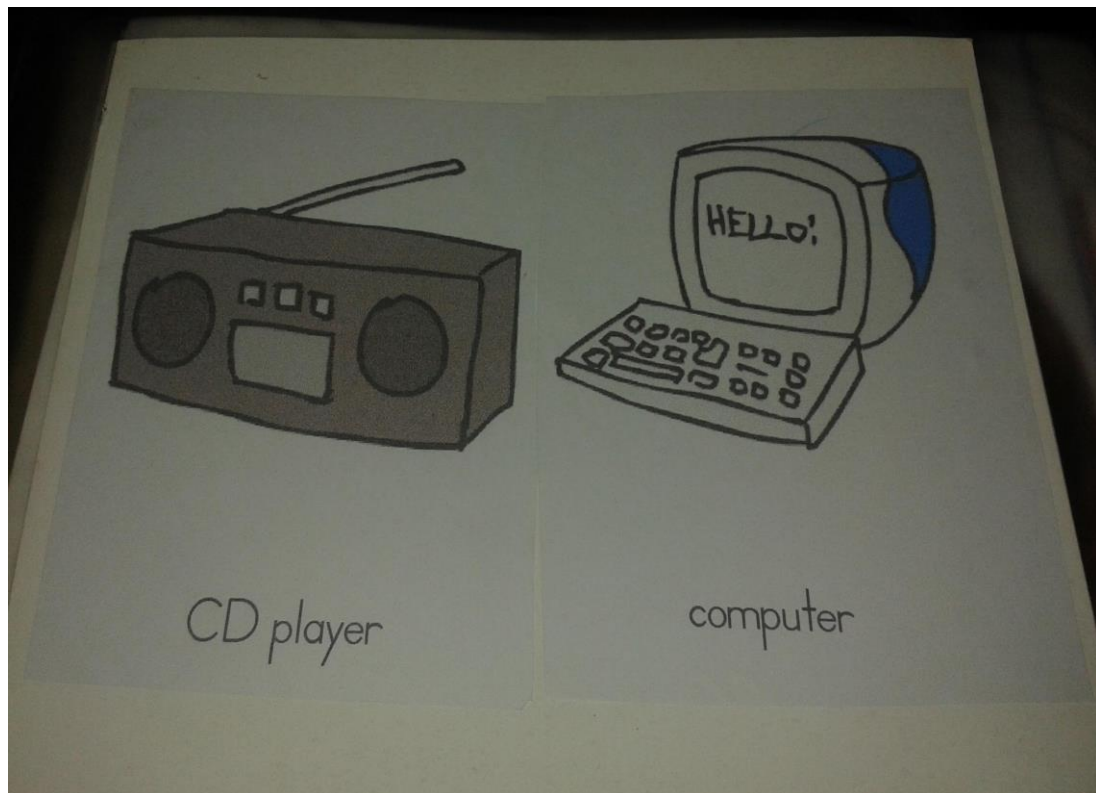
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## APPENDIX A

### Modern life flashcards

These are the flashcards that were used to work on the communicative activity picture description, these picture were printed out. ( they show a CD player and a Computer).



## APPENDIX B

### Modern life flashcard

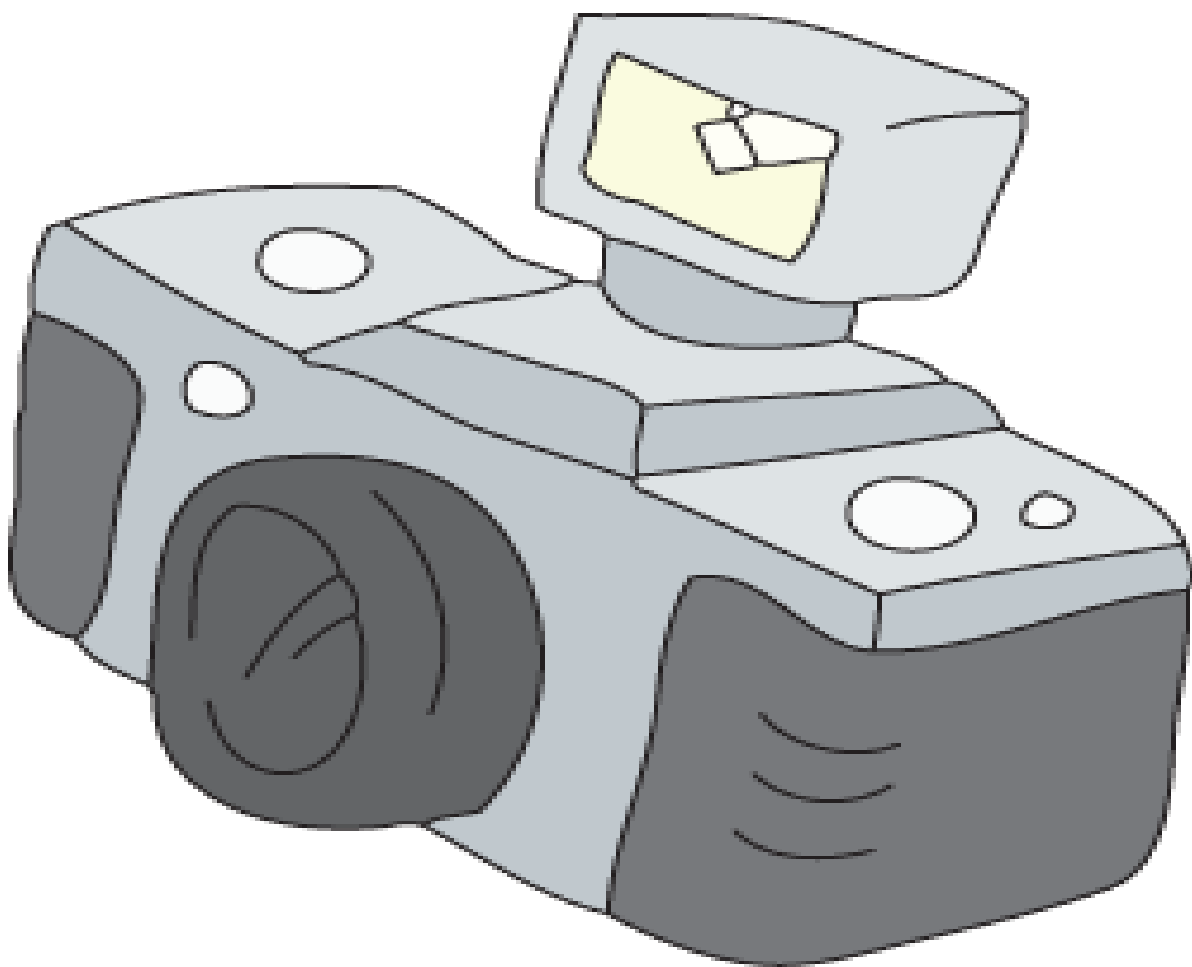
This is a flashcard that was used to work on the communicative activity Picture Description, This picture was printed out. (It shows a table)



## APPENDIX C

### Modern life flashcard

This is a flashcard that was used to work on the communicative activity Picture Description, This picture was printed out. (It shows a camera)



## APPENDIX D

### Lesson plan interview activity

This lesson plan was used to work on Interview activity

<b>Name:</b> Mileidis Paternina and Yarlidis Villa	<b>Date:</b> 20/10/2015	<b>Subject/ theme :</b> English	<b>GRADE/LEVEL:</b> 4	<b>Class time:</b> 1 hour.
ESTÁNDAR(S): Sigo instrucciones relacionadas con actividades de clase recreativas propuestas por mi profesor.				
<b>Learning Objective:</b> students will be able to answer questions in an Interview about their real life <b>Subsidiary aims:</b> students will be able to ask questions in an interview				
RUNNING CLOCK NATURE OF ACTIVITY	TEACHER ACTION	STUDENT ACTION	RESOURCES/NEEDED	
Talking about daily routine.	Introduce a new topic talking the students' life.	Talk about the activities they usually do.	Board, markers, notebooks, pencils.	
Writing vocabulary and learning how to pronounce them.	Write some questions on the board and say de pronunciation.	Write the questions on the notebook and say the pronunciation.	Notebooks, markers, pencils, board.	
Drawing the daily routine.	Ask students the questions already written on the board.	Answers the questions	Colors, papers, board, markers, notebooks.	
Doing grammar activities	Organize students to they do the interview among they.	Ask and Answers questions from the interview	Notebooks, board, markers, pencils.	

## APPENDIX E

### Lesson Plan Picture Description Activity

This is a lesson plan organized to work on a class using Picture Description



### Lesson plan

Program: Licenciatura en Educación con Énfasis en Inglés.

NAME: Mileidis Paternina Sossa Yartidis villa carrillo	DATE: 17/11/2015	SUBJECT/ THEME: Describing pictures.	GRADE/LEVEL: fourgrade	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● ESTÁNDAR(S): Respondo a preguntas sobre personas, objetos y lugares de mi entorno.</li></ul> <p>Participo activamente en juegos de palabras y rondas.</p> <p>Pregunto y respondo sobre las características físicas de objetos familiares.</p>				
LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Student will be able to describe some pictures about modern life				
SUBSIDIARY AIMS: Students will be able to make sentences describing the objects they usually use. Students will be able to ask and answer questions about the gadgets they usually use.				
NATURE OF ACTIVITY	TEACHER ACTION	STUDENT ACTION	RESOURCES/NEEDED	RUNNING CLOCK
Beginnig	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Tell the instruction for the class.</li><li>● Make feedback about the last topic.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Listening the instructions.</li><li>● Ask questions about the last topic.</li></ul>	Board, notebooks, markers, pencils.	15 minutes
Sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Show some flashcard with pictures about the modern life.</li><li>● Explain differences way how to describe the pictures.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Pay attention to the teacher.</li><li>● Say the pronunciation of the vocabulary and the ways how they can describe the pictures. (one by one)</li></ul>	Flashcards, notebooks	20 minutes
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Say the students to organize the classroom in two groups.</li><li>● Put the flashcards on the flow.</li><li>● Explain a game to play.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● A student from each group needs to take flashcard with the number that the teacher says and describe the picture that this flashcard show.</li><li>● Say what they can see and what they usually use the gadget (from the picture) for.</li></ul>	Flashcards	25 minutes



## APPENDIX F

### Student working on Picture Description activity

This picture is from the video which show the result that the implementation of the activities did.



## APPENDIX G

### Student working on Picture Description activity

This pictures is from the video which show the result that the implementation of the activities did.



## APPENDIX H

### Students working on Interview and Picture Description activity

These pictures are from the video which show the result that the implementation of the activities did.

