



BENEMÉRITA Y CENTENARIA ESCUELA NORMAL DEL ESTADO DE SAN LUIS POTOSÍ.

TITULO: The use of games to develop speaking abilities in middle school students.

AUTOR: Juan Diego Cruz Aguilar

FECHA: 7/15/2026

PALABRAS CLAVE: Confianza, Lúdico, Enseñanza, Inglés, Participación

SECRETARIA DE EDUCACIÓN DEL GOBIERNO DEL ESTADO.

SISTEMA EDUCATIVO ESTATAL REGULAR DIRECCIÓN DE EDUCACIÓN

INSPECCIÓN DE EDUCACIÓN NORMAL

BENEMÉRITA Y CENTENARIA

ESCUELA NORMAL DEL ESTADO DE SAN LUIS POTOSÍ

GENERACIÓN

2020



2024

**“THE USE OF GAMES TO DEVELOP SPEAKING ABILITIES IN MIDDLE
SCHOOL STUDENTS”**

INFORME DE PRÁCTICAS PROFESIONALES

**QUE PARA OBTENER EL TÍTULO DE LICENCIADO EN EDUCACIÓN
SECUNDARIA CON ESPECIALIDAD EN: LENGUA EXTRANJERA: INGLÉS**

PRESENTA:

JUAN DIEGO CRUZ AGUILAR

ASESOR:

MARÍA LEONORA SALAS PONTÓN

SAN LUIS POTOSI, S.L.P.

MAYO DE 2026



**BENEMÉRITA Y CENTENARIA ESCUELA NORMAL DEL ESTADO DE SAN LUIS POTOSÍ
CENTRO DE INFORMACIÓN CIENTÍFICA Y TECNOLÓGICA**

ACUERDO DE AUTORIZACIÓN PARA USO DE INFORMACIÓN DEL DOCUMENTO RECEPCIONAL EN EL REPOSITORIO INSTITUCIONAL DE LA BECENE DE ACUERDO A LA POLÍTICA DE PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL

**A quien corresponda.
PRESENTE. –**

Por medio del presente escrito Juan Diego Cruz Aguilar
autorizo a la Benemérita y Centenaria Escuela Normal del Estado de San Luis Potosí, (BECENE) la
utilización de la obra Titulada:
"THE USE OF GAMES TO DEVELOP SPEAKING ABILITIES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS"

en la modalidad de: Informe de Prácticas Profesionales para obtener el
Título de: Licenciatura en Enseñanza y Aprendizaje del Inglés en Educación Secundaria.

en la generación 2014-2018 para su divulgación, y preservación en cualquier medio, incluido el electrónico y como parte del Repositorio Institucional de Acceso Abierto de la BECENE con fines educativos y Académicos, así como la difusión entre sus usuarios, profesores, estudiantes o terceras personas, sin que pueda percibir ninguna retribución económica.

Por medio de este acuerdo deseo expresar que es una autorización voluntaria y gratuita y en atención a lo señalado en los artículos 21 y 27 de Ley Federal del Derecho de Autor, la BECENE cuenta con mi autorización para la utilización de la información antes señalada estableciendo que se utilizará única y exclusivamente para los fines antes señalados.

La utilización de la información será durante el tiempo que sea pertinente bajo los términos de los párrafos anteriores, finalmente manifiesto que cuento con las facultades y los derechos correspondientes para otorgar la presente autorización, por ser de mi autoría la obra.

Por lo anterior deslindo a la BECENE de cualquier responsabilidad concerniente a lo establecido en la presente autorización.

Para que así conste por mi libre voluntad firmo el presente.

En la Ciudad de San Luis Potosí, S.L.P. a los 07 días del mes de Julio de 2026.

ATENTAMENTE.

Juan Diego Cruz Aguilar

Nombre y Firma

AUTOR DUEÑO DE LOS DERECHOS PATRIMONIALES



BECENE-SA-DSE-RT-PO-01-05

Revisión 2

Administrativa

Dictamen Aprobatorio del
Documento Recepcional

San Luis Potosí, S.L.P.; a 26 de Junio del 2026

Los que suscriben, tienen a bien

DICTAMINAR

que el(la) alumno(a): C. CRUZ AGUILAR JUAN DIEGO
De la Generación: 2020 - 2024

concluyó en forma satisfactoria y conforme a las indicaciones señaladas en el Documento Recepcional en la modalidad de () Ensayo Pedagógico, (X) Informe de Prácticas Profesionales, () Portafolio Temático, () Tesis de Investigación, () Tesina, () Portafolio de Evidencias.

Titulado:

THE USE OF GAMES TO DEVELOP SPEAKING ABILITIES IN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Por lo anterior, se determina que reúne los requisitos para proceder a sustentar el Examen Profesional que establecen las normas correspondientes, con el propósito de obtener el Título de Licenciado(a) en ENSEÑANZA Y APRENDIZAJE DEL INGLÉS EN EDUCACIÓN SECUNDARIA

ATENTAMENTE COMISIÓN DE TITULACIÓN

DIRECTORA ACADÉMICA



DIRECTORA DE SERVICIOS ADMINISTRATIVOS

MTRA. VIANEY COVARRUBIAS CERVANTES

SECRETARÍA DE EDUCACIÓN
SISTEMA EDUCATIVO ESTATAL REGULAR
BENEMÉRITA Y CENTENARIA
ESCUELA NORMAL DEL ESTADO
SAN LUIS POTOSÍ, S.L.P.

MTRA. FÁTIMA GUADALUPE FABIÁN VANEGAS

RESPONSABLE DE TITULACIÓN

ASESOR DEL DOCUMENTO RECEPCIONAL

MTR. GERARDO JAVIER GUEL CABRERA

MTRA. MARIA LEONORA SALAS PONTON



AGRADECIMIENTOS

A mis padres por haberme dado el regalo de la vida, por haberme ayudado a establecer las bases de mis valores y principios para crecer como una persona empática, un adulto responsable, funcional y con una gran libertad de pensamiento, permitiéndome desarrollar conforme mis ideales, gustos e intereses, además del gran apoyo que me han brindado durante toda mi vida, y durante mi paso por la Benemérita y Centenaria Escuela Normal del Estado.

A mi madre, por ser mi compañera durante todo este gran viaje de mi vida, por haber sido un pilar para mi bienestar emocional y mental durante todo mi crecimiento, por ser mi mejor amiga y darme la oportunidad de ser libre para ser completamente yo mismo al estar con ella, por darme la confianza de ser honesto en cualquier aspecto de mi vida y compartirle hasta mis más importantes e íntimos secretos, por darme la comprensión, la enseñanza, la educación y el constante apoyo para todas mis necesidades durante todo mi crecimiento y desarrollo personal, por estar presente en mis más grandes victorias, y en mis más peores derrotas, ayudarme y enseñarme a tener resiliencia, fortaleza y las capacidades para seguir adelante y ver el lado positivo de cada aspecto de mi vida. Por haberme concebido la vida, dado la mejor educación y las mejores enseñanzas de la vida para relacionarme como un ser humano capaz de perseguir mis metas y nunca tener límites para soñar con el éxito, tener ambición de abundancia y conocimiento, por las tardes enteras compartiendo anécdotas de su juventud mientras la música de los 80s nos envuelve, por las noches de desvelo en las que tuve que quedarme hasta tarde y ella me hacía algo de cenar, o por aquellas noches en las que nos quedamos hasta la madrugada únicamente platicando de la vida, gracias a ella conocí la música, el amor al arte, las ganas de vivir, la libertad de hacer lo que quieres sin ningún miedo al que dirán, y sobre todas las cosas, por haberme ayudado a darme cuenta de lo valiosa de esta carrera, por haberme enseñado que en esta vida tenemos que hacer todo con amor, con cariño y con respeto, por ser la mejor Mamá.

A mi padre, por haber sido uno de los pilares más grandes de mi vida, haberme brindado el más grande apoyo posible durante mi desarrollo personal y haberme dado las capacidades y conocimientos para seguir adelante, por haberme brindado las herramientas para ser resiliente y completar todas mis metas y logros, por haber estado presente cuando requerí de su apoyo, y no dudar en ayudarme en cada oportunidad que tuvo. Por haber sido empático con mi bienestar y haberme dado la libertad de perseguir mis ideales y tomar mis decisiones bajo mis propias condiciones, por haber respetado el camino que elegí como ser humano y haberme dado la oportunidad de crecer como persona, le agradezco haberme dado la oportunidad de tener un trabajo y conocer la importancia del valor del esfuerzo y la dedicación para alcanzar mis metas, por haberme brindado la educación y los valores para desenvolverme como una persona empática y caritativa con los demás, por aquellas tardes quedándonos hasta tarde en el trabajo platicando sobre su juventud con esa costumbre de tratar de adivinar la edad de las personas, por su entrega, dedicación y que nunca recibirás un “No” por respuesta al pedirle su ayuda, por ser el mejor Papá.

A mis maestras de práctica y titulación, agradezco de todo corazón a la maestra Fátima, por haber escuchado cada una de mis quejas, haberme aconsejado cada vez que

me sentí acorralado por la escuela, o la vida. Por haberme enseñado el lado bueno de ser docente y haberme ayudado a seguir adelante con la carrera, aún con los retos e injusticias que se puedan presentar en la vida, y por estar ahí para mí incluso después de ser egresado, por demostrarme con hechos lo valioso que es ser llamado “colega” y ser tomado en cuenta como tal. A mi maestra Leonora por el gran apoyo que fue durante el desarrollo de este documento de titulación, por la gran paciencia que me tuvo ante las diferentes adversidades que se me presentaron durante este tardío proceso, por la constante atención que me brindó y el gran apoyo que fueron sus palabras para no rendirme durante este largo camino, las palabras de aliento y el gran apoyo que fue para sentirme suficiente y realizar cualquier tarea de manera profesional y manteniendo mi esencia como docente, y por supuesto por haberme acompañado y brindado las herramientas para completar este documento.

A mi familia, por estar para ahí en cada momento de mi vida, escucharme en cada momento difícil de mi vida, y estar para mí para sostener en tus brazos mis tristezas y problemas, por ser un pilar en mi vida para seguir adelante, por siempre preocuparse por mí ante cualquier adversidad y demostrarme de manera constante que puedo contar con ellos en cualquier momento de mi vida.

A la música, una de las más grandes expresiones artísticas que me ha acompañado durante toda mi vida, en los mejores momentos y en los peores, no importa cuán roto me haya sentido o que tanto quiera explotar de felicidad, siempre ha estado ahí para mí, dándome las palabras de aliento que necesito en los peores momentos, y recordándome la importancia de seguir adelante ante cualquier adversidad, y sobre todo por ser la mejor forma de unirme más a las personas que quiero y aprecio en mi vida.

Y, por supuesto no podía faltar, me agradezco a MÍ mismo, por nunca haberme rendido en este gran viaje que fue empezar y terminar una carrera universitaria, por haber tenido la suficiente resiliencia para seguir adelante incluso con las dificultades de la vida y las muchas personas dispuestas a ponerle un freno a tu velocidad, y un alto a tu felicidad, por haberme esforzado de todo corazón en el desarrollo de este documento de titulación e incluso en momentos en los que pensé en rendirme, elegir seguir adelante sin importar la dificultad del camino que haya elegido, aunque no ha sido fácil y la vida desgraciadamente de ponernos en frente las dificultades más grandes y complicadas que se nos puedan ocurrir, es un gran orgullo a estas alturas de mi carrera ejercer y tener una vocación en el alma por esta profesión tan bella y humana, y llegar a las mentes y corazones de muchas personitas de muchas edades, es el mejor regalo que uno puede recibir.

CONTENT

ABSTRACT	5
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	6
1.2 Rationale	11
1.3 Personal Interest in the Topic	14
1.4 Description of the Problem	15
1.5 Proposed Research Questions	16
Chapter II. Action Plan.....	18
2.1 Background.....	18
2.3 Plans and Study Program Changes During Teaching Practice	22
2.5 General Description of the Problem (Diagnosis).....	29
2.6 Research Instruments	31
2.7 Literacy	37
2.8 Action Plan	50
Chapter III. Implementation of the Strategy.....	55
3.1 Description of the Intervention.....	55
3.2 Description of Sessions / Didactic Sequences	59
Session 1: “How Do I Feel?”	60
Session 2: “How Does That Make Me Feel?”	64
Session 3: “Sharing Feelings and Thoughts!”	66
Session 4: “Healing the World”	76
Session 5: “Let’s HELP Our Community!”	80
Session 6: “My Community Problem Comic”	83
3.4 Analysis of Research Instruments.....	96
Table 1. Speaking Performance Rubric	98
Table 2. Participation and Motivation Checklist	100
3.5 Challenges and Limitations During the Intervention.....	102
Chapter IV. Results and Conclusions.....	105
4.1 Results	105
4.2 Research Questions Answered	109
4.3 Conclusions	115
4.4 Recommendations.....	122
References	124
APPENDIXES.....	125

<i>Appendix A. Observation Checklist</i>	125
<i>Appendix B. Speaking Rubric</i>	127
<i>Appendix C. Student Perception Survey</i>	128
<i>Survey Charts</i>	134
<i>Appendix D. Teaching Materials Used</i>	137
<i>Appendix G. Field Notes</i>	142

ABSTRACT

This action research study analyzes the effectiveness of game-based learning activities to improve students' confidence in speaking English in a secondary school context. The intervention was implemented at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*, located in Soledad de Graciano Sánchez, San Luis Potosí, with a sample group composed of 21 third-grade students from group "C" during the seventh-semester teaching practices of the English Major. The study emerged from the identification of a recurring problem within the English classroom: students demonstrated low confidence, nervousness, fear of ridicule, and reluctance to participate orally when using English.

The intervention consisted of a three-week implementation of game-based strategies focused on promoting speaking participation through communicative and interactive activities. The lessons addressed topics such as emotions and feelings, community problems, and healthy life habits, integrating grammar structures including *verb to be*, *like/dislike*, *must/mustn't*, and *should/shouldn't*. Different educational games such as *Pictionary*, *Hot Potato*, *Connect Four*, *Snakes and Ladders*, trivia games, memory games, and collaborative dynamics were applied to encourage oral participation and language use.

To collect and analyze information, several research instruments were employed, including observation, structured observation, checklists, rubrics, surveys, and field notes. Findings revealed a moderate improvement in students' confidence and participation levels. Although students did not achieve fully autonomous language production, they demonstrated greater willingness to attempt speaking, increased participation during classroom activities, and reduced hesitation when using English. Team-based and competitive games showed the highest level of effectiveness, particularly those involving collaboration, competition, and

what was identified as an “adrenaline factor,” which increased motivation and classroom engagement.

Nevertheless, the intervention also revealed limitations affecting the learning process, such as students’ fear of embarrassment, classroom distractions, cellphone use, waiting turns during activities, and the belief among some students that English would not be useful in their future lives. Results suggest that games should not be considered universally effective, but rather situational pedagogical tools whose success depends on factors such as age, classroom context, language objective, grammar complexity, vocabulary, and students’ characteristics. Overall, the study concludes that game-based learning can create meaningful opportunities for communication and confidence development when adapted according to the needs and context of learners.

Keywords: games, speaking confidence, English language learning, secondary education, communicative learning.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The learning of English as a second language has become increasingly relevant in contemporary society due to globalization, communication needs, educational opportunities, and access to information. Nowadays, the English language is considered an essential tool for academic, professional, and social development. However, despite its importance, learning English in public middle schools often represents a challenge for students, particularly in aspects related to oral communication and confidence while using the language. In many educational contexts, students experience insecurity, fear of making mistakes, lack of motivation, or even disinterest when participating in activities that involve speaking in English.

During the teaching practices carried out at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*, located in Soledad de Graciano Sánchez, San Luis Potosí, a recurrent problem was identified among third-grade students: the lack of confidence to communicate orally in English. Students frequently demonstrated hesitation, nervousness, fear of ridicule, and insecurity while participating in activities involving oral production. In many cases, students preferred to remain silent, avoid participation, or wait for the teacher to provide answers rather than attempting to produce language independently. This situation represented an obstacle for the development of speaking skills and meaningful language acquisition.

In addition to the linguistic challenges observed, it was evident that adolescent students are strongly influenced by social dynamics typical of their developmental stage. At this age, students tend to be more self-conscious about peer opinions, increasing the fear of embarrassment or criticism when speaking publicly. Consequently, oral participation may become uncomfortable, particularly in second language contexts where pronunciation mistakes and language insecurity are common. Likewise, classroom distractions, lack of sustained attention, cellphone use, and low perceived relevance of English learning contributed to limiting students' engagement with the language.

In response to this situation, this intervention proposal focused on the implementation of games as a teaching strategy to improve students' confidence while speaking English. Games were selected because they create dynamic, participative, and student-centered environments in which learning becomes more interactive and meaningful. Furthermore, game-based learning encourages participation, teamwork, motivation, and communication, while reducing pressure and anxiety commonly associated with traditional classroom participation. By transforming language practice into an engaging experience, games may provide

opportunities for students to experiment with language use in a less intimidating environment.

The selection of this strategy also emerged from personal teaching experience and professional interest. Throughout the teaching practices carried out during the English Major, games consistently demonstrated their potential to engage students, encourage participation, and create memorable learning experiences. Nevertheless, practice also revealed that the effectiveness of games depends on multiple variables, such as students' age, classroom environment, grammar complexity, vocabulary content, type of game, and communicative objective. Therefore, this research aimed not only to implement games but also to critically analyze their effectiveness, limitations, and contextual applicability within a secondary school English classroom.

This document presents an action research process focused on analyzing the influence of game-based activities on students' confidence to speak English. The intervention was implemented during a three-week period with a sample group composed of third-grade students from group "C" at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*. Through the use of different activities such as *Hot Potato*, *Snakes and Ladders*, *Connect Four*, *Pictionary*, trivia games, board games, and collaborative dynamics, students practiced vocabulary, grammar, and communicative expressions related to emotions, community problems, and healthy life habits.

To collect information regarding students' progress and the effectiveness of the intervention, several research instruments were employed, including observation, structured observation, checklists, rubrics, surveys, and field notes. These instruments allowed the continuous

monitoring of students' participation, speaking attempts, confidence levels, motivation, and classroom interaction throughout the intervention process.

This document is organized into four chapters. Chapter I presents the contextualization of the study, the problem description, the rationale of the research, personal interest in the topic, and research questions. Chapter II describes the theoretical framework, the research instruments, and the action plan implemented during practices. Chapter III focuses on the implementation of the intervention, describing each week of application, students' progress, classroom challenges, and the analysis of findings. Finally, Chapter IV presents the results, conclusions, limitations, and recommendations derived from the implementation of game-based learning activities in the English classroom.

Overall, this research seeks to contribute to the understanding of games as a pedagogical strategy in English language teaching, emphasizing both their opportunities and limitations. While games may not completely eliminate students' insecurity or guarantee autonomous language use, they can generate meaningful opportunities for participation, interaction, and confidence development, especially when adapted according to students' needs, classroom context, and communicative objectives.

1.1 Context

The implementation of this strategy took place at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*, a public secondary school located on Iturbide Street No. 421, in the neighborhood of Rancho Pavón, within the municipality of Soledad de Graciano Sánchez. The school infrastructure is composed of seven buildings, two of which include a second floor. These facilities comprise the administrative office, principal's office, laboratory, office automation workshop, sewing

workshop, library, media room, storage area, and a total of 18 classrooms designated for first, second, and third-grade students. Additionally, the institution is staffed by a principal, a vice principal, a coordinator, administrative personnel, three academic advisors (one per grade), and approximately sixteen teachers.

In addition to the previously described physical characteristics, it is important to note that, as of May 13th, the school underwent significant infrastructural modifications as a result of an intervention led by the Governor of San Luis Potosí, Ricardo Gallardo Cardona. Specifically, two buildings—previously used as the teachers’ lounge and advisors’ offices—were demolished. In their place, new facilities were constructed, including a designated lunch area for students, green recreational spaces, a soccer field with synthetic grass, and a roofed civic area. Furthermore, additional improvements were projected, such as the provision of updated computer equipment for the media room and institutional support for outstanding sports teams. These changes reflect an ongoing effort to enhance both the physical environment and the educational experience within the school.

Regarding its geographical and social context, the school is located in the Rancho Pavón neighborhood, where most students reside in nearby areas and commonly walk to and from school. However, it is widely acknowledged—both by school staff and students—that the surrounding community presents various social challenges. These include the presence of gangs and other high-risk groups, as well as ongoing issues related to substance use. In response to these conditions, school authorities, in collaboration with governmental institutions, frequently organize conferences and preventive programs aimed at raising awareness among students and encouraging them to avoid engaging in such activities. These

initiatives seek to promote a safer and more conscious student community despite the complexities of the context.

During the first teaching practice period of the seventh semester, I was assigned to work with third-grade students, specifically groups A, B, C, D, and E. These groups were located in the second-floor classrooms. The organization of the teaching practice was determined based on the assigned classrooms and available space. In this regard, it is relevant to mention that the classrooms are relatively smaller than average, accommodating approximately 22 to 26 students per group, with variations in gender distribution depending on each class.

Finally, the school operates under a dual-shift system: morning and afternoon. During my teaching practice, I was assigned to the morning shift, which experienced several schedule adjustments throughout the period. Initially, the standard schedule ran from 7:20 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. However, in November, a winter schedule was implemented, shifting the starting time to 7:50 a.m. while maintaining the same dismissal time. This schedule remained in place until March, when the institution returned to the original timetable. Subsequently, in April, further modifications were made due to climatological risks associated with a regional heat wave. As a result, the school day was shortened, operating from 7:20 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. These adjustments demonstrate the institution's efforts to adapt to environmental conditions while ensuring the safety and well-being of the school community.

1.2 Rationale

The proposal of this research is highly relevant in the current field of English language learning due to the opportunities it offers within the framework of Second Language Acquisition. The use of games as a pedagogical tool has proven to be particularly effective,

as it not only supports students' language acquisition process but also fosters motivation and encourages active use of the target language. In this sense, the implementation of game-based strategies seeks to transform the perception of English learning into an engaging and dynamic experience, where grammar and vocabulary are approached as interactive and meaningful elements rather than isolated content.

Through this strategy, it is expected that students perceive language learning as an opportunity for participation, interaction, and even healthy competition. By incorporating games into the classroom, learners are encouraged to make a greater effort to understand and use the language, while simultaneously engaging with their peers in collaborative and competitive activities. This environment promotes not only linguistic development but also social interaction, which is essential for communicative competence.

Furthermore, these types of strategies significantly contribute to increasing student motivation. As stated by Jeremy Harmer (1990), "...children need to be involved in something active (they will usually not sit and listen!)". This highlights the importance of implementing dynamic activities that allow students to actively participate in their own learning process. Games, in this regard, provide opportunities to address diverse learning styles, personalities, and behaviors, enabling students to feel more confident, curious, and willing to explore the language. Additionally, the possibility of achieving a goal or "winning" within a game context can further enhance engagement and participation.

From a professional development perspective, the implementation of this strategy represented an important opportunity to identify and consolidate my teaching style. It allowed me to reflect on the methods that align with my personality and classroom management approach, as well as to evaluate what strategies are more effective in promoting student

learning. Moreover, this research provided the opportunity to adapt, confirm, or question the effectiveness of game-based learning across different contexts, considering variables such as students' age, proficiency level, and group dynamics.

The main objective of this strategy is to analyze the effectiveness of using games in the classroom to teach English as a second language to third-grade secondary school students with an A1 proficiency level. Specifically, the intention is to promote improvement in students' speaking skills by creating opportunities for meaningful language use. In response to the continuous changes in educational plans and programs, it has become necessary to adapt teaching practices to make learning more accessible and relevant for students. Therefore, games were selected as a tool to facilitate the learning of specific language components, such as grammatical structures and vocabulary, while maintaining a strong emphasis on oral production.

It is important to highlight that, although games are used as the central strategy, they are complemented by the development of other language skills. As stated by Betteridge and Buckby (2006), "Games can be found to give practice in all the skills, in all the stages of teaching and learning and for many types of communication". This demonstrates the versatility of games within the language classroom, as they can be adapted to achieve various communicative objectives. Consequently, their implementation offers valuable opportunities for students to practice and develop their linguistic abilities in a contextualized and meaningful way, always considering the relevance of the topics, vocabulary, and communicative models presented.

1.3 Personal Interest in the Topic

“It’s the teacher that makes the difference, not the classroom.”

— Michael Morpurgo

The interest in conducting this research emerged from the recurrent observation of students’ difficulties when participating orally in English classes, particularly their lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and reluctance to use the language in front of others. Throughout teaching practices, it became evident that traditional participation formats frequently generated discomfort among students, limiting their willingness to communicate and reducing classroom interaction.

From a professional perspective, this situation encouraged reflection on the importance of designing didactical alternatives capable of promoting meaningful communication while reducing emotional barriers to participation. As part of the professional training process in English language teaching, one of the main responsibilities of a future teacher is to develop strategies that adapt to students’ characteristics, emotional needs, and learning environments in order to facilitate language acquisition and communicative practice.

In this sense, game-based learning emerged not merely as a personal preference, but as a pedagogical alternative capable of creating more dynamic, participative, and communicative classroom environments. The use of games represented an opportunity to transform traditional classroom participation into interactive experiences where students could practice English with reduced pressure and greater emotional involvement.

Furthermore, this interest aligns with the professional competencies required within teacher education, particularly those related to the design of didactical strategies, classroom

innovation, reflective practice, and the implementation of communicative approaches to language learning. Therefore, this research seeks not only to analyze the role of games in English teaching, but also to reflect critically on how educational strategies may be adapted according to students' needs, emotional responses, and classroom realities.

1.4 Description of the Problem

Students are often not fully engaged in learning English due to preconceived beliefs about the subject. Many of them perceive English as either unnecessary or excessively difficult, which leads to a lack of effort and commitment toward the learning process. This perception directly affects their disposition in the classroom, where it is common to observe low levels of motivation, limited participation, and a general disconnection from the activities being carried out.

One of the most recurrent issues identified in the classroom is the lack of interest and motivation toward the language. As a consequence, students tend to feel insecure about their abilities, avoiding participation and demonstrating little willingness to practice English in any of its forms. This lack of confidence becomes a significant barrier, as students often prefer not to attempt communication rather than risk making mistakes. Therefore, the learning process is affected not only at a cognitive level but also at an emotional and attitudinal level.

This problem can also be associated with traditional or outdated teaching models that are still present in some educational contexts. In such approaches, students are expected to remain passive, focusing primarily on listening to the teacher and completing exercises from textbooks, often without meaningful interaction or opportunities for real communication. As

a result, students do not feel actively involved in their own learning process, which limits both their engagement and their development of communicative competence.

In response to this situation, the present proposal aims to implement activities and tasks designed to move students beyond their comfort zones, promoting a more active and participatory role in the classroom. Game-based learning is considered a key strategy to address this issue, as it encourages motivation, maintains students' attention, and fosters both collaboration and healthy competition. By incorporating games into the learning process, classes become more dynamic and less predictable, increasing students' curiosity and willingness to participate.

Moreover, approaching language learning through games allows students to perceive English as an enjoyable and accessible subject. This shift in perception can reduce anxiety and create a more supportive environment in which students feel comfortable experimenting with the language. Even when mistakes occur, the game context provides opportunities for repetition and improvement without the fear of failure. Ultimately, the main objective is to help students develop a sense of confidence and self-efficacy, enabling them to feel capable of learning and using a second language in a meaningful way.

1.5 Proposed Research Questions

- Why do students demonstrate greater confidence when participating in game-based activities compared to traditional classroom participation?
- How can confidence in middle school students be effectively measured within an English language classroom?

- What differences can be identified between a traditional English teaching model and one that incorporates game-based learning strategies?

1.6 Main Aim

Reflect on the effectiveness of game-based learning strategies in enhancing speaking confidence and oral participation among A1-level middle school students.

1.7 Subsidiary aims

- Analyze students' willingness to participate orally in English through the implementation of game-based activities.
- Determine the influence of emotional, physical, and motivational factors involved in game-based learning, including competition, teamwork, and adrenaline.
- Review the development of students' confidence and reduction of affective barriers related to oral participation in English.
- Identify the differences between traditional classroom participation and game-based participation in terms of motivation, engagement, and willingness to speak.

1.8 Competences

By the end of my career and the writing of this document, it is expected from me to accomplish the following aptitudes and competences, which are meant to be taken in consideration during this process of applying this strategy, in order to get close to the expected professional teacher profile by the end of my career, and the beginning of my

professional path; being able to reflect on how to solve learning difficulties and the design of strategies or didactical alternatives to reach a communicative objective.

Generic Competence

- Solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking.

Professional Competence

- Designs plans applying its curricular, psycho-pedagogical, disciplinary, didactic and technological knowledge to provide inclusive learning spaces that respond to the needs of all students within the framework of the study plan and programs.
- Select strategies that promote the intellectual, physical, social and emotional development of students to ensure the achievement of learning.

Chapter II. Action Plan

2.1 Background

Throughout my professional training, I have had the opportunity to implement game-based strategies in different schools and educational contexts. From the beginning of my teaching practice, I sought to identify a strategy that could make a meaningful difference in both lesson planning and classroom implementation. In this process, games emerged as a key pedagogical tool to create learning environments in which students feel comfortable experiencing different emotions, while maintaining the acquisition of specific language components as the central objective of instruction.

Among the various experiences I have had, three particular implementations stand out as especially significant in shaping my understanding of the use of games in the English classroom.

Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 84: “Reordering my Feelings” Game

The first experience took place during my third semester teaching practice, from November 8th to 12th, 2021. The assigned content focused on “sharing ideas with the teacher and classmates through sentence construction,” specifically addressing vocabulary related to emotions and the use of the verb *to be*. The activity, titled “*Reordering my Feelings*”, consisted of placing images representing emotions on the board, along with corresponding word cards that students had to match correctly. This activity was structured following the PPP methodology (Presentation, Practice, Production). During the practice stage, students were required to reorganize the vocabulary within a limited time frame. Additionally, the activity was complemented by the use of the “Hot Potato” game to randomly select participants.

The results of this activity were generally positive, as students were able to complete the task; however, their performance varied depending on their personality traits and level of English proficiency. Some students demonstrated difficulty recalling the vocabulary, which highlighted the need for stronger methodological support.

Analysis of the experience:

This first implementation allowed me to identify that the use of games alone does not guarantee meaningful learning if it is not supported by a solid methodological structure. While the PPP model provided a clear sequence for introducing and practicing the language,

it became evident that the transition between stages must be carefully managed to ensure that students internalize the content before engaging in competitive dynamics. Additionally, this experience revealed the importance of scaffolding, as some students required more support to recall vocabulary and participate confidently. Therefore, the integration of games must be accompanied by strategies that reinforce comprehension and retention, ensuring that all students can actively engage regardless of their proficiency level.

Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 67: “Where’s My Arm?” Game

The second experience was carried out from May 2nd to 13th, 2022. The content for this intervention focused on “writing notes to create diagrams of the human body.” The activity, named “*Where’s My Arm?*”, was designed as a team-based game. A visual representation of a human body was placed on the board, along with flashcards containing the names of body parts. Students were required to correctly reorganize the labels, and for additional points, they were asked to write the functions of specific body parts within a limited time.

Following the presentation of the content through mimicry and visual aids, students worked collaboratively in teams to complete the task. This activity promoted teamwork, as students combined their knowledge, speed, and problem-solving skills. Nevertheless, as the activity progressed and most teams had already participated, the level of challenge decreased significantly.

Analysis of the experience:

This experience highlighted the importance of maintaining an appropriate level of challenge throughout the entire activity. Although the game initially promoted engagement and collaboration, its repetitive nature caused it to lose effectiveness once students became

familiar with the correct answers. This situation demonstrated that games must include adaptive or variable elements to sustain students' interest over time. Furthermore, it emphasized the role of cognitive challenge in learning, as students tend to disengage when tasks become too predictable or easy. As a result, it became necessary to consider strategies such as increasing difficulty, introducing new rules, or modifying the activity dynamically in order to preserve its pedagogical value.

Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 6: “Snakes and Ladders” Game

The third experience took place from December 5th to 16th, 2022. The content focused on “sharing personal and others’ experiences in conversation,” with emphasis on the use of the simple past tense. The activity was based on the traditional “*Snakes and Ladders*” game, adapted to include language tasks in each square of the board. These tasks involved transforming verbs, constructing sentences, and answering questions related to the simple past.

The implementation of this activity proved to be highly engaging. Students demonstrated enthusiasm and motivation, particularly due to the unpredictable nature of the game. The use of dice and the arrangement of snakes and ladders introduced an element of randomness that maintained students’ attention and excitement throughout the activity.

Analysis of the experience:

This experience provided valuable insight into the importance of unpredictability and emotional engagement in game-based learning. The random nature of the game generated a sense of anticipation and excitement, which positively influenced students’ participation and willingness to use the language. This can be understood as an “adrenaline factor,” which

plays a crucial role in sustaining attention and enhancing performance. Unlike previous experiences, the variability of this game prevented it from becoming repetitive, allowing students to remain engaged regardless of how many times it was played. Consequently, this highlighted the importance of incorporating elements of uncertainty, competition, and challenge when designing effective educational games.

Overall, these experiences demonstrate that the impact of games in the classroom varies depending on multiple factors, including the design of the activity, the level of challenge, the group dynamics, and the specific learning objectives. Each implementation provided valuable insights that contributed to refining my teaching practice and deepening my understanding of game-based learning.

Throughout my teaching practice, I have learned that games require careful planning and intentional design to be effective. The first experience highlighted the importance of scaffolding and methodological support; the second emphasized the need for sustained challenge; and the third demonstrated the relevance of unpredictability and emotional engagement. From a professional perspective, these insights have allowed me to better understand how to design and implement games that not only motivate students but also contribute meaningfully to their language development.

2.3 Plans and Study Program Changes During Teaching Practice

The seventh semester of my English major began in September 2023. In my case, I was assigned to *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*, where, at that time, a new educational model was in the process of being implemented: the *Nueva Escuela Mexicana* (NEM). This

transition represented a significant shift in both the structure of teaching practices and the conceptualization of learning within the classroom.

According to the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP, 2023), the NEM seeks to “stop prioritizing theories, methods, and techniques expressed through behavioral or homogeneous objectives over practice and the sociocultural reality of students’ lives.” In this sense, the model proposes a transformation in the traditional approach to education by placing greater emphasis on the context in which students develop. Rather than focusing exclusively on predefined methodologies, the NEM promotes the integration of learning with real-life situations, encouraging the inclusion of cultural elements—particularly those related to indigenous communities—as well as social and community issues that directly affect students.

This transformation is particularly relevant for the development of the present study, as it directly influenced the way in which teaching practices were designed and implemented. One of the main changes introduced by the NEM is the incorporation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) as a central methodological approach across all subjects in Mexican schools. Consequently, the teaching of English is no longer limited to isolated linguistic content but is instead connected to broader social themes that aim to foster critical thinking and social awareness among students.

As a result, many of the topics addressed in the classroom are closely related to complex and sensitive real-life issues, such as drug abuse, sexual harassment, unhealthy eating habits, discrimination, domestic violence, bullying, and sexting, among others. These topics reflect situations that, unfortunately, are present in the daily lives of many students within the school context. While their inclusion in the curriculum is intended to promote awareness and

reflection, they also represent a challenge for instructional design, particularly when attempting to implement alternative strategies such as game-based learning.

From my perspective as a teacher, these topics require careful and respectful handling, as they may be sensitive or emotionally impactful for some students. For this reason, it was not always appropriate or feasible to directly integrate grammatical content into game-based activities when addressing such issues. In many cases, the nature of the topics limited the possibility of transforming them into playful or competitive dynamics without risking trivialization or discomfort among students.

This situation presented a significant challenge in the planning and execution of my lessons, as it required constant adaptation of my teaching strategy. Nevertheless, I was able to identify specific moments and contexts in which the use of games remained appropriate and effective, particularly when focusing on more neutral language components such as general vocabulary or grammatical structures. In these instances, it was possible to maintain the essence of my teaching approach while still aligning with the broader objectives of the NEM.

Overall, the implementation of the new educational model required a continuous process of reflection and adaptation. It highlighted the need for flexibility in teaching practices, as well as the importance of balancing innovative strategies with the sociocultural and emotional realities of students. This experience ultimately contributed to a deeper understanding of how pedagogical approaches must evolve in response to educational reforms and contextual demands.

Within the framework of the Nueva Escuela Mexicana (NEM), language learning is understood as a social practice connected to students' realities, communities, and experiences. Therefore, English is not only considered a system of grammatical structures, but also a tool that allows students to communicate ideas, express perspectives, and participate in discussions about situations that affect their environment.

However, incorporating games into socially relevant topics requires careful pedagogical consideration. Community problems such as pollution, discrimination, unhealthy lifestyles, or social inequality represent complex situations that cannot be reduced to simple classroom entertainment. For this reason, the purpose of using games within this intervention was not to minimize the importance of these topics, but rather to create a meaningful bridge that allowed students to approach them through interaction, reflection, and communication.

Games were used as mediating tools that facilitated vocabulary acquisition, oral interaction, and collaborative problem-solving. Through activities such as trivia games, board games, and team challenges, students were encouraged to discuss possible solutions, express opinions, and use English as a means of communication related to real-life situations.

From this perspective, game-based learning and the principles of the Nueva Escuela Mexicana are not contradictory. Instead, games can provide an environment where students actively participate, negotiate meanings, collaborate with others, and construct knowledge connected to their social context. The effectiveness of these activities depends on the teacher's ability to maintain the academic purpose of the game and ensure that entertainment serves as a pathway toward meaningful learning.

2.4 Group Context

The present intervention strategy was implemented with a sample group composed of third-grade students from group “C” at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*, during the teaching practice period corresponding to the seventh semester of the English Major. Although the teaching practices were conducted with groups A, B, C, D, and E, this research specifically focused on group “C” as the study sample, considering its characteristics, classroom behavior, and participation patterns throughout the intervention process.

The study group consisted of a total of 21 students, including 9 boys and 12 girls, whose ages ranged approximately between 14 and 15 years old, corresponding to the developmental stage of adolescence. This period of development is characterized by emotional, behavioral, and social changes, which directly influence students’ interaction, participation, and classroom confidence. During adolescence, students often become more aware of peer opinions, increasing sensitivity to embarrassment, criticism, or ridicule, particularly in activities involving public speaking or classroom participation. Consequently, this factor became highly relevant within the English classroom, where students were constantly exposed to situations requiring oral communication in a foreign language.

From the initial observation period, it became evident that students generally demonstrated a limited level of confidence while speaking English. Many of them expressed insecurity regarding pronunciation, vocabulary recall, and grammatical accuracy, often avoiding participation or remaining silent when asked to speak. Likewise, students frequently manifested attitudes of hesitation, nervousness, and laughter as a coping mechanism when participating in oral activities, especially those requiring individual exposure in front of classmates. Expressions such as “*Teacher, I don’t know how to say it*”, “*I understand, but I*

don't know how to speak it", or attempts to seek confirmation from the teacher before answering became recurrent during the lessons.

Another characteristic identified within the group was the strong influence of peer dynamics on participation. Students frequently observed classmates' reactions before deciding to participate, particularly in activities involving mimicry, body language, or oral performance. In several situations, students initially refused to participate due to embarrassment; however, once one student successfully completed the activity without fear of making mistakes, others gradually began to participate as well. This demonstrated that confidence development within the classroom was often influenced by social modeling and peer behavior.

Academically, the group presented a heterogeneous English proficiency level. While some students demonstrated basic communicative competence and willingness to participate, others struggled significantly with pronunciation, vocabulary retention, and oral production. Most students could recognize vocabulary and understand instructions when supported by visual materials or contextual examples; however, independently producing spoken language represented a considerable challenge. Reading and listening comprehension were generally stronger skills than speaking production, as students tended to feel more secure recognizing language rather than generating it autonomously.

Regarding classroom behavior, the environment could be described as generally serious but socially active. Although students maintained relatively acceptable classroom discipline, distractions were recurrent throughout the sessions. Some students frequently lost focus, engaged in unrelated conversations, or used mobile phones during waiting periods, particularly when activities required turn-taking or individual participation. This situation

became more evident during games in which only one participant or team representative was actively involved, causing other students to disconnect temporarily from the learning process.

Despite these classroom challenges, the implementation of games generated visible moments of engagement and participation. Competitive activities, particularly those involving teamwork and fast responses, significantly increased students' motivation and willingness to participate. Games such as *Hot Potato*, *Connect Four*, and *Snakes and Ladders* promoted higher levels of interaction due to the presence of competition and what can be identified as an “adrenaline factor,” in which students demonstrated enthusiasm, emotional involvement, and urgency to help their teammates succeed. During these moments, students naturally increased their attempts to speak English, even when making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that participation patterns remained uneven throughout the intervention. Voluntary participation was frequently led by the same students, while others required continuous encouragement or external motivation to engage. Although some improvement in speaking confidence was observed over the weeks, language production remained dependent on teacher guidance, peer support, or game structure rather than becoming fully autonomous.

Overall, the characteristics of this study group represented both opportunities and challenges for the implementation of the intervention strategy. While factors such as insecurity, peer pressure, distractions, and low perceived relevance of English learning limited students' participation, elements such as teamwork, competition, classroom dynamics, and playful learning environments created opportunities to gradually encourage confidence and speaking attempts in English. For this reason, understanding the specific context and characteristics of

the study group became essential for adapting the intervention according to students' needs, interests, and behavioral patterns.

2.5 General Description of the Problem (Diagnosis)

“The students do not have enough confidence to speak in English.”

This statement summarizes the main problem identified during the initial approach to the study group. In general terms, students demonstrate a low level of confidence when using English, particularly in oral communication. This situation has been consistently observed throughout the teaching practice, where students exhibit discomfort and hesitation when asked to participate in class activities that involve speaking in the target language.

This lack of confidence is often accompanied by visible signs of insecurity, such as reluctance to participate, avoidance of interaction, and minimal verbal responses. As a result, students tend to develop a negative perception of their own abilities, frequently adopting limiting beliefs such as “I can’t” or “I don’t know how.” These attitudes directly impact their willingness to engage in classroom activities and, consequently, hinder their language development. Moreover, this emotional barrier contributes to a general sense of disinterest not only in the class but also in the subject itself.

The identification of this problem was initially based on systematic observation during the first contact with the group. Students' behaviors and attitudes were carefully analyzed during regular class activities, as well as during the implementation of games and interactive dynamics. A comparative approach was used to examine the differences between students' participation in traditional activities—such as reading aloud or completing written

exercises—and their participation during game-based activities that required the use of English.

This comparison revealed a significant contrast in students' behavior. While participation in conventional classroom tasks was often characterized by reluctance and low engagement, participation during games tended to be more active, spontaneous, and confident. This suggests that the learning environment and the type of activity play a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes toward language use. Therefore, it can be inferred that the problem is not solely related to students' linguistic abilities, but also to affective factors such as motivation, confidence, and classroom dynamics.

Main Findings

- Students show discomfort when participating in class activities that require speaking in English. This discomfort often manifests as nervousness, hesitation, or refusal to engage in oral communication.
- Students tend to lose interest when they perceive themselves as incapable of using the language, reinforcing negative beliefs such as “I can’t” or “I don’t want to.”
- A “fear of ridicule” is present among students, which significantly reduces their motivation to participate and increases their anxiety when using the language.
- The combination of low motivation, lack of attention, and emotional barriers affects students' overall academic performance, leading to incomplete assignments, lack of participation, and increased distraction during class.

Analytical Reflection of the Diagnosis

From an analytical perspective, the problem identified goes beyond a simple lack of linguistic knowledge. It is strongly connected to affective and motivational factors that influence students' learning processes. Confidence plays a fundamental role in second language acquisition, particularly in the development of speaking skills, as it determines the extent to which students are willing to take risks and engage in communication.

The contrast observed between traditional classroom activities and game-based dynamics suggests that the learning environment significantly impacts students' behavior. When students perceive the classroom as a safe and engaging space—such as during games—they are more likely to participate, experiment with the language, and overcome their fear of making mistakes. On the other hand, more traditional approaches may unintentionally reinforce anxiety and passivity, limiting opportunities for meaningful language use.

Therefore, this diagnosis highlights the need to implement strategies that not only address linguistic content but also foster a supportive and motivating environment. In this context, game-based learning emerges as a potential approach to reduce anxiety, increase confidence, and promote active participation, ultimately contributing to the development of students' communicative competence.

2.6 Research Instruments

Observation

Observation is one of the most commonly used tools in educational research, as it allows the researcher to analyze the various factors within the learning environment that influence students' behavior and performance. As stated by zhu, Manion, and Morrison (2007),

observation “offers the investigator the opportunity to gather ‘live’ data from naturally occurring social situations.” This characteristic makes it particularly valuable, as it provides direct insight into real classroom dynamics rather than relying solely on self-reported data.

Through observation, it is possible to examine not only students’ academic performance but also their attitudes, interactions, and reactions to different teaching strategies. This instrument enables the identification of patterns of behavior, levels of participation, and emotional responses within specific situations. Additionally, observation can be applied in both natural and structured contexts, allowing the researcher to analyze how students respond to different stimuli, such as games, traditional activities, or collaborative tasks. In this sense, it serves as a versatile tool for collecting detailed and contextualized information about the teaching and learning process.

Structured Observation

Within this study, structured observation was selected as a specific approach to guide the data collection process. This type of observation involves the systematic and intentional recording of behaviors and events based on predefined criteria. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), structured observation helps “facilitate the making of comparisons between settings and situations, and frequencies, patterns and trends to be noted or calculated.”

In the context of this research, structured observation was used to monitor students’ progress throughout the implementation of game-based activities. By applying consistent criteria across different sessions, it was possible to compare students’ behavior and performance over time. This included aspects such as participation, confidence, willingness to speak, and

interaction with peers. Furthermore, the progressive increase in the complexity of the activities allowed for the identification of changes in students' responses, making it possible to establish a record of their learning development.

Action Research

Action research is another fundamental instrument in this study, as it focuses on the continuous improvement of educational practices through reflection and systematic intervention. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), "action research is an approach to improving education by changing it and learning from the consequences of changes." This highlights its cyclical nature, in which planning, action, observation, and reflection are interconnected stages that guide the research process.

This approach is particularly relevant in educational settings, as it allows teachers to become active researchers within their own classrooms. Through the implementation of specific strategies—in this case, game-based learning—the teacher can observe the effects of these interventions, analyze the outcomes, and make informed decisions to adjust future practices. As a result, action research not only generates valuable data but also contributes directly to the improvement of teaching and learning processes.

In the present study, action research was selected due to its alignment with the objective of enhancing students' speaking abilities in English. By continuously evaluating the implementation of games and analyzing students' responses, it was possible to identify strengths, limitations, and areas for improvement. This reflective process enabled the adaptation of activities to better meet students' needs and contextual conditions.

Furthermore, action research supports the development of new pedagogical strategies, as each cycle of implementation provides insights that inform subsequent decisions. In this sense, it becomes a dynamic and evolving process that not only addresses the current problem but also contributes to future research and practice. Ultimately, the use of this instrument allowed for a deeper understanding of how game-based learning influences students' confidence and participation, while also guiding the refinement of the proposed strategy.

Additional Instruments

Checklist

The checklist was implemented as a complementary instrument to systematically record specific observable behaviors during the development of the activities. This tool allowed for the identification of key indicators related to students' participation, confidence, and use of the English language in a structured and organized manner.

The checklist included criteria such as:

- Participation in activities (voluntary or prompted)
- Use of English during the activity
- Willingness to interact with classmates
- Response to instructions
- Demonstration of confidence when speaking

Each criterion was marked based on its presence or absence during the activity, allowing for efficient and consistent data collection. This instrument facilitated comparisons across different sessions and supported the identification of behavioral patterns over time.

Analytical

contribution:

The checklist provided concrete and observable evidence of students' progress, particularly in terms of engagement and participation. It also strengthened the reliability of the observation process by incorporating measurable indicators that complemented qualitative data.

Rubric

A rubric was designed to assess students' speaking performance during the implementation of game-based activities. This instrument aimed to provide a detailed evaluation of oral production, considering both linguistic competence and affective factors.

The rubric included the following criteria:

- **Pronunciation:** clarity and intelligibility of speech
- **Fluency:** ability to produce language with minimal hesitation
- **Accuracy:** correct use of grammar and vocabulary
- **Confidence:** level of security and willingness to speak
- **Interaction:** ability to respond and communicate effectively with peers

Each criterion was evaluated using a performance scale (e.g., Excellent, Good, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement), allowing for a more precise assessment of students' abilities.

Analytical

contribution:

The rubric enabled a deeper analysis of students' speaking skills beyond simple participation. It highlighted the relationship between confidence and language production, while also

identifying specific areas for improvement. Additionally, it served as a guide for instructional adjustments throughout the intervention.

Survey

A survey was administered to gather students' perceptions regarding the use of games in the English classroom. This instrument aimed to collect subjective data related to motivation, confidence, and overall learning experience.

The survey included both closed-ended and open-ended questions, such as:

- Do you feel more confident speaking English during games? Why?
- Do games help you understand English better?
- How do you feel when participating in traditional activities compared to games?
- What type of activities do you prefer for learning English?

This approach allowed students to reflect on their own learning process and express their opinions in a structured format.

Analytical

contribution:

The survey provided valuable insight into students' perspectives, complementing the data obtained through observation and performance-based instruments. It helped validate the effectiveness of the strategy from the learners' point of view and identified preferences that informed future instructional decisions.

Field Notes

Field notes were used as a reflective instrument to document relevant events, observations, and impressions during each session. These notes included descriptions of students' behavior, reactions to activities, unexpected situations, and personal reflections as a teacher-researcher.

Analytical

contribution:

Field notes enriched the research by providing in-depth qualitative data that could not be captured through structured instruments alone. They supported the interpretation of findings by adding context and depth to the observed behaviors, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the classroom dynamics.

2.7 Literacy

The implementation of the *Nueva Escuela Mexicana* (NEM) has transformed the educational perspective within Mexican public schools, prioritizing sociocultural realities, meaningful learning, collaboration, and students' active participation in solving real-life problems (SEP, 2023). Within English language teaching, this transition implies moving beyond traditional grammar-centered instruction toward communicative practices that allow students to interact, negotiate meaning, and participate in situations connected to their environment. In this context, game-based learning emerges as a potentially valuable pedagogical strategy, as it may facilitate communication, emotional involvement, and collaborative interaction while maintaining alignment with the social and reflective principles promoted by the NEM. Consequently, although classical theories continue to provide an important foundation for understanding games in language learning, it becomes necessary to incorporate contemporary perspectives that explain the emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of game-based learning in present educational contexts.

2.7.1 Contemporary Perspectives on Game-Based Learning

While classical perspectives such as Rixon (1981), Hadfield (1999), and Harmer (1991) provide a strong foundation for understanding the pedagogical use of games in language learning, contemporary research suggests that game-based learning should be understood not only as entertainment or competition, but also as a cognitive, emotional, and social learning environment.

According to Plass, Homer, and Kinzer (2020), game-based learning involves meaningful experiences that promote cognitive engagement, emotional involvement, motivation, and social interaction. Rather than understanding games exclusively as artificial systems governed by rules and competition, contemporary perspectives emphasize their ability to create learning environments where students actively construct knowledge through interaction and participation.

This perspective becomes particularly relevant in the context of middle school English classrooms, where emotional variables such as anxiety, embarrassment, fear of ridicule, and motivation strongly influence oral participation. During adolescence, students frequently experience insecurity when speaking publicly, especially in a foreign language classroom. Therefore, game-based learning can function as a mediating strategy that encourages participation through collaborative objectives, competition, and emotionally engaging tasks.

Likewise, the principles of the Nueva Escuela Mexicana (SEP, 2023) support educational approaches that prioritize sociocultural realities, collaborative learning, and the connection between classroom contents and students' daily experiences. From this perspective, speaking should not be understood solely as the production of isolated grammatical structures, but

rather as a communicative tool that allows students to participate socially, share ideas, solve problems, and interact within their communities.

In relation to this perspective, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) emphasizes oral interaction, mediation, and communication for meaningful purposes, suggesting that language learning becomes more effective when learners interact to solve shared situations rather than simply reproduce isolated linguistic forms. This perspective aligns with the implementation of collaborative and competitive games, where students used English to negotiate, support peers, and solve communicative challenges.

Additionally, contemporary research in positive psychology and second language acquisition has highlighted the importance of emotions in language learning. Dewaele and MacIntyre (2022) introduce the concept of *Foreign Language Enjoyment* (FLE), which explains how positive emotional experiences reduce anxiety and promote willingness to communicate in a second language. Emotional factors such as enjoyment, excitement, challenge, and social interaction may contribute to reducing students' affective barriers and increasing classroom participation.

This perspective is particularly relevant to the findings of the present study, where students demonstrated greater willingness to participate during activities involving competition, teamwork, and challenge-based dynamics. In several sessions, students appeared more motivated when games generated emotional excitement, suggesting that emotional activation may positively influence oral participation.

Nevertheless, contemporary educational research also suggests that no pedagogical strategy should be considered universally effective. According to Hattie (2023), educational success depends largely on contextual variables, instructional design, teacher implementation, and classroom conditions. Therefore, the effectiveness of game-based learning may vary depending on factors such as students' age, emotional development, language level, classroom management, and the type of activity implemented.

From this perspective, games should not be understood as a universal solution for language learning, but rather as a situational pedagogical resource whose effectiveness depends on how, when, and why they are implemented in the classroom.

2.7.2 Defining a Game

According to Noemí and Máximo (2014), a game can be described as a contest, whether physical or mental, governed by specific rules and aimed at entertaining or rewarding the participant. This definition highlights the structured yet engaging nature of games, positioning them as activities that combine organization with motivation. In a similar way, Tekinbas and Zimmerman (2003) define a game as a system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, regulated by rules, that leads to a measurable outcome. From this perspective, games can be understood as organized systems that promote interaction, decision-making, and goal-oriented behavior.

These definitions suggest that games are not only recreational activities but also structured environments that can support learning processes, particularly in educational contexts where active participation and engagement are essential.

2.7.3 Characteristics of Games

Games include a variety of elements that distinguish them from other classroom activities and make them valuable tools for educational purposes. Rather than functioning as simple entertainment, games involve structured interactions that can support learning when aligned with pedagogical objectives.

- **Structured Organization:** Games operate through an organized system in which different elements interact with one another. Objectives, participants, actions, and responses function together to create a meaningful experience for learners.
- **Active Participation:** A fundamental characteristic of games is the active involvement of participants. Students are expected to interact, make decisions, solve problems, or respond to challenges, transforming them from passive learners into active classroom participants.
- **Simulated Context:** Games often create an environment separated from everyday classroom routines. This temporary setting allows learners to experiment with language in situations that feel less formal and less intimidating than traditional participation.
- **Challenge and Interaction:** Many games involve some form of challenge, whether through competition, cooperation, or problem-solving tasks. This element tends to increase students' motivation and emotional involvement during classroom activities.

- **Guidelines and Procedures:** Every game requires clear instructions that regulate participation and provide structure. Rules help students understand expectations, maintain order, and ensure fair participation during activities.
- **Observable Results:** Games generally include outcomes that participants can recognize, such as completing a task, earning points, winning, or solving a challenge. These outcomes often provide learners with a sense of achievement and direction during the activity (Tekinbas & Zimmerman, 2003).

These characteristics demonstrate that games naturally promote interaction, participation, and goal-oriented behavior. Within language classrooms, such elements may contribute to increasing motivation and encouraging students to engage more actively in communication practices.

2.7.4 Types of Games

Games may take different forms depending on the objectives of the lesson and the language skills intended to be practiced. In language teaching, selecting an appropriate type of game becomes essential to support students' participation, communication, and learning needs.

- **Guessing Games:** These activities involve identifying hidden information through questions, clues, or logical assumptions. They encourage communication and interaction among students while promoting speaking practice.
- **Visual or Picture-Based Games:** Activities using images, drawings, or visual representations help students describe, interpret, and associate vocabulary with meaning, strengthening speaking and listening abilities.

- **Auditory Games:** These games rely on sounds, listening activities, or oral clues that students must interpret. Such activities may contribute to listening comprehension and pronunciation awareness.
- **Mime and Gesture-Based Activities:** Students communicate messages through body language and gestures without speaking directly, encouraging interpretation and vocabulary recall through movement and observation.
- **Information and Discovery Games:** Some activities focus on collecting, organizing, or identifying information related to real-life contexts, helping students connect classroom learning with meaningful situations.
- **Debate-Oriented Activities:** In these games, learners express opinions, defend viewpoints, or discuss ideas, supporting critical thinking and communicative interaction.
- **Collaborative or Jigsaw Activities:** Students work together by contributing different pieces of information to complete a shared objective, promoting teamwork and cooperative communication.
- **Role-Playing Games:** These activities simulate real or imaginary situations in which students assume specific roles, allowing them to practice language in contextualized and meaningful scenarios (Zhu, 2012).

The diversity of game types demonstrates their flexibility as educational resources. Teachers may select or adapt games according to students' age, classroom context, language objectives, and the communicative needs of each lesson.

2.1.5 Emotional Engagement in Game-Based Learning

Beyond their structural characteristics, games also involve an important emotional dimension that may influence students' motivation and participation in educational contexts. Contemporary perspectives on game-based learning suggest that games are effective not only because of their rules or measurable outcomes, but because they generate emotional engagement through competition, collaboration, challenge, urgency, and social interaction (Plass, Homer & Kinzer, 2020).

In language learning environments, emotional engagement becomes particularly important due to the anxiety, insecurity, and fear of making mistakes that many students experience while using a foreign language. Adolescents, especially middle school learners, frequently demonstrate fear of ridicule or embarrassment when expected to speak publicly in front of peers. As a result, emotional variables may significantly influence their willingness to communicate.

One relevant concept related to this process is *Foreign Language Enjoyment* (FLE), proposed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2022), which explains how positive emotions during language learning may reduce anxiety and encourage students to participate more actively. Emotional experiences such as excitement, teamwork, competition, and enjoyment can increase learners' motivation and lower affective barriers, facilitating oral participation.

Within game-based environments, competition and collaborative objectives frequently generate moments of emotional activation that encourage students to react more spontaneously and participate with less hesitation. Although this emotional response may be informally understood as an “adrenaline factor,” within educational contexts it can be interpreted as a form of emotional engagement that promotes attention, motivation, and willingness to communicate.

However, emotional engagement varies according to the type of game, students’ personalities, age, classroom dynamics, and instructional design. While some learners may feel motivated by competitive environments, others may feel uncomfortable when games involve public performance or excessive peer attention. Therefore, the effectiveness of games depends not only on the activity itself but also on how it responds to students’ emotional and social needs (Hattie, 2023).

2.7.6 What is Speaking?

Speaking is a fundamental skill in second language learning, as it represents the primary means through which learners express ideas and interact with others. According to Nunan and Carter (2001), speaking involves not only the production of words and sentences but also the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts. This skill requires the integration of components such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension.

Additionally, speaking is closely related to affective factors such as confidence, motivation, and anxiety, which significantly influence students’ willingness to participate. For this reason, the development of speaking skills requires environments that encourage interaction and reduce fear of making mistakes.

2.7.7 Theoretical Foundations: Krashen and the Communicative Approach

The implementation of games in the classroom can be supported by key theories in second language acquisition. Krashen's Input Hypothesis suggests that learners acquire language when they are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current level ($i+1$), particularly when it is presented in meaningful contexts. In this sense, games provide opportunities for students to engage with language in a dynamic and contextualized manner.

Furthermore, Krashen's Affective Hypothesis emphasizes that emotional factors such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence play a crucial role in language acquisition. A high affective filter can limit learning, while a low affective filter facilitates it. Game-based activities contribute to lowering this filter by creating a more relaxed and engaging environment, where students feel more comfortable participating and taking risks.

Similarly, the Communicative Approach focuses on the use of language for real communication rather than the memorization of isolated structures. This approach prioritizes interaction, meaning negotiation, and the functional use of language in realistic contexts. Games align with this perspective by promoting communication, collaboration, and active use of the language within meaningful situations.

In this way, the integration of games in the classroom connects theoretical principles with practical application, supporting both the cognitive and affective aspects of language learning. As a result, games become an effective strategy for enhancing students' speaking skills, particularly in contexts where confidence and participation are key challenges.

2.7.8 Game-Based Learning and Gamification in Contemporary Language Teaching

In recent years, educational research has increasingly differentiated between simply playing games and implementing game-based learning (GBL) as a pedagogical strategy. While traditional educational games have commonly been used to reinforce grammar or vocabulary, modern perspectives argue that game-based learning represents a broader cognitive, emotional, and social learning environment.

According to Plass, Homer, and Kinzer (2020), game-based learning should not be understood merely as entertainment or competition, but rather as a process that promotes cognitive engagement, emotional involvement, and social interaction. In this perspective, games become meaningful learning experiences where students actively construct knowledge while interacting with challenges, peers, and contextualized language situations.

This contemporary perspective aligns with the findings observed during the present intervention. Throughout the implementation process, students demonstrated greater willingness to attempt oral participation when activities included teamwork, competition, uncertainty, and collaborative problem-solving. These elements appeared to increase emotional involvement and classroom participation, particularly during games requiring collective interaction rather than isolated performance.

However, the intervention also demonstrated that the effectiveness of games is highly situational. The results varied according to the students' emotional comfort, the type of activity, the linguistic objective, and the classroom context. Certain activities, especially those requiring body language performance or public exposure, generated embarrassment and resistance among some adolescents. In contrast, competitive team-based games promoted motivation, collaboration, and greater oral attempts. This suggests that successful

implementation of game-based learning depends heavily on the adaptation of activities according to students' characteristics and classroom realities.

2.7.9 Speaking and Social Language Practices within the Nueva Escuela Mexicana

The implementation of the Nueva Escuela Mexicana (NEM) has transformed the perspective of language teaching in Mexican public education by emphasizing social, cultural, and community-based learning experiences. According to the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP, 2023), language learning should move beyond isolated grammatical instruction and instead focus on meaningful participation in social practices that connect with students' realities and environments.

From this perspective, speaking is not understood solely as the production of accurate linguistic structures, but as a communicative tool that allows students to express opinions, share ideas, solve problems, and participate actively in social contexts. This aligns with the concept of *Prácticas Sociales del Lenguaje*, where students use language for authentic purposes related to real-life situations.

Likewise, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) expands the traditional understanding of speaking by emphasizing oral interaction, mediation, and communication for meaningful purposes. Rather than simply producing grammatically correct sentences, learners are expected to negotiate meaning, collaborate, and communicate ideas in authentic situations.

This perspective becomes particularly relevant for game-based learning environments. During the intervention, students frequently demonstrated greater willingness to communicate when speaking had a shared purpose, such as helping teammates, solving a

challenge, or participating in a collaborative task. Therefore, games may function not only as tools for vocabulary reinforcement, but also as opportunities to develop meaningful oral interaction aligned with the objectives of the Nueva Escuela Mexicana.

2.7.10 Emotions, Motivation, and Foreign Language Enjoyment

Although Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis explains how anxiety, low confidence, and fear may limit language acquisition, contemporary research suggests that emotional engagement in language learning extends beyond merely reducing anxiety.

According to Dewaele and MacIntyre (2022), the concept of *Foreign Language Enjoyment* (FLE) highlights how positive emotions, enjoyment, motivation, and classroom dynamics can significantly increase learners' willingness to participate and interact in a foreign language. Emotional factors such as excitement, collaboration, humor, and challenge may positively influence students' confidence and intrinsic motivation.

This perspective becomes especially meaningful when analyzing the results of the present intervention. During several game-based activities, students appeared more emotionally involved when competition, teamwork, and unpredictability were incorporated into classroom dynamics. In particular, activities involving point systems, challenges, or collaborative competition generated an observable increase in participation and spontaneous speaking attempts. This phenomenon may be interpreted as an emotional activation factor, in which excitement and competitiveness reduce hesitation and encourage students to engage with the language more naturally.

Nevertheless, emotional responses varied according to the nature of the activity. Games involving excessive public exposure or body performance generated embarrassment among

some students, suggesting that emotional comfort remains an essential factor when implementing game-based learning strategies during adolescence.

2.8 Action Plan

Methodology

The present study followed an action research methodology, specifically based on the cyclical process proposed by Latorre (2003), which describes educational research as a continuous process involving planning, action, observation, and reflection. This model was selected because it allows teachers to analyze their own classroom practices, identify problems, implement strategies, evaluate their effects, and modify future actions according to the evidence collected.

Throughout this intervention, the action research cycle was developed through three main stages. The first stage consisted of planning the implementation of game-based activities aimed at improving students' oral participation and reducing emotional barriers toward speaking English. Based on the initial classroom observations, activities were designed considering students' confidence levels, participation patterns, and communicative needs.

The second stage involved the implementation of the intervention through three weeks of classroom practice. During this period, different game-based activities were applied, including competitive games, collaborative activities, vocabulary games, and communicative challenges. Each activity was observed in terms of students' participation, emotional responses, language attempts, and classroom interaction.

The third stage consisted of observation and reflection. After each session, field notes were analyzed to identify successful strategies, difficulties, and possible modifications for future lessons. These reflections allowed the intervention to evolve progressively, creating a relationship between classroom evidence and pedagogical decisions.

Therefore, the intervention was not understood as a fixed sequence of activities, but as a dynamic process in which each classroom experience informed the following instructional decisions. This characteristic allowed the research to move beyond describing the use of games and toward analyzing their effectiveness according to students' specific context and needs.

Conceptual Dimension

A game can be understood as an activity that provides entertainment and engagement, involving participants through enjoyment, interaction, and, in many cases, competition. It is considered a structured form of play, generally carried out for pleasure, but also widely used as an educational tool. In the educational context, a game is defined as a cooperative or competitive activity in which participants follow a set of rules to achieve specific objectives. As Rixon (1981) states, "A game is an activity carried out by cooperating or competing decision-makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objectives."

This concept is particularly relevant in language teaching, as games offer an interactive and student-centered approach that promotes active participation. According to Zhu (2012), games can create an engaging learning environment that is comparable to the motivation students experience in recreational settings. In this sense, the use of games in the classroom not only makes the learning process more enjoyable but also contributes to the development

of key skills such as communication, collaboration, and strategic thinking. Therefore, game-based learning becomes a valuable strategy to support the development of speaking skills in a second language.

Spatial Dimension

This research project was implemented with third-grade students at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*, located in the Rancho Pavón neighborhood in the municipality of Soledad de Graciano Sánchez. This institution presents particular social and educational characteristics that make it a relevant context for the application of innovative teaching strategies.

The selection of this setting allows the intervention to be adapted to the specific needs, interests, and challenges of the students. Factors such as classroom conditions, available resources, and students' sociocultural background were considered in the design of the activities. By working within a familiar environment, the implementation of game-based strategies becomes more meaningful and relevant, increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes in students' speaking performance.

Temporal Dimension

The implementation of this action plan was carried out over a three-week period, from November 13 to December 1. This timeframe was selected to allow sufficient opportunities for the application, observation, and evaluation of the proposed strategy.

During this period, multiple sessions were conducted, each incorporating different types of games and interactive activities. The sessions were designed progressively, aiming to gradually increase students' confidence and ability to communicate in English. This temporal

structure also allowed for continuous monitoring of students' development, as well as the collection of relevant data to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

Action Plan Description

During the implementation period, third-grade students participated in a series of game-based activities designed to enhance their English-speaking skills. These activities included role plays, language-based challenges, guided conversations, and competitive games that required active verbal interaction.

The main objectives of the action plan were:

- **Increase speaking opportunities:** Provide students with frequent and meaningful opportunities to use English orally during each session.
- **Boost confidence:** Create a supportive and low-anxiety environment where students feel comfortable taking risks and making mistakes.
- **Enhance motivation:** Use games as a means to make learning more engaging and enjoyable, encouraging active participation.
- **Improve fluency and accuracy:** Promote the development of both spontaneous communication and correct language use.

Throughout the intervention, data were collected to monitor students' participation, engagement, and progress. This included observational records, performance assessments, and feedback from students regarding their experiences during the activities. These data sources provided a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the strategy on students' speaking development.

Overview of Implementation Phases

Phase 1: Problem Identification

The initial phase consisted of identifying the main difficulties students faced in speaking English. This was achieved through classroom observation and informal assessment activities. Baseline data were collected to establish students' initial level of confidence, participation, and oral performance.

Phase 2: Literature Review and Planning

In this phase, relevant literature on game-based learning and second language acquisition was reviewed to identify effective strategies. Based on this theoretical foundation, a detailed implementation plan was developed, including the selection of activities, session organization, and evaluation criteria.

Phase 3: Implementation and Documentation

The action plan was carried out through structured classroom sessions incorporating game-based activities. During this phase, the teaching process was documented through observation notes, recordings, and student feedback. Continuous monitoring allowed for adjustments to be made in response to students' needs and progress.

Phase 4: Analysis and Conclusions

The final phase involved analyzing the collected data to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. A comparison between initial and final observations was conducted to identify changes in students' speaking abilities, confidence, and participation. Based on these findings, conclusions were drawn regarding the impact of game-based learning, and recommendations were proposed for future practice and research.

Overall, this action plan was designed to demonstrate the potential of game-based learning as an effective strategy for improving speaking skills in a second language. By integrating theoretical foundations with practical implementation, the project aimed not only to enhance students' linguistic abilities but also to create a more dynamic, engaging, and meaningful learning environment.

Chapter III. Implementation of the Strategy

3.1 Description of the Intervention

This chapter describes the implementation of the intervention strategy carried out during the teaching practice period at *Escuela Secundaria Técnica No. 36*. The intervention consisted of the implementation of game-based activities aimed at improving students' confidence and speaking skills in English. The sessions were conducted with third-grade students from groups A, B, C, D, and E during the 2023–2024 school cycle. However, for the purpose of this research and a more detailed analysis, a specific sample group was selected: third-grade group “C”, composed of 21 students, including 9 boys and 12 girls.

The intervention was developed during the teaching practices carried out from **October 2nd to October 20th, 2023**, within the framework of the social practice of language “**Share and express information about own and others' interests**”, corresponding to the community and familiar social environment. The proposal was designed according to the contents established by the current educational program and the competences assigned for this period, including the organization of campaigns in English to solve community problems, the expression of emotions, feelings, and ideas related to the school environment, and the development of communicative abilities through stories and examples connected to healthy living.

The implementation of this strategy was divided into **three different weeks**, each one focused on a specific communicative topic and linguistic purpose. This division allowed the intervention to follow a progressive sequence in which students gradually developed familiarity with the language, confidence in oral participation, and greater willingness to communicate in English. Likewise, organizing the intervention by weeks made it possible to observe changes in students' behavior, participation, and speaking performance over time.

During the **first week**, the contents focused on **feelings, emotions, and likes and dislikes**, aiming to help students communicate personal information and emotions using English. Students practiced emotions vocabulary in relation to the use of the verb *to be*, as well as simple present structures to express preferences and feelings. Additionally, vocabulary related to movie genres was introduced in order to establish a connection between students' personal interests and the language used in class. Through these contents, students were expected to describe how they feel, explain things they enjoy or dislike, and communicate emotions related to familiar situations.

The second and third weeks of the intervention continued with different communicative objectives and linguistic contents, progressively increasing the level of participation and oral production expected from students. Throughout the process, the activities were designed considering both grammatical development and communicative competence, ensuring that students had opportunities to interact meaningfully with the language while participating in dynamic and collaborative tasks.

The principal objective of the intervention was to strengthen students' **confidence and willingness to speak English**, considering one of the most evident problems observed during the teaching practices: students' insecurity when participating orally. During observations, it

was frequently identified that students demonstrated hesitation, fear of making mistakes, nervousness, and even avoidance behaviors when asked to speak English in front of their classmates. Expressions such as *“I can’t”*, *“I don’t know how”*, or simple refusal to participate were commonly observed, demonstrating a lack of confidence and motivation toward the subject.

For this reason, games were selected as the principal strategy for the intervention. The decision to implement game-based learning emerged from the need to transform the classroom atmosphere into a more engaging, motivating, and emotionally safe environment. Rather than exposing students to repetitive traditional activities focused exclusively on written exercises, the intervention sought to create situations in which learners could interact with English naturally while reducing the pressure commonly associated with oral participation.

Games were specifically chosen because they encourage interaction, teamwork, competition, spontaneity, and emotional involvement. Through games, students have the opportunity to participate actively without perceiving language production as an obligation or a stressful activity. Instead, speaking becomes part of a challenge, a competition, or a collaborative experience in which communication happens naturally while trying to accomplish a goal.

Furthermore, the selection of games considered the age characteristics and behavioral patterns of middle school students. At this stage, adolescents often demonstrate higher levels of engagement when activities involve movement, competition, unpredictability, and social interaction. Consequently, the intervention incorporated games that could stimulate curiosity and maintain students’ attention throughout the lesson. Activities such as mimic games, guessing games, board games, role-playing tasks, and competitive dynamics were

intentionally selected because of their potential to encourage oral production while simultaneously maintaining students motivated.

Another relevant aspect observed during the intervention was the emotional intensity generated through gameplay. While traditional exercises often produced disinterest or passive participation, games generated enthusiasm, curiosity, and anticipation among students. In many cases, students demonstrated a greater willingness to attempt pronunciation or speak in English when the activity involved competition, teamwork, or the possibility of winning. This emotional factor appeared to influence participation significantly, as students became more involved in the activity despite their fear of making mistakes. Such observations suggest that emotional engagement may play an important role in promoting speaking confidence in second language learning environments.

The intervention followed a relatively consistent instructional sequence throughout the three weeks. In general, sessions began with a **warm-up activity**, commonly involving short games or dynamics designed to activate previous knowledge and capture students' attention. Afterwards, an **introduction stage** was implemented, in which new vocabulary, grammatical structures, or communicative models were presented. Following this stage, students participated in a **main game or communicative activity**, where they were expected to apply the target language in an interactive context. Finally, classes concluded with a **closing activity or reflection**, often involving short written products, oral participation, or group discussion regarding the lesson.

This structure allowed students to approach the language progressively, beginning with controlled practice and gradually moving toward more communicative and spontaneous production. Additionally, the use of games throughout the sessions provided opportunities to

observe students' reactions, attitudes, confidence levels, pronunciation difficulties, and willingness to participate, all of which became valuable information for the analysis of this intervention.

Overall, the intervention was designed not only to teach linguistic content but also to create conditions in which students could feel more comfortable using English in meaningful situations. Through the implementation of games, the strategy aimed to reduce anxiety, encourage participation, and gradually strengthen students' confidence in speaking English inside the classroom.

3.2 Description of Sessions / Didactic Sequences

3.2.1 Week One: Feelings, Emotions, and Likes/Dislikes

The first week of the intervention focused on introducing students to vocabulary related to feelings, emotions, and likes and dislikes. The purpose of this stage was to help students communicate personal information and emotions through meaningful situations while simultaneously reducing the fear and insecurity often associated with speaking English in front of others. Since this was the first contact of the sample group with the game-based intervention, the sessions were intentionally designed to gradually increase students' confidence and participation.

The linguistic contents addressed during this week included emotions vocabulary, movie genres, expressions of likes and dislikes, the use of the verb *to be*, and simple present structures. These contents were selected because they provided opportunities for students to communicate familiar and personal information, allowing them to connect the target language with their own experiences and preferences. Moreover, since emotions and personal

tastes are topics students can easily relate to, they offered an accessible starting point for oral participation.

The instructional design of the week followed a progressive sequence. Students first explored vocabulary through mimic and guessing games, later connected emotions to personal interests and preferences, and finally developed a communicative product in which they shared information about themselves. Through this gradual process, the intention was not only to reinforce vocabulary acquisition but also to encourage students to speak in English with greater confidence.

Session 1: “How Do I Feel?”

Objective of the Lesson

The purpose of this session was to help students practice expressions used to describe their own feelings and the feelings of others. Specifically, students were expected to become familiar with emotions vocabulary while using the verb *to be* to construct simple sentences related to emotional states.

Topic / Grammar / Vocabulary

- Emotions and feelings vocabulary
- Use of the verb *to be*
- Basic oral production related to emotions

Development of the Activity

Warm-up Activity: Simon Says – Emotions Mimic

The class began with a warm-up activity based on the traditional game *Simon Says*. However, instead of using physical movements unrelated to the lesson, students were asked to imitate different emotions through gestures and facial expressions. The objective of this activity was to activate students' attention while introducing emotional vocabulary in a playful and less threatening manner.

At the beginning of the activity, students appeared amused but also hesitant. Several of them laughed when asked to imitate emotions such as *sad*, *angry*, or *surprised*, often trying to avoid direct participation by hiding behind classmates or pretending not to understand the instructions. This reaction demonstrated an initial lack of confidence, especially because the activity required them to expose themselves physically in front of the group.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere gradually changed. Once one student voluntarily participated and completed the activity without embarrassment, the rest of the class began to imitate the emotions more openly. This situation suggested that confidence within the classroom can be socially influenced, since students often feel more comfortable participating after observing their classmates doing the same.

Presentation of Vocabulary

After the warm-up activity, emotions vocabulary was introduced using visual materials and examples. Students practiced pronunciation collectively while associating the vocabulary with images and facial expressions. During this stage, some pronunciation difficulties became noticeable, particularly among a small group of students.

For instance, while attempting to read certain words aloud, one student asked:

“Teacher, what does it say? Is it ‘shulen’ or ‘shoulden’?”

Although the pronunciation was incorrect, this type of interaction reflected an important aspect of the intervention: students were attempting to engage with the language instead of avoiding it completely. Rather than remaining silent, they demonstrated willingness to take risks, even when unsure of pronunciation.

Similarly, another student hesitantly repeated:

“Teacher... ‘embarrassed’? Is like... emba... emba...”

Such attempts, although incomplete, represented meaningful opportunities for language production and oral participation.

Main Activity: Guess Who? Game

During the development stage, students participated in the *Guess Who?* game adapted to emotions and personal characteristics. In this activity, students had to identify emotions based on descriptions, mimic, and contextual clues.

The competitive nature of the activity helped maintain students’ attention and participation. Students laughed, negotiated answers with classmates, and tried to identify the correct emotion before the opposing team. Unlike traditional oral participation, where students frequently avoided speaking, the game context appeared to reduce anxiety because attention shifted toward winning rather than toward linguistic perfection.

However, some students still showed discomfort when required to perform in front of others. Nervous laughter remained present, and a few students initially avoided volunteering. Even so, participation gradually increased as the game progressed.

Written Practice and Closing Activity

To reinforce the language content, students completed a fill-in and reorder activity related to emotions vocabulary. Afterwards, they wrote a short handwritten reflection explaining how the activities made them feel.

This final task allowed students to connect vocabulary with personal experiences. Many students used simple constructions such as:

“I feel happy because the game was funny.”

“I feel nervous because I don’t speak English.”

Although grammatically simple, these productions demonstrated emerging confidence in using English to express personal emotions.

Reflection of the Session

This first session revealed that students initially experienced discomfort when speaking or performing in front of classmates, particularly during mimic-based activities. Nervous laughter, hesitation, and avoidance behaviors were frequent, reflecting low confidence and fear of embarrassment.

However, as the lesson progressed, the game environment appeared to reduce resistance toward participation. Students became more willing to engage once classmates participated successfully and the activity atmosphere felt less intimidating. Language use was perceived less as an evaluation and more as part of a challenge, increasing curiosity and participation.

An important limitation identified was that some students lost interest when they were not directly involved in the activity. For this reason, future sessions incorporated more

collaborative and competitive dynamics to reduce waiting time and encourage continuous participation.

Session 2: “How Does That Make Me Feel?”

Objective of the Lesson

The objective of this lesson was to help students relate emotions to personal preferences, allowing them to express opinions and feelings connected to familiar topics, specifically movies and entertainment.

Topic / Grammar / Vocabulary

- Movie genres vocabulary
- Present simple
- Expressing feelings and preferences

Development of the Activity

Warm-up Activity: Guess the Emotion

The lesson began with a mimic game in which students represented emotions while classmates attempted to identify them. Compared with the previous class, students appeared more willing to participate, suggesting an initial increase in confidence.

Although some students still laughed nervously, hesitation was less evident than during the first lesson. Several students voluntarily raised their hands to participate, particularly after observing classmates succeeding in the activity.

Introduction: Movies and Feelings

Students participated in a guided conversation about movie preferences and the emotions generated by different genres. Questions such as:

“Do you like horror movies?”

“How do action movies make you feel?”

encouraged simple oral production.

Some students responded using mixed language:

“Teacher, I like terror because is... scary.”

“Comedy makes me feel... happy.”

Even though grammatical accuracy remained limited, students demonstrated willingness to communicate ideas.

Main Activity: Would You Rather? Game

Students participated in a *Would You Rather?* game involving emotions and movie genres. This activity required students to make decisions and justify preferences.

The game proved highly engaging because it connected language learning to students' interests. Since there were no completely right or wrong answers, students appeared more relaxed and less afraid of making mistakes.

However, one challenge remained evident: students not actively participating occasionally became distracted. Although most learners remained attentive, some lost interest while waiting for their turn, indicating the need for more continuous participation opportunities.

Reflection of the Session

Compared with the first lesson, this session showed a modest but noticeable increase in students' willingness to participate orally. Familiar topics such as movies seemed to facilitate communication because students already possessed personal opinions they wanted to express.

Furthermore, the game context reduced the emotional pressure associated with oral participation. Since speaking occurred naturally as part of the activity, students focused less on avoiding mistakes and more on sharing their preferences.

Session 3: “Sharing Feelings and Thoughts!”

Objective of the Lesson

The purpose of this session was to encourage students to communicate personal information by expressing likes, dislikes, and emotions related to their interests. Through the development of an infographic and short oral exposition, students were expected to use vocabulary and grammatical structures previously learned during the week in a more communicative and personalized way.

The lesson also aimed to reinforce students' confidence while speaking in front of their classmates, moving from controlled activities to more spontaneous oral production. Since this was the closing session of the first week, students were expected to integrate emotions vocabulary, movie genres, and expressions of likes and dislikes into a final product that reflected their personal preferences.

Topic / Grammar / Vocabulary

- Emotions vocabulary
- Movie genres vocabulary
- Expressions of likes and dislikes
- Positive and negative forms of the simple present
- Speaking through personal information

Development of the Activity

Warm-up Activity: Pictionary – Emotions and Movie Genres

The class started with a *Pictionary* game focused on emotions and movie genres. Students had to draw vocabulary words while their classmates attempted to guess the correct answer in English.

This activity functioned as a review of the content explored during the week while simultaneously generating an active and participative classroom atmosphere. Since students had already become familiar with much of the vocabulary, participation during this session appeared more natural compared with the previous lessons.

At this stage, students laughed less nervously and demonstrated greater confidence while volunteering to participate. In many cases, students shouted possible answers enthusiastically, attempting to pronounce the words despite mistakes.

For example, while one student was drawing a movie genre, classmates attempted to guess:

“Teacher! Action movie!”

“No, no... horror!”

“Comedy! Comedy!”

Likewise, when reviewing emotions vocabulary, one student hesitantly attempted to pronounce *surprised*, saying:

“Teacher... is ‘sorpraisd’?”

While pronunciation errors remained present, students no longer avoided speaking as frequently as in the first session. Instead, they seemed more willing to attempt the language, even if imperfectly.

The game atmosphere also generated a noticeable increase in energy within the classroom. Students demonstrated excitement, curiosity, and anticipation while waiting for their classmates’ drawings, contributing to an environment that felt significantly more dynamic than traditional classroom participation.

Introduction: Reading Activity on Likes and Dislikes

After the warm-up activity, students were introduced to a short reading about a person’s likes and dislikes. This text functioned as a model for the final product and helped students understand how emotions, preferences, and opinions could be connected in meaningful communication.

The reading stage included guided questions to encourage comprehension and oral interaction. Questions such as:

“What does he like?”

“How does she feel about horror movies?”

encouraged students to identify patterns in the language and prepare for their own production.

Although some students still relied partially on Spanish to understand the activity, they increasingly attempted to use English vocabulary while responding.

Main Activity: Tourist Board Game

During the development stage, students participated in the *Tourist Board Game*, which included movie genres, emotions, and expressions of likes and dislikes. The game involved movement across a board in which students had to answer questions, identify vocabulary, or produce short statements in English to continue progressing.

Unlike more traditional oral exercises, this activity generated a sense of competition that maintained students' attention for longer periods of time. The uncertainty of advancing or losing turns encouraged participation, while students supported one another by providing clues and suggestions.

During the game, students produced short but meaningful attempts to communicate, including expressions such as:

“I like action movies because are exciting.”

“I don't like horror because I feel scared.”

“Teacher, how do you say ‘me da miedo’?”

Although grammatical mistakes remained frequent, communication gradually became more spontaneous and less dependent on teacher prompting.

One important observation during this activity was that games requiring direct participation generated considerably higher levels of engagement. Students actively involved in the gameplay remained motivated and attentive. However, some students who were temporarily not participating occasionally became distracted or disconnected from the activity.

This situation suggested that while games are effective in promoting motivation, maintaining the engagement of all students requires assigning continuous roles or participation opportunities. Even though only a minority of students lost focus, this remained an important aspect to consider for future sessions.

Final Product Development: Infographic and Oral Presentation

After the board game, students developed an infographic representing personal likes, dislikes, and emotions. The product was creatively divided into two sections: one half represented the student's face, while the other half included visual representations of things they liked and disliked, accompanied by feelings associated with them.

This activity allowed students to combine creativity, personal identity, and language production. Since the information was related to their own interests, students appeared more invested in the task and demonstrated greater willingness to talk about themselves.

To conclude the lesson, students presented their infographics orally. Instead of asking for volunteers, participation was selected randomly through the *Hot Potato* game. This strategy increased classroom attention considerably because students knew they could be selected at any moment.

Some students initially appeared nervous while presenting, often laughing or hesitating before speaking. Nevertheless, many of them successfully attempted simple oral production, using phrases such as:

“I like comedy movies because they make me feel happy.”

“I don’t like horror movies because I feel scared.”

“My favorite movie is action because is exciting.”

Although pronunciation difficulties remained visible in approximately five students, the majority attempted to communicate despite mistakes. More importantly, students seemed less afraid of participating publicly than they had been at the beginning of the week.

Reflection of the Session

This third session represented an important moment during the first week, as students demonstrated greater openness toward participation. Although nervous laughter remained present, it no longer functioned as a major obstacle preventing oral interaction. The classroom atmosphere appeared more relaxed and collaborative compared with earlier lessons.

The *Pictionary* and *Tourist Board Game* activities proved particularly effective because they transformed language practice into an engaging challenge. Competition, unpredictability, and teamwork appeared to increase students’ motivation and willingness to use English more spontaneously.

Likewise, the infographic presentations reflected moderate progress in speaking confidence. Although students still depended on short structures and occasional teacher support, many demonstrated greater willingness to speak publicly and share personal ideas in English.

Nevertheless, some learners continued losing focus while waiting for turns, reinforcing the importance of maintaining active participation throughout the lesson.

The reactions observed during mimic-based activities can be analyzed beyond simple lack of motivation or unwillingness to participate. The nervous laughter and avoidance behaviors demonstrated by some students were related to the social and emotional characteristics commonly present during adolescence. At this developmental stage, students become increasingly aware of peer perception and social acceptance, which may increase the fear of making mistakes or appearing inadequate in front of classmates.

Therefore, the difficulty experienced during these activities was not necessarily caused by the game itself, but by the level of personal exposure required. Performing gestures, being observed by peers, and becoming the center of attention created a situation where students felt emotionally vulnerable. In a foreign language classroom, where students are already concerned about pronunciation and accuracy, this type of exposure may intensify hesitation and resistance.

This observation contributed to understanding that game-based learning effectiveness depends not only on the existence of playful elements, but also on the emotional conditions created by each activity. Games that involve public performance require careful adaptation according to students' confidence levels and classroom dynamics.

Week One General Reflection

The first week of implementation demonstrated that introducing games into the English classroom can contribute positively to reducing anxiety and increasing students' willingness to participate orally. At the beginning of the intervention, students showed hesitation,

embarrassment, and avoidance behaviors, especially during activities that required speaking or performing in front of classmates. However, as sessions progressed, participation gradually increased, and students became more willing to engage with the language.

One of the most important findings of this week was the influence of peer behavior on confidence. When one student participated successfully and without fear of ridicule, others appeared more willing to imitate that behavior. This suggests that speaking confidence in adolescence may be strongly influenced by classroom dynamics and social acceptance. Students who initially avoided participation gradually became more willing to attempt speaking after observing classmates succeed without negative reactions from peers.

Likewise, the week revealed the importance of emotional engagement in language learning. Students often appeared more motivated when activities included movement, competition, uncertainty, and social interaction. Rather than perceiving English as an academic obligation, many students approached participation as part of a game or challenge. This emotional involvement appeared to reduce pressure and create opportunities for more spontaneous language use.

Despite these positive outcomes, some limitations also became evident. Activities involving mimicry or body language generated discomfort among several students, who frequently laughed nervously, avoided eye contact, or refused to participate due to embarrassment. In addition, some learners occasionally lost interest when they were not actively participating in the game, especially during activities that required waiting turns. During these moments, a small number of students became distracted, talked with classmates, or disconnected from the lesson.

These observations generated an important reflective process regarding the intervention strategy. Since some students lost engagement while waiting for participation opportunities, it became necessary to adapt the following week's activities to include more collaborative tasks, faster participation dynamics, and reflective activities that encouraged more continuous involvement. Likewise, games requiring excessive public exposure through body language were reduced in order to avoid generating discomfort and resistance among students. Instead, greater emphasis was placed on teamwork, vocabulary reinforcement, and activities that promoted oral participation in less intimidating ways.

Overall, the first week established a positive foundation for the intervention, allowing students to begin interacting with English in a more relaxed and meaningful way while gradually developing greater confidence and willingness to attempt oral participation.

However, the reflection stage of this first cycle also revealed areas that required modification for the following intervention phase. Although games increased participation, activities involving waiting periods or individual exposure sometimes caused students to lose attention, especially when they were not directly involved in the activity. Some learners became distracted while waiting for their turn instead of observing or supporting their classmates.

Based on this observation, the following week was redesigned to increase collaborative participation and reduce passive waiting time. More team-based activities, collective challenges, and interactive dynamics were incorporated in order to maintain students' attention and provide more frequent opportunities for language use. This adjustment represented the re-planning stage of the action research process, where classroom evidence was used to modify future teaching decisions.

3.2.2 Week Two: Community Problems and Ethical Awareness

The second week of the intervention, implemented from October 9th to October 13th, focused on the topic of community problems and social responsibility. Unlike the first week, which emphasized emotions, feelings, and personal interests, this stage aimed to encourage students to reflect on situations affecting their community while simultaneously strengthening their confidence and willingness to participate orally in English.

The planning of this second stage was partially adapted according to the observations and reflections obtained during Week One. Since some students demonstrated loss of attention while waiting for turns and discomfort during activities involving public performance or mimicry, the instructional strategy was modified to incorporate activities that promoted more constant participation, teamwork, and lower levels of emotional exposure. For this reason, games during this week functioned primarily as vocabulary reinforcement tools, collaborative warm-up activities, and guided reflective tasks rather than highly performative activities.

The planning of this second week was influenced by the observations obtained during the first implementation cycle. Considering that some students showed reduced attention during waiting periods and felt uncomfortable with activities involving individual exposure, the instructional design was adjusted toward more collaborative and team-oriented dynamics. Therefore, games during this stage were selected not only to reinforce vocabulary and grammar, but also to increase interaction among students and provide shared communicative objectives.

This modification allowed students to participate through collective responsibility, reducing the pressure placed on individual performance while maintaining opportunities for oral production.

The linguistic content of this week revolved around community problems vocabulary, the modal verbs *must*, *mustn't*, *should*, and *shouldn't*, and oral production related to giving advice, expressing obligations, and proposing solutions. These topics were selected according to the official syllabus and the competencies established within the educational program, particularly those focused on community awareness and social responsibility.

Since the nature of the topic involved sensitive and reflective situations, such as pollution, violence, discrimination, unhealthy habits, and other social concerns, the instructional approach during this week became more reflective and discussion-oriented. Although games continued to be used, their role shifted slightly. Instead of functioning as the central learning mechanism, they were mainly employed as warm-up activities, vocabulary reinforcement tools, and motivational elements to maintain students engaged throughout the lessons.

An important aspect observed during this week was that students gradually demonstrated greater willingness to participate orally compared with the first week. Although participation remained limited to a reduced number of students, approximately five to eight learners voluntarily attempted to use the target language during reflections and discussions.

Session 4: “Healing the World”

Objective of the Lesson

The purpose of this lesson was to help students identify and learn vocabulary related to community problems while introducing the modal verbs *must* and *mustn't* to express obligations and prohibitions related to ethical behavior and social responsibility.

Topic / Grammar / Vocabulary

- Community problems vocabulary
- Use of *must* and *mustn't*
- Giving ethical obligations and recommendations

Development of the Activity

Warm-up Activity: RRR Game (Basketball Concept with Rhymes)

The lesson began with an energetic warm-up activity called *RRR Game*, inspired by a basketball challenge using a bottle and recycled box. Students participated by throwing an object toward a target while producing rhymes or repeating vocabulary.

Although the activity was simple, it successfully captured students' attention at the beginning of the class. Compared with previous weeks, students appeared more comfortable participating in front of classmates, likely due to the trust gradually developed during prior sessions.

The competitive component of the game contributed positively to classroom engagement, generating enthusiasm and maintaining students focused. While the activity itself was not directly connected to deep language production, it functioned effectively as an attention hook before introducing more complex content.

Presentation of Vocabulary

Following the warm-up activity, students were introduced to vocabulary related to community problems using visual materials and examples. Topics included environmental contamination, violence, garbage, unhealthy habits, and other situations affecting communities.

The lesson also introduced the grammatical structure of *must* and *mustn't*, helping students understand how to express obligations and prohibitions.

Examples presented included:

“We must recycle.”

“People mustn't throw garbage in the street.”

At this stage, students demonstrated increasing familiarity with oral repetition activities. Pronunciation difficulties remained visible among a few learners, though hesitation was less noticeable than during the first week.

For instance, one student asked:

“Teacher... ‘mustn't’ is like ‘mosn’? How do I say it?”

These moments reflected students' willingness to engage with difficult pronunciation rather than avoiding participation entirely.

Main Activity: Memory Game – Community Problems Vocabulary

The development activity consisted of a memory game adapted to community problems vocabulary. Students worked to identify matching images and concepts while reinforcing vocabulary retention.

Since the rules were already familiar to many students from previous experiences with classroom games, the activity progressed smoothly. Students participated enthusiastically and frequently attempted to recall vocabulary collaboratively.

In several moments, students supported classmates by whispering possible answers or correcting vocabulary collectively:

“No, teacher! It’s pollution!”

“Garbage... garbage in the street!”

Although the language produced remained simple, the activity promoted repeated exposure to vocabulary in a less stressful environment.

To reinforce the grammar content, students later completed fill-in and reorder exercises focused on *must* and *mustn’t*. These activities helped consolidate understanding of ethical obligations and social behavior.

Closing Activity: True or False Dynamic

The session concluded with a *True or False* dynamic using the *Hot Potato* game to randomly select students. During this activity, learners evaluated statements related to community behavior and justified answers.

Examples included:

“People must throw garbage on the floor.”

“Students must help the environment.”

Although oral participation remained brief, students increasingly attempted short answers using English expressions such as:

“False, teacher!”

“Must recycle.”

Reflection of the Session

This session demonstrated that students were becoming progressively more familiar with participation through games. Compared with Week One, embarrassment appeared less intense, and students demonstrated increased openness toward speaking in front of classmates.

Nevertheless, the reflective nature of the content influenced classroom dynamics differently. Since students were discussing real social problems, activities naturally shifted toward analysis and ethical thinking rather than purely playful interaction.

Despite this transition, games continued to function effectively as motivational tools that prepared students emotionally for participation. The warm-up activities generated energy and reduced classroom tension, helping students approach the lesson with greater willingness to interact.

Session 5: “Let’s HELP Our Community!”

Objective of the Lesson

The objective of this lesson was to encourage students to generate advice and propose solutions for community problems while learning how to use *should* and *shouldn't* to express recommendations.

Topic / Grammar / Vocabulary

- Community problems vocabulary
- Solutions and necessities vocabulary
- Use of *should* and *shouldn't*
- Giving recommendations and advice

Development of the Activity

Warm-up Activity: Pictionary – Community Problems Vocabulary

The lesson started with a *Pictionary* activity reviewing community problems vocabulary. Students appeared increasingly comfortable participating during this type of activity, especially because they were already familiar with the mechanics of the game.

At this point of the intervention, several students voluntarily participated without requiring teacher prompting, suggesting a gradual increase in confidence.

Introduction: Cause-Consequence Dynamic

Students were introduced to *should* and *shouldn't* through examples connected to community problems.

Questions such as:

“What should people do to stop pollution?”

“What shouldn’t people do in the community?”

encouraged students to generate solutions.

Although most students remained hesitant, approximately five to eight learners actively attempted responses in English, producing simple ideas such as:

“People should recycle.”

“Students shouldn’t litter.”

“We should help animals.”

While grammatical structures remained basic, students demonstrated greater willingness to produce language independently.

Main Activity: Community Problems Trivia Game

Students participated in a team-based trivia game using colored flags to answer questions related to community problems and solutions.

The competitive aspect of the game maintained students motivated while simultaneously encouraging collaboration. Since teams had to discuss possible answers before responding, students increasingly interacted with peers to negotiate vocabulary and meaning.

However, because the lesson’s focus was more reflective than playful, participation occurred in a more thoughtful manner compared with previous weeks. Students often paused to think about consequences and solutions before answering.

Afterwards, students completed a reading activity about a foreign person experiencing community problems, followed by comprehension questions and a *True or False* exercise.

Reflection of the Session

This lesson represented an important transition in the intervention, as students moved from vocabulary recognition toward reflection and opinion sharing. Unlike the previous week, learners were expected not only to identify language structures but also to express recommendations related to community problems.

Although games continued supporting motivation, participation became more discussion-oriented. A relevant finding was that some students who rarely participated in traditional activities became more willing to share ideas when teamwork or game-based interaction was involved. This suggests that collaborative environments may facilitate oral participation among hesitant learners.

Overall, this session highlighted the importance of balancing playful strategies with reflective opportunities, particularly when addressing social topics that require deeper thinking and meaningful communication.

Session 6: “My Community Problem Comic”

Objective of the Lesson

The purpose of this session was to help students develop and present a comic about a community problem and its possible solution using the grammatical structures previously studied.

Topic / Grammar / Vocabulary

- Community problems vocabulary
- Solutions vocabulary

- *Must, mustn't, should, and shouldn't*
- Speaking through collaborative presentations

Development of the Activity

Warm-up Activity: Song Reflection

The session started with songs related to peace and social awareness, including *We Are the World*, *Imagine*, and *Don't Kill the World*. Students sang selected parts together while reflecting on the message behind the lyrics.

Although not all students actively sang, the activity generated a calmer and more reflective atmosphere.

Main Activity: Comic Development

Students worked in teams to develop posters or comics representing a community problem and proposing solutions using the target grammar.

Unlike previous activities centered on speed and competition, this task required collaboration, discussion, and reflection.

During teamwork, students attempted to negotiate ideas using limited English:

“Teacher, can we say ‘people shouldn’t fight’?”

“Teacher, how say ‘ayudar al planeta’?”

The activity encouraged communication naturally because students needed vocabulary to complete their projects.

Closing Activity: Project Presentation

To conclude, students presented their comics in front of the class.

Although oral participation remained brief, some groups successfully integrated target structures:

“People should recycle.”

“Students must help the community.”

“People mustn’t throw garbage.”

Reflection of the Session

The final session of Week Two demonstrated moderate progress in students’ oral confidence. Although participation remained concentrated among a smaller group of students, those who participated showed increasing willingness to speak publicly and express ideas using English.

This week highlighted an important pedagogical finding: while games are highly effective for vocabulary learning and confidence building, reflective topics require balancing playfulness with opportunities for discussion and ethical reasoning.

The adaptation of modal verbs into board game activities responded to the communicative nature of these structures. Instead of practicing *must*, *mustn’t*, *should*, and *shouldn’t* through isolated written exercises, students were required to produce recommendations and obligations as part of a meaningful challenge.

Games such as Connect Four and Trivia transformed grammatical practice into a decision-making process where language became a tool to achieve an objective. Students were not

only identifying correct structures but also negotiating answers, supporting teammates, and applying vocabulary within a communicative context.

Overall, Week Two functioned as a bridge between motivation and reflection, helping students move beyond vocabulary repetition toward expressing ideas, opinions, and recommendations related to real-life situations.

3.3.1 Confidence Development

One of the principal objectives of this intervention was to encourage students' confidence while using the English language in the classroom, specifically regarding speaking participation. At the beginning of the implementation process, a notable lack of confidence was identified among the majority of the students when they were expected to communicate orally in English. During the first sessions, students frequently demonstrated insecurity, nervousness, and hesitation when asked to participate in activities involving speaking, reading aloud, or expressing simple ideas in the target language.

During the first week of intervention, especially throughout activities related to emotions and feelings vocabulary, students showed clear discomfort when they had to participate individually in front of their classmates. Activities such as mimic games, emotional representations, and guessing dynamics revealed an evident fear of embarrassment. In many situations, students were unable to avoid laughing nervously, hiding their faces, or refusing to participate immediately. Instead of attempting to use the language, some students preferred to remain silent or simply wait for the teacher to provide the answer.

Likewise, during reading or oral participation activities, students commonly expressed insecurity through phrases such as *"I don't know how to say it"*, or by asking for direct

assistance from the teacher before attempting an answer. Nevertheless, even during these early stages, it was possible to observe that many students still attempted to participate after receiving encouragement or support from classmates. Although oral production was limited, students gradually started to make efforts to pronounce vocabulary and short structures related to the lessons.

An important aspect observed throughout the intervention was the role that peer modeling played in the development of confidence. During the first sessions, once a student participated successfully without showing fear or embarrassment, other students started to imitate that behavior and became more willing to participate. This situation became particularly noticeable during game-based activities, where students observed classmates successfully using English vocabulary in front of the group. Through this process, participation gradually shifted from complete reluctance to at least an attempt to produce the language.

As the weeks progressed, a gradual improvement in students' confidence became evident. Although participation was still primarily led by the same group of volunteers, new students occasionally started participating, often encouraged by observation and repetition of classmates' behavior. Students did not become completely autonomous in their use of English; however, they increasingly attempted to use the language whenever classroom activities required it. Instead of rejecting participation immediately, students demonstrated more willingness to make mistakes and try to communicate their ideas.

This improvement became evident in spontaneous interactions during classroom activities and notebook exercises. For example, during activities related to healthy and unhealthy habits, students started asking questions involving English structures and classroom

vocabulary, demonstrating greater confidence to interact with the language. Comments such as *“Teacher, should not goes here, right? Because watching TV was bad in the game?”* or *“So, is it ‘You shouldn’t drink too much soda’?”* reflected an increasing effort to understand and apply grammatical structures independently. Even when pronunciation difficulties or grammatical mistakes remained present, students demonstrated less fear of failure and more willingness to participate orally.

Furthermore, confidence development appeared closely related to repeated exposure to communicative situations within a playful environment. Through the continuous use of games and interactive dynamics, students gradually perceived speaking not only as a classroom obligation but also as part of a competitive and collaborative activity. The classroom atmosphere generated by games reduced pressure in some situations, allowing students to experiment with the language without perceiving mistakes as failure, but rather as part of the learning process.

Overall, although confidence development was gradual and not homogeneous among all participants, the intervention demonstrated positive progress regarding students’ willingness to participate orally. By the end of the three-week implementation period, students showed less hesitation, increased speaking attempts, and a greater disposition to use English during activities, even when uncertainty regarding vocabulary or pronunciation was still evident.

3.3.2 Participation in Oral Activities

Students’ oral participation represented one of the principal aspects analyzed throughout the implementation of this intervention, due to its direct relation with confidence and speaking development in the English classroom. From the beginning of the process, participation was identified as a challenge, since students commonly avoided speaking situations, particularly

those requiring individual oral production in front of classmates. However, throughout the three-week intervention, important variations in participation patterns were observed according to the type of activity and game applied.

During the first sessions, oral participation was limited and repetitive. A reduced number of students frequently volunteered to answer questions, read instructions, or participate actively during games, while the majority preferred to remain silent or wait for teacher guidance. Students often avoided direct participation by expressing uncertainty or discomfort, particularly when pronunciation or speaking accuracy was involved. In many cases, oral participation depended largely on teacher encouragement and direct prompting.

Nevertheless, as the intervention progressed, participation gradually became more frequent, although still concentrated among a group of recurring volunteers. It was observed that classroom participation developed through a modeling process, in which students learned participation patterns from classmates who were more willing to take risks while speaking English. Once students observed that participation did not necessarily involve ridicule or negative consequences, some of them gradually started attempting oral production themselves.

Students' pronunciation difficulties were interpreted as evidence of interlanguage development rather than simply incorrect language production. The question "Teacher, is it shulen or shouliden?" demonstrated that the learner was actively constructing hypotheses about English pronunciation and attempting to establish a relationship between written forms and oral production.

From a second language acquisition perspective, these approximations represent an important stage in language development because learners are testing possible rules and seeking confirmation. Therefore, these moments should not be considered failures, but rather evidence that students were engaging with the language and attempting to communicate despite uncertainty.

This process became particularly evident during game-based activities involving teamwork and competition. Activities such as *Hot Potato*, *Connect Four*, and *Snakes and Ladders* generated considerably higher levels of oral participation compared to more traditional classroom dynamics or activities focused only on written production. During these activities, students demonstrated greater willingness to interact with English vocabulary and grammatical structures due to the immediate objective of helping their teams succeed.

The implementation of teamwork played a relevant role in increasing participation levels. By working collaboratively, students frequently supported one another during speaking moments, providing suggestions, reminders, or even helping classmates remember vocabulary and grammar structures. Rather than facing oral participation individually, teamwork reduced pressure and encouraged cooperative speaking opportunities. This collaborative environment promoted greater confidence among some students who otherwise avoided participating independently.

Furthermore, competitive dynamics appeared to increase students' motivation to participate orally. During activities involving points, teams, turns, or winners, students demonstrated higher levels of emotional involvement. In several moments throughout the intervention, students became highly engaged with the objective of helping their teams win, even shouting

possible answers or attempting to guide classmates verbally while they participated at the front of the classroom.

For example, during games such as *Connect Four* and *Snakes and Ladders*, students frequently encouraged classmates by reminding them of grammatical structures previously practiced during lessons. Situations emerged in which students attempted to support oral production with comments such as “*Teacher, wasn’t it shouldn’t when it is bad?*” or “*Tell her ‘you shouldn’t drink soda’!*”. Although these interactions still reflected insecurity and grammatical uncertainty, they simultaneously demonstrated increasing involvement and communicative participation in English.

An important aspect observed during this intervention was the influence of competition and emotional excitement, commonly referred to as an “adrenaline factor,” within classroom participation. Games involving unpredictability, teamwork, and the possibility of winning or losing appeared to maintain students more attentive and emotionally engaged throughout the lesson. Students demonstrated greater focus when outcomes depended on their participation, suggesting that emotional activation positively influenced oral interaction and motivation to use the target language.

However, not all activities generated the same participation results. Games involving body language representation or mimics did not prove equally effective in promoting oral participation. Due to adolescents’ concern regarding embarrassment and peer judgment, many students demonstrated discomfort when expected to perform physically in front of classmates. Nervous laughter, hesitation, and avoidance behaviors often interfered with the main objective of these activities, reducing the effectiveness of participation compared to more structured competitive games.

Likewise, despite increased oral participation throughout the intervention, some limitations remained evident. Not all students participated consistently, and some occasionally became distracted while waiting for their turns, speaking with classmates or using mobile phones during activities. This suggests that while games increased classroom engagement, maintaining participation among all students simultaneously remained a challenge requiring additional classroom management strategies.

Overall, participation in oral activities showed moderate but meaningful progress during the intervention period. Although students did not develop fully autonomous speaking behaviors, they demonstrated increased willingness to participate, collaborate, and attempt oral production in English. The use of games, particularly those involving competition and teamwork, proved to be an effective strategy for promoting classroom participation and reducing resistance toward speaking activities.

3.3.4 Motivation and Classroom Environment

One of the most notable aspects observed throughout the implementation of this intervention was the relationship between students' motivation and the classroom environment generated through the use of games. Since one of the principal difficulties identified during the diagnosis stage was students' lack of interest and confidence while participating in English lessons, analyzing the changes in classroom atmosphere became relevant to understand the effectiveness of the strategy applied.

At the beginning of the intervention, students generally demonstrated a serious but simultaneously playful classroom attitude. Although the group maintained an environment in which students were commonly willing to interact socially, English activities often generated hesitation, disinterest, or passivity, particularly when participation required oral

production. In many situations, students preferred waiting for direct teacher explanations rather than attempting to interact independently with the language.

Throughout the intervention process, it was observed that the implementation of game-based activities contributed to creating moments of increased attention, emotional engagement, and participation. Although the general atmosphere of the classroom did not change radically, students demonstrated greater disposition to interact during lessons that included games, competition, or dynamic activities. Rather than perceiving English exclusively as an academic requirement, many students started associating classroom participation with enjoyable and unpredictable moments.

An important aspect observed was that students' motivation did not necessarily emerge from the materials themselves, but rather from the competitive and interactive opportunities generated during activities. Although students generally did not express visible excitement when educational materials, flashcards, or game boards were introduced, they frequently showed curiosity regarding the purpose of these resources and how they would be used during the lesson. The novelty of some materials generated surprise and contributed to maintaining classroom attention during specific moments of instruction.

Likewise, although it did not occur frequently, some students occasionally expressed curiosity regarding the continuity of game-based activities. During approximately two occasions throughout the intervention period, students asked whether there would be games during the lesson, suggesting that some of them had started to perceive these activities as a recurring and motivating component of the English classroom. While this behavior was not generalized among the entire group, it reflected a degree of positive expectation regarding the methodology applied.

Among the elements that most strongly influenced students' motivation, competition emerged as one of the principal factors. Activities involving points, winners, team collaboration, and classroom challenges appeared to generate greater enthusiasm among students. The possibility of winning, outperforming another team, or helping classmates succeed encouraged participation and maintained students' attention for longer periods of time.

This situation became especially evident during activities such as *Connect Four*, *Snakes and Ladders*, and *Hot Potato*, in which students demonstrated high levels of emotional involvement. During these games, students frequently attempted to help classmates participating at the front of the classroom by suggesting answers, correcting grammar structures, or reminding them of vocabulary learned during previous lessons. In several moments, students even shouted possible responses enthusiastically, revealing a higher level of engagement compared to traditional classroom participation settings.

The presence of competition within game-based activities also appeared to activate what can be described as an emotional or "adrenaline factor." Students seemed more focused and willing to participate when the activity involved uncertainty, time pressure, or the possibility of earning points for their teams. In these contexts, participation became more spontaneous, and even students who generally remained passive occasionally demonstrated greater involvement in classroom interaction. This emotional component appeared to positively influence classroom motivation and contribute to reducing speaking resistance.

Nevertheless, despite the motivational benefits generated by games, some limitations remained evident throughout the intervention. Not all students maintained the same level of engagement during lessons, particularly in moments when participation opportunities were

limited or dependent on turns. Some students occasionally became distracted by talking with classmates, disengaging from the activity, or using mobile phones during classroom time. Likewise, while many students actively participated during competitive moments, others preferred observing rather than directly interacting with the activity.

Another relevant limitation observed was related to the type of game implemented. Activities involving physical representation or body language occasionally reduced motivation due to feelings of embarrassment among students. Since adolescents commonly demonstrate concern regarding peer judgment, some activities requiring emotional exposure generated discomfort, nervous laughter, or reluctance to participate. This finding suggests that classroom motivation depends not only on the implementation of games themselves but also on selecting activities appropriate to students' personalities, emotional comfort, and developmental stage.

Overall, the implementation of game-based strategies positively influenced classroom motivation and contributed to creating a more dynamic learning environment. Although motivation was not equally distributed among all students and classroom distractions remained present, games encouraged participation, emotional involvement, and greater willingness to use English during lessons. Particularly, activities involving teamwork and competition demonstrated a stronger motivational impact, supporting the idea that enjoyable and interactive learning environments may contribute positively to students' language learning process.

3.4 Analysis of Research Instruments

3.4.1 Observation Results

Observation represented one of the principal instruments used during the intervention process, due to its usefulness in documenting students' behaviors, classroom attitudes, confidence development, and participation patterns during English lessons. Through continuous observation, it was possible to identify students' reactions toward speaking activities, their willingness to participate, and the impact generated by game-based strategies.

At the beginning of the intervention, observation revealed a notable lack of confidence among students when oral participation was required. During the first sessions, students frequently demonstrated nervousness, hesitation, and fear of embarrassment, particularly during activities involving pronunciation, mimicry, or individual speaking performance. Many students preferred remaining silent, avoiding eye contact, or waiting for teacher guidance instead of attempting independent language production.

As the intervention progressed, observational findings demonstrated gradual improvement regarding participation and confidence. Although oral interaction continued being led mainly by recurring volunteers, new students occasionally began participating during games and collaborative activities. Likewise, students progressively attempted to self-correct and use grammatical structures previously practiced in class.

Another relevant observation involved students' emotional responses toward competition. During games involving teamwork, points, or classroom challenges, students demonstrated greater engagement, concentration, and willingness to communicate. These findings suggest

that game-based environments contributed positively to students' classroom participation and motivation.

Overall, observation allowed the identification of behavioral changes, classroom participation patterns, and confidence development throughout the implementation period, providing relevant information regarding the effectiveness of games as a strategy to encourage oral participation in English.

3.4.2 Structured Observation Analysis

Structured observation was used to identify repetitive behavioral patterns throughout the intervention period, particularly regarding students' confidence, participation, speaking attempts, and motivation during different classroom situations.

To facilitate data collection, classroom behaviors were continuously compared according to different moments of the intervention process, observing students' responses before, during, and after game-based activities. This instrument allowed identifying tendencies regarding students' reactions toward oral participation, particularly while comparing traditional classroom moments with dynamic game situations.

The structured observation process revealed that participation and speaking willingness tended to increase significantly during collaborative and competitive activities. Games such as *Connect Four*, *Snakes and Ladders*, and *Hot Potato* generated higher levels of interaction compared to activities requiring isolated individual participation.

Likewise, structured observation made possible the identification of limitations within the intervention. Although motivation generally increased during games, some students occasionally lost focus while waiting for their turns, talked with classmates, or became

distracted by mobile devices. These patterns highlighted the importance of maintaining continuous engagement opportunities during classroom activities.

3.4.3 Speaking Performance Rubric

To evaluate students' speaking development throughout the intervention, a simplified oral performance rubric was implemented. This instrument allowed monitoring students' progress regarding classroom participation, confidence, pronunciation, and communicative production during game-based activities.

The rubric was applied informally through classroom observation during oral participation, games, and final project presentations. Rather than assigning numerical grades, the objective was to identify students' progress and speaking tendencies throughout the intervention process.

Table 1. Speaking Performance Rubric

Criteria	Beginning	Developing	Satisfactory	Advanced
Confidence while Speaking	Refuses or avoids participation. Demonstrates insecurity and nervousness.	Participates with hesitation and teacher support.	Participates voluntarily with occasional insecurity.	Speaks confidently and participates actively.
Pronunciation and Intelligibility	Pronunciation difficulties prevent understanding.	Pronunciation shows frequent hesitation but remains understandable.	Pronunciation is generally clear with minor mistakes.	Pronunciation is clear and understandable during communication.
Language Production	Produces isolated words or short responses only.	Produces short phrases with support.	Produces complete sentences independently.	Produces connected ideas using classroom vocabulary appropriately.

Through the application of this rubric, it was possible to identify moderate but meaningful progress among students. While many students initially remained at a beginning or developing stage regarding confidence and speaking production, several students demonstrated improvement by the final week, particularly when participating in communicative games involving teamwork and competition.

Students particularly improved in their willingness to attempt speaking rather than avoiding participation completely. Although grammatical mistakes and pronunciation difficulties remained present, increased participation and risk-taking became evident by the end of the intervention.

Case Study: Student Development Through Game-Based Activities

One particular case observed during the intervention demonstrated the gradual development of oral confidence through game-based activities. For ethical reasons, the student will be referred to as Student A.

At the beginning of the intervention, Student A was identified within the Beginning performance level according to the speaking rubric. The student demonstrated difficulty participating orally, frequently avoided speaking in front of classmates, and required constant teacher support to produce simple sentences. During initial activities, hesitation and uncertainty were evident, particularly when pronunciation was required.

However, throughout the implementation of collaborative and competitive games, Student A gradually demonstrated greater willingness to participate. Activities such as Connect Four

and Snakes and Ladders provided opportunities to practice language within a team environment, reducing the pressure of individual performance.

By the final stage of the intervention, Student A showed characteristics associated with the Satisfactory level. Although grammatical accuracy was not completely independent, the student demonstrated more frequent attempts to communicate, greater willingness to answer questions, and increased participation during team activities.

This case illustrates that the main development observed through the intervention was not a complete transformation of linguistic proficiency, but rather a change in students' attitude toward oral participation. The student moved from avoiding communication to attempting communication, representing meaningful progress within the limited intervention period.

3.4.4 Checklist Analysis

A checklist instrument was used to register specific classroom behaviors and students' progress during the intervention. This tool allowed documenting observable indicators related to participation, confidence, motivation, and oral interaction.

Table 2. Participation and Motivation Checklist

Indicator	Observed
Students voluntarily participate in speaking activities	✓
Students attempt oral production in English	✓
Students demonstrate increased confidence	✓
Students collaborate during teamwork	✓
Students remain motivated throughout activities	Partial

Indicator	Observed
Students maintain attention during all sessions	Partial

The checklist findings suggested positive development regarding oral participation and classroom engagement. However, results also indicated that maintaining motivation continuously among all students remained a challenge, particularly during activities involving waiting periods or limited participation opportunities.

3.4.5 Student Survey Analysis

A brief perception survey was considered to gather students' opinions regarding the implementation of games during English lessons. The instrument focused on identifying students' preferences, classroom motivation, and perceptions about confidence while using the language.

In general terms, students demonstrated positive attitudes toward game-based activities. Most participants expressed greater enjoyment during lessons involving teamwork, competition, and dynamic classroom interaction. Likewise, students identified games as moments in which speaking English felt less stressful compared to traditional participation settings.

However, responses also suggested differences regarding individual preferences. While many students enjoyed competitive games, others demonstrated preference for collaborative activities involving lower levels of public exposure.

Overall, survey results supported the idea that games positively contributed to classroom motivation and encouraged greater willingness to participate in English-speaking situations.

3.5 Challenges and Limitations During the Intervention

Although the intervention was generally effective in encouraging students' participation and improving their willingness to use English, several challenges and limitations were identified throughout the implementation process. These limitations were not understood as failures of the strategy itself, but rather as contextual factors that influenced the way students responded to the activities. Identifying these difficulties is important because it provides a more complete view of the intervention and makes the final analysis more realistic and trustworthy.

3.5.1 Students' Lack of Confidence

One of the main challenges observed during the intervention was students' lack of confidence when participating orally in English. At the beginning of the process, many students reacted with nervous laughter, hesitation, or direct refusal when asked to speak, read aloud, or perform in front of their classmates. In several activities, especially those involving mimicry or individual oral participation, students appeared embarrassed and tried to avoid being the center of attention.

This situation was closely related to the developmental stage of the students, since middle school learners are in an important process of adolescence, a period in which peer acceptance becomes especially relevant. At this stage, students are often more sensitive to criticism and more aware of how they are perceived by others. As a result, the possibility of making mistakes in front of classmates can generate anxiety and reluctance to participate. In some cases, this also increases the risk of mockery or negative peer reactions, which may discourage students from taking part in class activities.

For this reason, confidence became one of the most relevant affective factors throughout the intervention. Although many students gradually improved, the fear of embarrassment remained visible in several moments, particularly during activities that required public performance or immediate verbal responses.

3.5.2 Classroom Management Difficulties

Another limitation identified during the intervention was related to classroom management, especially during game-based activities that required students to wait for their turn. While the students who were actively participating often remained motivated, those who were not directly involved at that moment sometimes became distracted. Instead of observing their classmates or preparing for their own turn, some students chose to talk to others, stop paying attention, or use their mobile phones.

This situation required constant classroom management and, in several occasions, the teacher had to intervene to recover students' attention. Even though games were effective in generating motivation, their success also depended on maintaining the participation of the entire group, not only of the students who were currently playing. Therefore, one of the practical challenges of the intervention was ensuring that waiting time did not turn into disengagement time.

This observation shows that, although game-based learning is highly motivating, it also demands careful organization to avoid gaps in student involvement. When only a few students are active while the rest remain passive observers, classroom attention can decrease significantly.

3.5.3 Limitations of Game-Based Activities

A further limitation observed during the intervention was that not all game-based activities produced the same level of engagement or comfort among students. Team-based and competitive games generally worked better because they encouraged collaboration, emotional involvement, and a sense of challenge. However, activities that required students to perform through body language, mimicry, or direct personal exposure were less effective for some learners.

This difference was especially noticeable when students felt that they were being watched or judged by their classmates. In those moments, some learners became self-conscious, laughed nervously, or avoided participating altogether. This made it clear that the success of a game does not depend only on its design, but also on how comfortable students feel while taking part in it.

The effectiveness of each game varied according to students' age, personality, and emotional maturity. Since adolescents often become more aware of peer judgment, certain activities may need to be adapted carefully in order to avoid discomfort. In this sense, the intervention showed that game-based learning is not universally effective in the same way for all students; rather, it must be selected and adjusted according to the characteristics of the group.

3.5.4 Time Constraints and Contextual Factors

The intervention was also limited by the available time and by contextual factors related to the school environment and the curriculum. Since the implementation took place over a relatively short period, the changes observed in students' behavior and oral confidence were gradual and partial. For this reason, the intervention provided meaningful evidence of progress, but not a complete transformation of students' speaking performance.

In addition, the instructional context required adaptation to the contents established by the official program and to the realities of the school setting. Some topics were more sensitive or reflective in nature, which sometimes reduced the possibility of using games as the central strategy. Therefore, the intervention had to balance language learning objectives with contextual appropriateness, emotional sensitivity, and curricular alignment.

Despite these limitations, the intervention was still valuable because it allowed the teacher to identify what types of activities worked better, what factors affected participation, and what classroom conditions influenced students' responses. This information became essential for interpreting the results and understanding the scope of the strategy.

Chapter IV. Results and Conclusions

4.1 Results

The implementation of the intervention strategy through game-based learning generated a series of observable changes in students' participation, confidence, and willingness to use English during classroom activities. Although the progress achieved cannot be considered radical or transformative, the results demonstrate a **moderate improvement** in students' disposition to participate orally and attempt communication in the target language. More importantly, the intervention allowed students to progressively reduce some of the fear and hesitation that initially characterized their classroom behavior.

At the beginning of the intervention, students frequently demonstrated resistance toward oral participation in English. During the first sessions, many learners showed visible discomfort when asked to speak, read aloud, or perform activities involving oral production. Nervous laughter became a repetitive reaction, particularly during games that required direct

participation in front of classmates. In multiple occasions, students preferred to remain silent, avoid eye contact, or wait for the teacher to provide the answer instead of attempting communication by themselves.

Expressions such as *“Teacher, I don’t know how to say it,”*, *“Can you tell me the answer?”*, or simply remaining silent while laughing nervously, were recurrent behaviors during the first classes. These reactions reflected a lack of confidence that had already been identified during the diagnostic stage of the investigation. Speaking English was frequently perceived by students as a risky action that exposed them to embarrassment or ridicule in front of their classmates.

However, throughout the intervention, several positive changes began to emerge. Although the students did not become fully autonomous users of the language, many of them gradually became more willing to at least **attempt participation**. The difference was especially visible during game-based activities that involved teamwork, competition, and immediate objectives. Instead of remaining completely passive, students increasingly began to ask questions related to grammar and vocabulary, showing greater involvement with the learning process.

Comments such as:

“Teacher, is it ‘shouldn’t’ here? Because watching too much TV was bad in the game, right?”

or

“Teacher, I understand it, but I don’t know how to say it... Is it okay if I say: ‘You shouldn’t drink too much soda’?”

demonstrated a gradual change in attitude. Although students still required guidance and support, these interactions reflected an important shift: instead of rejecting the language completely, many students started making attempts to construct meaning and communicate their ideas.

This progress was not consistent among all learners. Participation remained repetitive in some cases, meaning that the same students often volunteered during activities. Nevertheless, new participants gradually emerged during the sessions, often encouraged by observing the performance of classmates who were more willing to participate. This social influence became particularly important throughout the intervention, since students appeared to gain confidence when they saw that making mistakes did not necessarily result in negative reactions.

One important finding was that students' motivation seemed to increase when they understood the classroom dynamic and recognized that participation could occur in more playful or collaborative ways. Although only a small number of students openly asked whether games would be included in future sessions, this behavior reflected growing familiarity and expectation regarding the methodology used during class.

At the same time, several difficulties remained present. Some students continued demonstrating little interest in English due to the belief that they would never need to use the language in real life. Although this group represented only a reduced number of learners, their attitude influenced their level of participation and effort. In these cases, motivation became difficult to strengthen, even through game-based learning.

Furthermore, the intervention also revealed behavioral patterns related to classroom attention. Once students became familiar with the teaching model, some learners learned to identify moments in which active participation was not required, leading them to disconnect from the lesson, talk to classmates, or use their cellphones. This issue became particularly visible during activities that involved waiting turns or long observation periods, reducing the effectiveness of some games.

Among all the activities implemented, the most effective elements identified throughout the intervention were **competition, games, and adrenaline**. The emotional intensity generated by competitive activities produced higher levels of participation, excitement, and involvement among students. Team-based games such as *Connect Four*, *Hot Potato*, and *Snakes and Ladders* generated moments in which students actively collaborated, shouted answers, corrected classmates, and became emotionally invested in the success of their team.

During these activities, students frequently encouraged each other using expressions related to the target language, even when pronunciation or grammar were not fully accurate. This demonstrates that the emotional context created by competition promoted oral attempts that might not have appeared in a traditional classroom setting.

In contrast, activities involving body language, mimicry, or direct public exposure were considerably less effective. Students often felt embarrassed when required to perform individually in front of classmates. Instead of generating confidence, these activities occasionally increased nervousness and caused some students to avoid participation entirely. This suggests that adolescents may respond differently to game-based learning depending on the level of emotional exposure involved.

Another relevant result of this intervention concerns the relationship between confidence and language production. Although students did not show complete mastery of grammar or vocabulary, there was evidence of greater willingness to speak and experiment with the language. Students became more open to trying, even when uncertain about pronunciation or grammatical accuracy. In this sense, the intervention

4.2 Research Questions Answered

The present investigation was guided by three research questions focused on students' confidence, oral participation, and the role of games in reducing affective barriers within English language learning. Throughout the implementation of the intervention and the analysis of the results obtained during the three weeks of practice, it was possible to reflect upon these questions and generate conclusions based on classroom observation, students' participation patterns, and the evidence collected through the research instruments. Rather than observing a radical improvement in linguistic proficiency, the intervention primarily revealed moderate progress in students' willingness to participate orally, reduced hesitation, and increased confidence when attempting to use the language.

Research Question 1: Why do students have better confidence with a game instead of participating in class?

The results of this intervention suggest that students tend to demonstrate greater willingness to participate and moderate increases in confidence during game-based activities because games reduce the emotional pressure commonly associated with classroom participation. In a traditional lesson, students often perceive oral participation as an evaluative process in which mistakes may lead to embarrassment or criticism. In contrast, games shift students'

attention toward the objective of winning, collaborating, or completing a challenge, making the use of English feel less intimidating and more natural.

At the beginning of the intervention, students frequently avoided speaking, laughed nervously, or directly refused to participate when they were expected to speak in front of the whole class. However, when the same students were involved in games, especially team-based and competitive activities, their behavior changed noticeably. Instead of focusing on the fear of making mistakes, they concentrated on helping their teams, answering quickly, or earning points during the activity.

This phenomenon became particularly visible during activities such as *Connect Four*, *Snakes and Ladders*, and *Hot Potato*, where students demonstrated greater emotional involvement. The competitive atmosphere generated what could be identified as an **adrenaline factor**, which encouraged students to react more spontaneously and participate with less hesitation. During these moments, students often shouted answers, corrected each other, or attempted to speak even when unsure about pronunciation or grammar.

The emotional environment generated by games appears to reduce anxiety because students stop perceiving English exclusively as an academic subject and begin interacting with it as part of a dynamic experience. Rather than participating simply because they are required to do so, students participate because they want to win, support teammates, or avoid losing. This shift in motivation becomes highly significant in middle school classrooms, where emotional engagement often determines the level of participation.

Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that not all games generated the same positive effect. Activities involving mimicry or body language proved less effective due to students'

embarrassment and fear of being observed by classmates. This demonstrates that confidence is not automatically generated by every game, but rather by those that fit students' emotional comfort and developmental stage.

Therefore, students appear to demonstrate greater confidence with games because these activities reduce emotional barriers, encourage participation through teamwork and competition, and create an environment where mistakes feel less threatening.

However, the results also demonstrated that confidence improvement remained moderate rather than transformative. Although students became more willing to attempt participation, many still demonstrated hesitation, nervous laughter, or dependence on teacher guidance when producing language independently. This suggests that confidence building in language learning requires continuous exposure and a longer intervention period to generate more substantial changes.

Research Question 2: How can confidence in middle school students be measured in an English language class?

Throughout this intervention, confidence was measured through direct observation of students' classroom behaviors, participation patterns, speaking attempts, and reactions toward activities requiring oral communication. Since confidence is an affective and emotional factor, it cannot be evaluated solely through numerical scores or traditional tests. Instead, confidence becomes observable through the way students behave when interacting with the language.

At the beginning of the intervention, students showed several behaviors associated with low confidence. These included avoiding participation, refusing to read aloud, laughing

nervously, remaining silent, waiting for answers from the teacher, and expressing phrases such as *“I can’t”* or *“I don’t know how to say it.”* These reactions demonstrated fear of failure and discomfort when using English publicly.

As the intervention progressed, moderate changes became visible. Students gradually began to attempt participation more frequently, ask questions about grammar or pronunciation, and make efforts to construct phrases independently. Even though mistakes remained present, learners became more willing to try instead of rejecting participation completely.

Confidence was particularly noticeable through behaviors such as:

- Increased willingness to volunteer during activities.
- Greater participation in team-based games.
- More frequent oral attempts, even when incomplete.
- Reduced hesitation during classroom participation.
- Increased curiosity about pronunciation and vocabulary.
- Greater willingness to ask for clarification instead of avoiding participation.

Research instruments such as **observation records, checklists, rubrics, surveys, and field notes** also contributed to identifying changes in students’ confidence levels. Through these instruments, it became possible to compare behaviors at the beginning and end of the intervention, allowing for a clearer understanding of students’ development.

However, the intervention also demonstrated that confidence develops progressively and inconsistently. Some students advanced more quickly, while others remained hesitant despite

repeated exposure to games. This suggests that confidence in language learning is highly individualized and influenced by emotional, social, and contextual variables.

As a result, confidence in middle school students can be measured not primarily by linguistic accuracy, but rather through their willingness to attempt communication, reduced hesitation, classroom participation, and readiness to interact with English despite mistakes or uncertainty.

Research Question 3: What is the contrast between a classical English class model and one that includes the use of games?

The contrast identified between a traditional English classroom model and a game-based classroom was significant in terms of participation, motivation, and emotional involvement.

In the more traditional classroom approach, students often assumed a passive role. Activities generally focused on listening to explanations, completing written exercises, reading texts, or responding individually to teacher questions. During these moments, students tended to demonstrate low motivation and limited willingness to speak voluntarily. Participation frequently depended on teacher pressure rather than genuine interest, resulting in classroom environments where many students preferred silence or disengagement.

In contrast, when games were integrated into the lessons, the classroom atmosphere changed noticeably. Students became more active participants, showing greater emotional investment and interaction with both the language and their classmates. The implementation of games transformed classroom participation into something more collaborative, dynamic, and engaging.

Students frequently demonstrated excitement, competitiveness, and urgency during game-based activities. Rather than remaining passive, many actively attempted to solve challenges, answer questions, or support their teams. This increased level of engagement contributed to more frequent opportunities for oral production and language use.

However, the results also showed that game-based learning should not be idealized as universally superior to traditional teaching. Although games increased motivation and participation, they also introduced challenges such as distractions, waiting turns, loss of attention, and varying levels of engagement depending on the type of game used. Furthermore, some grammatical topics or sensitive classroom contents were more difficult to adapt into game-based activities without affecting the seriousness of the topic.

For this reason, the contrast between both models suggests that neither should function independently. Traditional instruction provides structure, explanation, and reinforcement, while games offer opportunities for meaningful interaction, motivation, and confidence-building. The most effective classroom environment appears to be one that balances both approaches strategically, adapting them according to the objectives of the lesson and the needs of the students.

The intervention demonstrates that games can significantly enrich English language teaching when implemented thoughtfully. Their role is not to replace traditional teaching completely, but rather to complement it in ways that promote communication, participation, and emotional engagement among students, not necessarily to linguistic perfection, but to reducing the psychological barriers that prevented oral participation.

Overall, the findings of this intervention suggest that game-based learning positively influenced students' classroom participation and confidence in moderate ways. The strategy was successful in generating motivation, emotional involvement, and opportunities for oral production; however, it did not eliminate all the challenges related to speaking anxiety, classroom distractions, or students' lack of long-term interest in English. Therefore, the results indicate that games should not be understood as an immediate solution, but rather as a supportive pedagogical resource that can facilitate language learning when used strategically and appropriately according to classroom conditions.

Additionally, the intervention demonstrated that the effectiveness of games is highly situational and dependent on multiple classroom variables. Factors such as students' age, emotional maturity, type of activity, grammatical content, classroom behavior, and even the emotional comfort generated by the game influenced the results obtained. Certain activities, particularly those involving public mimicry or body language, generated discomfort and embarrassment, limiting participation. In contrast, team-based and competitive games generated greater motivation, emotional engagement, and oral attempts due to the presence of competition and the desire to win.

4.3 Conclusions

The conclusions of this intervention were supported by multiple sources of evidence, including observation records, field notes, student surveys, and classroom performance rubrics. The data collected demonstrated that students' confidence improved moderately throughout the implementation period.

The student survey revealed that 20 out of 20 participants considered that games should be used more frequently in English classes, while 19 students expressed preference for group games. These results support the observation that collaborative and competitive activities generated greater motivation and participation.

Additionally, classroom observations showed that activities involving competition and teamwork produced higher levels of oral interaction. Games such as Hot Potato, Connect Four, and Snakes and Ladders generated greater student involvement, more frequent language attempts, and increased peer collaboration.

However, the evidence also confirmed that improvement was limited by factors such as students' fear of mistakes, classroom distractions, and the short duration of the intervention. Therefore, the findings suggest that games contributed mainly to increasing willingness to communicate and reducing hesitation rather than producing immediate linguistic transformation.

The implementation of this intervention provided an opportunity to critically analyze the role of game-based learning strategies in promoting oral participation and speaking confidence among A1-level middle school students. Although the results obtained during the three weeks of implementation did not demonstrate a radical or transformative linguistic improvement, the experience revealed moderate yet meaningful progress regarding students' willingness to participate orally, attempt communication, and engage more actively with the English language.

One of the principal conclusions derived from this intervention is that games may contribute positively to students' confidence and oral participation when implemented under

appropriate classroom conditions. Rather than generating immediate linguistic mastery or autonomous language production, games appeared to create opportunities in which students felt more willing to experiment with the language, make mistakes, and attempt communication without the same level of resistance observed in traditional classroom participation.

At the beginning of the intervention, students frequently demonstrated behaviors associated with low confidence in oral production. Nervous laughter, avoidance of participation, hesitation, silence, and direct refusal to speak in English were common reactions, particularly during activities requiring individual exposure in front of classmates. Many learners preferred waiting for the teacher to provide answers rather than attempting independent participation. These findings support the idea that speaking in a foreign language at the middle school level involves emotional barriers that strongly influence classroom behavior.

However, as the intervention progressed, moderate changes became noticeable. Students gradually began participating more frequently, asking questions related to grammar and pronunciation, and demonstrating greater willingness to attempt oral production. Although many learners continued requiring teacher guidance and peer support, several moved from complete avoidance toward partial participation and communication attempts. Expressions such as *“Teacher, is it shouldn’t here?”* or *“Teacher, I understand it, but I don’t know how to say it”* reflected an increased willingness to interact with the language despite insecurity or fear of making mistakes.

In this sense, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of games was more visible in terms of reducing hesitation and increasing participation rather than significantly improving speaking proficiency itself. Since confidence was not measured through psychological

instruments related to anxiety, it cannot be conclusively stated that games directly reduced students' affective filter. Nevertheless, classroom observations indicate that game-based activities appeared to reduce emotional resistance toward participation and encouraged students to engage with English in more spontaneous ways. These observations partially align with Krashen's (1982) perspective regarding affective variables in language acquisition, particularly the importance of emotional conditions that facilitate learner participation.

An especially relevant finding throughout the intervention was the importance of emotional engagement in students' participation. Competitive and collaborative games, particularly *Connect Four*, *Snakes and Ladders*, and *Hot Potato*, generated higher levels of motivation, excitement, and classroom interaction. During these activities, students often demonstrated urgency, enthusiasm, and spontaneous reactions while attempting to support teammates or contribute to their group's success.

This phenomenon may be understood through what was identified during the intervention as an **adrenaline factor**, referring to the emotional intensity generated by competition and teamwork. In several moments, students who normally remained passive or hesitant became more actively involved when the activity included points, challenges, or the possibility of winning. The emotional stimulation generated by competition appeared to increase students' concentration and willingness to participate orally. These observations may be connected with contemporary perspectives such as **Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE)** proposed by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2022), which emphasize how positive emotional experiences contribute to greater engagement and participation in foreign language learning.

Nevertheless, another important conclusion of this intervention is that **games are situational pedagogical tools rather than universally effective strategies**. Their success depends on numerous contextual variables, including students' age, emotional maturity, classroom behavior, linguistic objectives, type of vocabulary or grammar being taught, group dynamics, and the emotional demands of the activity itself. While some games proved highly motivating and communicative, others generated discomfort or reduced effectiveness depending on the context.

For example, activities involving mimicry, body language, or individual performance in front of classmates produced more hesitation and embarrassment among students. Since adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by heightened sensitivity toward peer judgment, fear of ridicule and social embarrassment became important limitations affecting participation. In middle school environments, students are frequently more aware of social acceptance, increasing the possibility of insecurity or fear of mockery. As a result, games requiring strong public exposure appeared less effective than team-based activities where responsibility and attention were shared among classmates.

Likewise, classroom management challenges continued influencing participation despite the implementation of games. Some students lost focus while waiting for their turns, became distracted through conversations unrelated to the lesson, or disengaged by using cell phones during inactive moments. Interestingly, once students became familiar with the classroom dynamics, they also appeared to identify moments in which attention could decrease. These findings demonstrate that games alone cannot eliminate classroom management difficulties and require careful organization to maintain continuous engagement among learners.

Another relevant conclusion concerns students' perceptions about learning English itself. Although only a reduced number of learners openly expressed resistance, some students demonstrated limited motivation because they believed English would not be relevant to their future lives. This belief influenced the level of effort invested in participation and speaking attempts. Therefore, language learning cannot be understood exclusively as a methodological issue; students' beliefs, expectations, and perceived usefulness of English also play a fundamental role in shaping classroom participation.

Additionally, this intervention confirms that the role of the teacher remains essential during game-based learning processes. The effectiveness of games does not depend solely on the activity itself, but on the teacher's ability to adapt, monitor, and redesign strategies according to students' reactions and classroom realities. From an action research perspective, effective teaching requires continuous observation and reflection. Activities that generated low engagement or discomfort required modification in subsequent sessions, reinforcing the importance of pedagogical flexibility.

This finding aligns with contemporary perspectives such as Hattie's (2023) educational meta-analyses, which argue that no instructional strategy functions equally in every context and that effectiveness depends greatly on how methodologies are implemented by teachers according to students' needs. Consequently, games should not be idealized as universally successful practices, but rather understood as adaptable resources whose effectiveness varies depending on instructional design and contextual conditions.

Similarly, the results suggest that games should complement rather than replace traditional instruction. Although game-based activities proved useful for increasing oral participation, motivation, and emotional involvement, traditional approaches continued playing an

important role in explaining grammar, reinforcing vocabulary, and clarifying misunderstandings. The most effective classroom environment appears to emerge from a balance between structured instruction and interactive opportunities that encourage students to communicate meaningfully.

From the perspective of the **Nueva Escuela Mexicana (NEM)** and the **CEFR Companion Volume (2020)**, speaking should not be understood exclusively as grammatical accuracy or perfect oral performance, but as a communicative and social practice through which learners interact, negotiate meaning, and participate in authentic situations. In this regard, the intervention demonstrated moderate progress, as students increasingly attempted communication, collaborated with classmates, and participated in classroom interaction despite linguistic limitations.

Ultimately, the greatest contribution of this intervention lies in recognizing that meaningful language learning occurs not only through repetition and memorization, but also through emotionally engaging experiences that encourage participation. Even when progress remains moderate, every speaking attempt, every grammar question, and every moment in which students choose participation instead of silence represents an important step in the language learning process.

Therefore, this intervention concludes that game-based learning can positively influence speaking confidence and oral participation among middle school students when implemented strategically and contextually. However, their effectiveness depends on multiple emotional, pedagogical, and social factors that must be carefully considered by teachers. In this sense, games should be understood not as a universal solution, but as a meaningful and adaptable

pedagogical resource capable of enriching English language teaching when applied thoughtfully and according to students' realities.

4.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained during this intervention, several recommendations can be made for future English teachers who wish to implement game-based learning strategies in middle school classrooms. These recommendations are intended to improve the effectiveness of classroom practices while considering the emotional, behavioral, and academic characteristics of adolescent learners.

First, it is highly recommended to prioritize **team-based and competitive games**, since these activities generated the highest levels of motivation and participation throughout the intervention. Competition appeared to increase students' emotional engagement, concentration, and willingness to attempt oral communication. Activities that incorporated a sense of challenge, scoring systems, or team collaboration proved especially effective in maintaining classroom attention and reducing participation anxiety.

Second, teachers should carefully consider the **emotional comfort of students** before implementing games that involve individual performance or public exposure. Activities requiring body language, mimicry, or acting in front of classmates may generate discomfort among adolescents, especially in groups where fear of embarrassment is common. In these cases, adapting activities into pairs, small groups, or team dynamics may increase participation while reducing emotional pressure.

Another important recommendation is to design activities that **minimize waiting time**. During this intervention, students often lost attention when they were not directly

participating, leading to distractions, conversations, or cellphone use. For this reason, teachers should seek strategies that keep all students involved simultaneously, even when one student or team is performing. Observation tasks, participation points, peer assistance, or prediction activities can help maintain engagement.

Additionally, teachers should understand that **games are not automatically effective**. Their success depends on multiple variables, including grammar content, vocabulary complexity, student maturity, classroom atmosphere, and the specific objective of the lesson. Therefore, games should be selected intentionally rather than included simply for entertainment purposes. Teachers should continuously reflect upon what works, what does not, and why certain activities succeed with one group but not another.

It is also recommended that English teachers promote environments where **mistakes are normalized**. Since fear of ridicule represented one of the main barriers to participation, creating a classroom culture where errors are viewed as part of learning may help students feel safer when attempting oral communication.

Finally, future interventions should consider implementing game-based learning over longer periods of time. Since confidence develops progressively, longer interventions may allow students to become more familiar with the methodology and achieve more noticeable improvements in oral confidence and participation.

In conclusion, game-based learning represents a meaningful opportunity for English language teaching, especially when adapted thoughtfully to students' needs and classroom realities. When carefully planned, games can contribute not only to language development,

but also to creating a classroom environment where students feel more motivated, supported, and willing to communicate.

References

Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment – Companion Volume*. Council of Europe Publishing.

Dewaele, J. M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2022). *The emotional rollercoaster of language learning: Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety*. Multilingual Matters.

Hadfield, J. (1999). *Beginners' communication games*. Longman.

Harmer, J. (1991). *The practice of English language teaching* (New ed.). Longman.

Harmer, J. (2008). *How to teach English*. Pearson Education.

Hattie, J. (2023). *Visible Learning: The Sequel*. Routledge.

Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Maley, A., & Duff, A. (2005). *Drama techniques in language learning: A resource book of communication activities for language teachers* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Noemí, P. M., & Máximo, S. H. (2014). Educational games for learning. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 2(3), 230–238.

Nunan, D., & Carter, R. (Eds.). (2001). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge University Press.

Plass, J. L., Homer, B. D., & Kinzer, C. K. (2020). *Foundations of Game-Based Learning*. *Educational Psychologist*, 55(1), 1–16.

Rixon, S. (1981). *How to use games in language teaching*. Macmillan Education.

Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP). (2023). *Plan de Estudio para la Educación Preescolar, Primaria y Secundaria*. México: SEP.

Tekinbaş, K. S., & Zimmerman, E. (2003). *Rules of play: Game design fundamentals*. MIT Press.

Wallace, M. J. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge University Press.

Wright, A., Betteridge, D., & Buckby, M. (2006). *Games for language learning* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Zhu, D. (2012). Using games to improve students' communicative ability. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(4), 801–805.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). Routledge.

Morpurgo, M. (2003). *Private peaceable*. HarperCollins.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A. Observation Checklist

The following observation checklist was implemented throughout the intervention process to monitor students' participation, confidence, engagement, and oral production during the

game-based activities. This instrument allowed the researcher to systematically identify behavioral patterns, classroom attitudes, and speaking attempts while students interacted with English through games and collaborative dynamics. The checklist was applied continuously during the three weeks of intervention, particularly focusing on students' willingness to participate, oral confidence, teamwork, and classroom engagement.

Table A.1 Observation Checklist

Indicator	Yes	No	Observations
The student participates voluntarily during activities.			
The student attempts to speak in English.			
The student shows confidence while participating orally.			
The student collaborates with classmates during teamwork activities.			
The student remains engaged during game-based activities.			
The student follows classroom instructions during games.			
The student demonstrates understanding of vocabulary and grammar.			
The student participates more actively during games than traditional activities.			
The student demonstrates motivation during competitive activities.			
The student shows improvement in oral participation over time.			

The use of this instrument provided important information regarding students' confidence and classroom behavior. Through observation, it was identified that students tended to participate more actively when activities included competition, teamwork, and immediate challenges. Nonetheless, some students still demonstrated hesitation, nervousness, or

distraction during certain activities, particularly those requiring individual oral participation in front of classmates.

Appendix B. Speaking Rubric

The following speaking rubric was implemented to assess students' oral participation and progress during the intervention process. The rubric considered linguistic and behavioral aspects related to confidence, classroom participation, teamwork, and willingness to use English during activities.

Table B.1 Speaking Performance Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Pronunciation	Speaks clearly with minimal mistakes.	Minor pronunciation mistakes.	Frequent hesitation and pronunciation difficulties.	Speech is difficult to understand.
Confidence While Speaking	Participates naturally without fear or embarrassment.	Shows minor nervousness but participates.	Hesitates frequently while speaking.	Refuses or avoids participation.
Vocabulary Use	Uses vocabulary correctly and independently.	Minor vocabulary mistakes.	Limited vocabulary use with teacher support.	Avoids vocabulary usage.
Grammar Accuracy	Correctly applies grammatical structures.	Minor grammatical mistakes.	Frequent grammar mistakes.	Limited grammatical understanding.

Teamwork Performance	Collaborates actively and supports peers.	Participates appropriately in teamwork.	Limited collaboration.	Shows little or no participation.
Classroom Engagement	Maintains attention during activities.	Minor distractions occur.	Frequently distracted.	Shows little engagement.
Speaking Attempt	Makes spontaneous speaking attempts in English.	Speaks with teacher assistance.	Minimal oral production.	Avoids speaking completely.

This rubric was applied during game-based activities, oral participation moments, project presentations, and collaborative dynamics. The evaluation focused not only on linguistic performance but also on students' willingness to participate and make speaking attempts, recognizing confidence as an essential element within second language learning.

Appendix C. Student Perception Survey

In order to collect students' perceptions regarding the implementation of games in English lessons, a short survey was designed and applied informally at the end of the intervention process. The objective was to identify students' preferences, confidence levels, motivation, and opinions concerning the use of games as a teaching strategy.

Table C.1 Student Survey

C.1 Survey Description

At the end of the intervention process, a student perception survey was applied to identify students' previous experiences with English learning, their preferences regarding game-based activities, and their perceptions about the implementation of games in the classroom. The survey was applied to the sample group of third-grade group "C", composed of 21

students. Due to absences and unanswered items, the number of responses varied slightly across questions.

The purpose of this instrument was to complement classroom observations and provide additional information regarding students' motivation, participation, and attitudes toward learning English through games.

C.2 Survey Results

Question 1. Since when have you been learning English?

Answer	Frequency
Preschool	1
Elementary School	12
Middle School	5

Interpretation:

Results suggest that most students began learning English during elementary school, while only a minority reported exposure during preschool years. Despite previous exposure to English instruction, many students still demonstrated insecurity and lack of confidence while speaking the language, which may suggest that prolonged exposure alone does not necessarily guarantee oral confidence.

Question 2. How frequently are games used in English classes?

Answer	Frequency
--------	-----------

Never	1
-------	---

Rarely	18
--------	----

Sometimes	1
-----------	---

Interpretation:

Most students reported that games are rarely implemented in English lessons. This finding may explain students' curiosity and positive reactions toward game-based activities during the intervention, as the methodology represented an uncommon classroom experience.

Question 3. Do you enjoy learning through games?

Answer	Frequency
--------	-----------

Yes	19
-----	----

Sometimes	1
-----------	---

No	0
----	---

Interpretation:

Most students demonstrated a positive perception regarding game-based learning. This finding supports the idea that games may increase motivation, attention, and classroom participation when implemented appropriately.

Question 4. *How do you prefer games?*

Answer	Frequency
--------	-----------

Large Group Activities	19
------------------------	----

Small Group Activities	1
------------------------	---

Interpretation:

Students demonstrated a strong preference for large-group competitive activities. This result aligns with classroom observations, where teamwork and competition generated higher levels of participation, motivation, and excitement.

Question 5. What type of games do you prefer for learning English?

Type of Game	Frequency
--------------	-----------

Board Games	14
-------------	----

Role Play	1
-----------	---

Online Games	1
--------------	---

Interpretation:

Board games were the preferred option among students, supporting the effectiveness of activities such as *Connect Four* and *Snakes and Ladders*, which promoted active participation and collaborative speaking opportunities.

Question 6. How do games help you learn English?

Answer	Frequency
--------	-----------

Improve vocabulary	1
--------------------	---

Answer	Frequency
Improve pronunciation/listening	1
Help remember words and phrases	1
Make classes entertaining and participative	13

Interpretation:

Students mainly perceived games as a strategy that makes classes more entertaining and participative. This result reinforces the idea that motivation and engagement are among the strongest benefits of game-based learning.

Question 7. Should games be used more frequently in English lessons?

Answer Frequency

Yes	20
No	0
Not sure	0

Interpretation:

All respondents expressed positive attitudes toward increasing the use of games in English lessons. This finding suggests that students value dynamic and interactive strategies that differ from traditional classroom instruction.

C.3 General Interpretation of Survey Findings

Overall, survey results suggest that students perceive games as a motivating and enjoyable strategy for learning English. Responses indicate a preference for teamwork, competition,

and board-game dynamics, which coincides with classroom observations made during the intervention. Likewise, students demonstrated a strong interest in increasing the implementation of games in future English lessons, reinforcing the potential of this strategy to improve motivation and participation in the classroom.

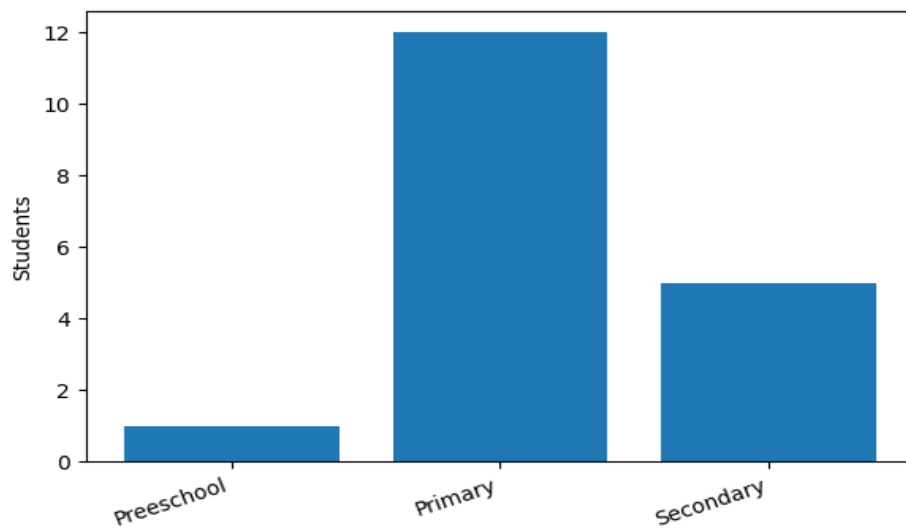
The information obtained from the student survey was consistent with the observations recorded throughout the intervention. While field notes identified greater participation during competitive activities such as Connect Four, Hot Potato, and Snakes and Ladders, survey results showed that students strongly preferred collaborative game formats.

The fact that 20 out of 20 students expressed interest in using more games during English classes, and that 19 out of 20 preferred large group games, suggests that social interaction and teamwork were significant motivational elements. These results support the interpretation that emotional engagement generated through competition and collaboration contributed to students' willingness to participate orally.

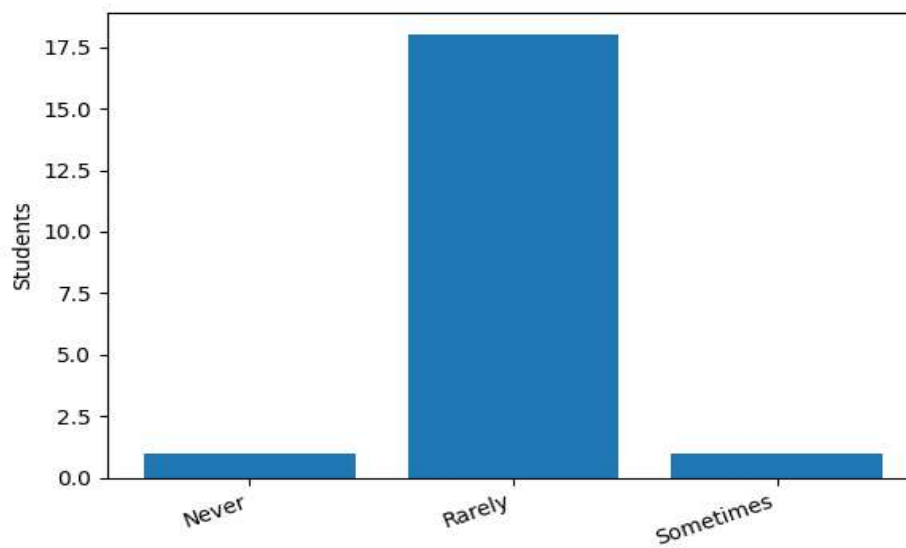
However, these findings do not suggest that competition alone guarantees learning. Instead, they indicate that emotional activation, when combined with clear linguistic objectives and teacher guidance, can become a factor that encourages participation and reduces hesitation.

Survey Charts

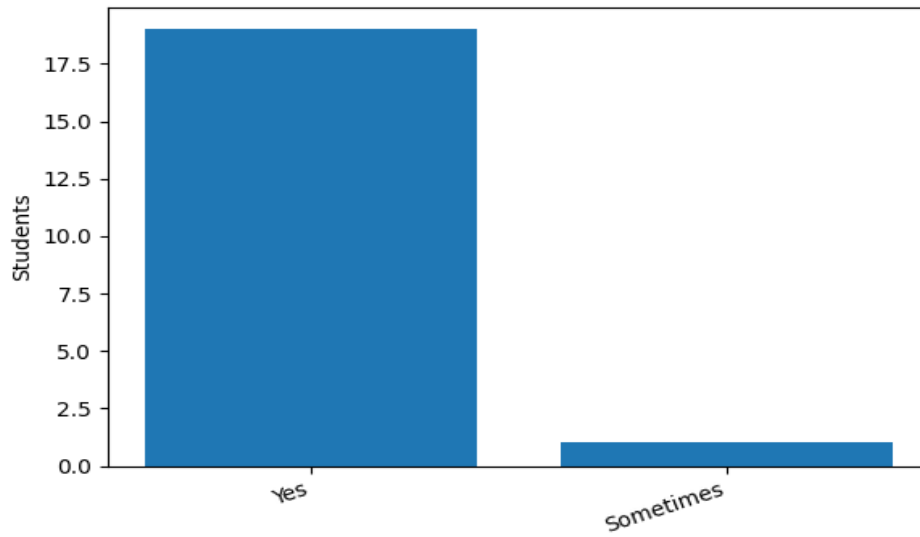
Since when have you been learning English?



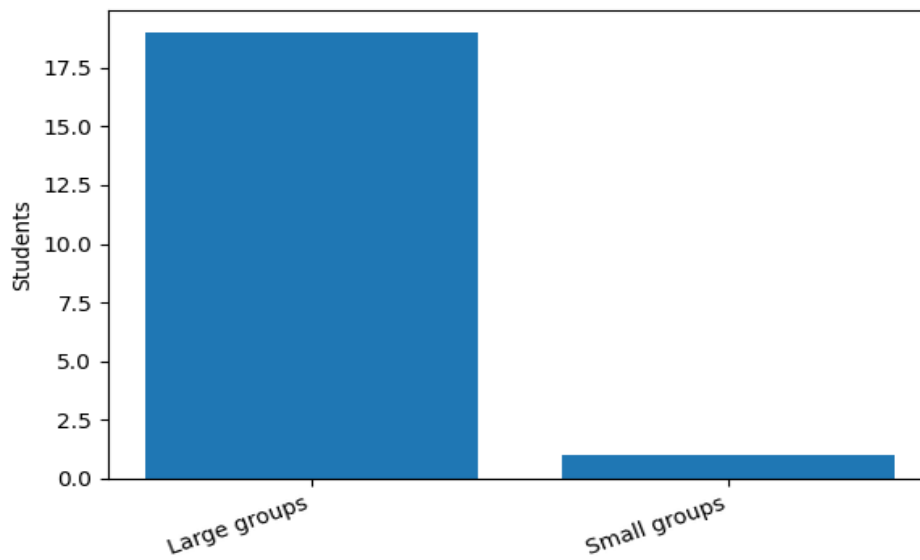
How often are games used in English class?



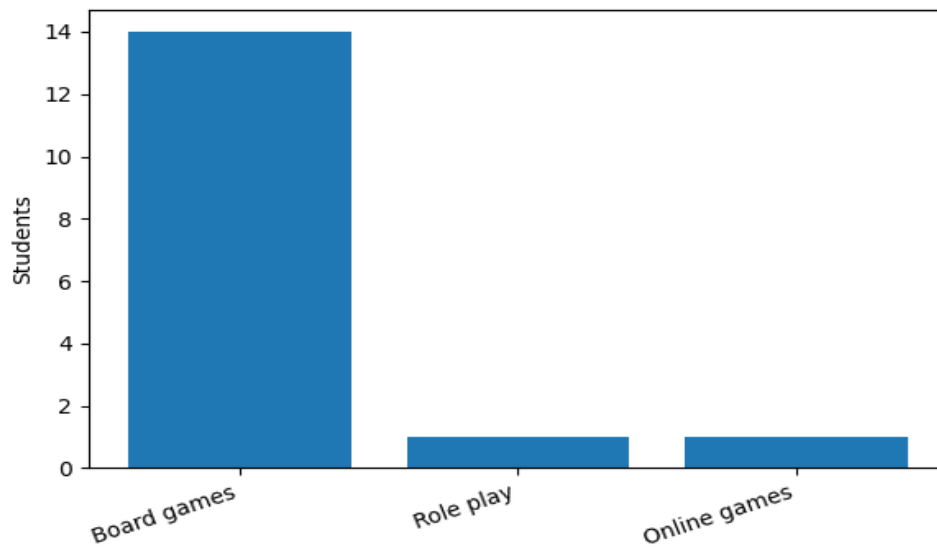
Do you like learning through games?



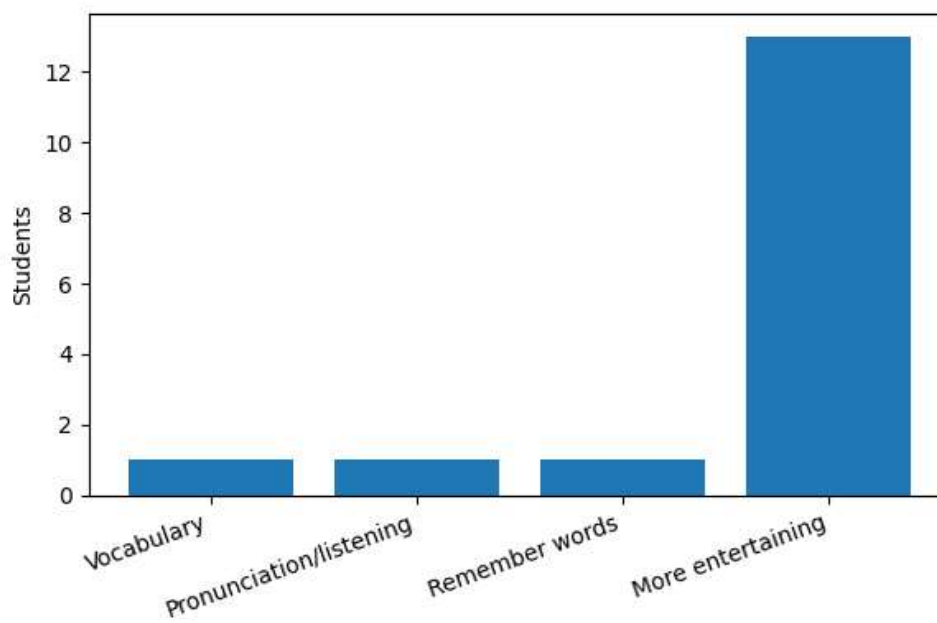
How do you prefer games?



Preferred game type for learning English



How do games help you learn English?



Appendix D. Teaching Materials Used

The following materials were designed and implemented throughout the intervention process to support students' vocabulary acquisition, grammatical understanding, oral participation, and communicative development. Most of these materials were adapted into game-based formats to encourage motivation and classroom engagement.

Week 1: Feelings, Emotions, and Likes/Dislikes

Appendix 1.1 – Emotions Vocabulary

Poster

This material was used to introduce emotions and feelings vocabulary in English. Students related visual images to emotions and practiced pronunciation alongside the use of the verb *to be*.



Appendix 1.2 – Guess Who? Game

The game aimed to reinforce vocabulary through oral interaction and guessing dynamics. Students practiced describing emotions and identifying classmates' answers using English vocabulary.

Appendix 1.3 – Fill-in and Reordering

Activity

This activity reinforced emotions vocabulary and grammatical structures through sentence completion and organization exercises.

App. 1.3

Fill in the following sentences with correct form of verb to be:

1. Daniela _____ sad.
2. He feels _____ when he sings.
3. I _____ in love with her.
4. They _____ surprised about the test.
5. Pedro _____ proud of his brother.

Reorder the following sentences to its correct form:

1. Feels / today / she / happy
2. Is / Javier / excited
3. Surprised / for the / she / is / test
4. Are / confused / homework / they / about the
5. In / love / am / I

Appendix 2.1 – Movies and Feelings Conversation

A guided reading activity focused on movie genres, feelings, and the use of simple present structures to express likes and emotional reactions.

App. 2.1

MOVIES & FEELINGS CONVERSATION

Brenda: Hi Gaby! Good Morning!

Gaby: Hi Brenda! Nice to see you!

Brenda: Thanks! Hey, what are you favorite movies?

Gaby: My favorites are Comedy movies, make me feel happy! What about you?

Brenda: My favorite are Romance movies, make me feel in love and happy.

Gaby: Nice! What are your brother's favorites?

Brenda: Kevin? He likes Horror movies, He doesn't like romance movies. What about your sister?

Gaby: Jessi? She likes romance movies like you! She doesn't like mystery movies.

Brenda: That's cool, was nice to talk to you, see you.

Gaby: See ya.

Appendix 2.2 – Reading Comprehension Activity

Students analyzed short texts about emotions and movie preferences while answering comprehension questions.

Appendix 3.2 – Tourist Board Game

This board game reinforced vocabulary related to emotions, movie genres, likes, and dislikes while encouraging oral participation and teamwork.



Week 2: Community Problems

Appendix 4.1 – Community Problems Vocabulary

Visual material was implemented to introduce vocabulary related to social and community issues.

Appendix 4.2 – Memory Game

A matching activity designed to reinforce vocabulary retention through repetition and visual association.



Appendix 5.2 – Community Problems Trivia Game

A team-based competitive activity that promoted classroom participation while practicing *should* and *shouldn't* structures.

Appendix 6.1 – Song Reflection Activity

Songs related to social awareness and helping others were implemented to encourage students' reflection and engagement with community problems.

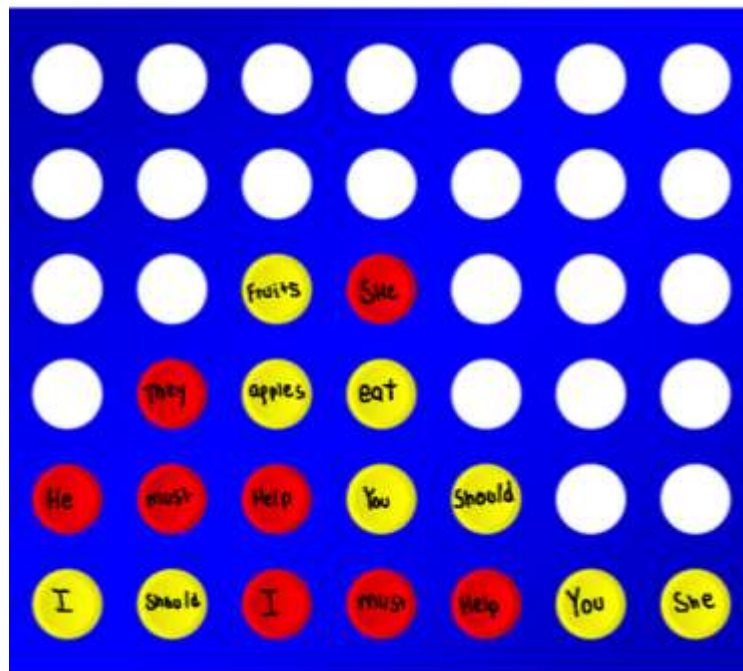
Week 3: Healthy Life

Appendix 7.1 – Healthy Life Vocabulary Material

This material introduced healthy and unhealthy habits vocabulary through visual resources.

Appendix 7.2 – Connect Four Game

A modified version of the traditional game in which students constructed sentences using *should* and *shouldn't* to discuss healthy habits.





Appendix 8.2 – Snakes and Ladders Game

An adapted board game designed to reinforce vocabulary and grammar while increasing students' motivation and oral participation.

Appendix 8.3 – Comparative and Grammar Activities

Written activities were used to complement oral production and reinforce grammatical structures related to healthy habits.

Appendix G. Field Notes

The following field notes summarize relevant classroom situations observed during the implementation of the intervention strategy. These observations allowed the researcher to identify behavioral patterns, participation levels, confidence changes, and classroom dynamics related to the use of games.

Field Note – Week 1

During mimic and guessing activities, several students initially demonstrated discomfort, embarrassment, and nervousness while speaking English in front of classmates. Some students laughed continuously or avoided participation, remaining silent and waiting for the teacher to provide the correct answer. However, after observing classmates succeed without negative reactions, participation gradually increased.

Examples of students' spontaneous interactions included comments such as:

“Teacher, how do you say this?”

“Teacher, is it ‘shoulden’ or ‘shouldn’t’?”

These moments reflected students’ uncertainty but also their willingness to attempt oral production.

Field Note – Week 2

During reflective activities related to community problems, students demonstrated increased participation while discussing solutions and ethical obligations. Although not all students participated orally, some began incorporating vocabulary into their classroom interactions, particularly when discussing possible solutions for real-life problems.

Competition-based games continued promoting participation; however, activities requiring extended waiting periods occasionally generated distraction and loss of attention among some students.

Field Note – Week 3

During the implementation of Connect Four and Snakes and Ladders, students demonstrated greater motivation, teamwork, and speaking attempts. Team competition generated a noticeable increase in classroom energy, excitement, and oral participation.

Some students actively supported classmates by shouting possible answers or helping them remember vocabulary and grammatical structures. Examples of spontaneous interactions included:

“Teacher, was it shouldn’t? Because watching TV was unhealthy, right?”

“Teacher, I understand it, but I don’t know how to say it... Is this correct? ‘You shouldn’t drink too much soda’?”

Although confidence improvement was moderate rather than substantial, students progressively demonstrated greater willingness to attempt speaking in English, particularly in activities involving teamwork, competition, and immediate interaction.