How can students-centered classroom enable a deeper engagement in a seventh grade course of

an ESL classroom?

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Abstract

The purpose of this AR study was to enable a deeper engagement in a seven grade course of an ESL classroom at the school Miraflores. Aiming to achieve the research goals students-centered classroom was implemented as a key strategy. The data to analyze the impact of this project was collected through teacher journals, check list, video recordings, Ss' written production, interview, and Ss' logs. The action plan fostered students' interactions and helped them to make little contributions to accomplish a given task. Nevertheless, Ss did not use time adequately, did not make considerable efforts to follow instructions at first time, and did not show themselves involved in performing the activities.

Key words: Students-centered classroom, group work, scaffolding, engagement.

Degree requirement

This action research project was conducted during my teaching practicum at school Miraflores Luis Eduardo Valencia Garcia (2016-2017) as requirement to obtain my Bachelor education degree in Foreign Language Teaching (English and French) at the Escuela de Idiomas, Universidad de Antioquia, in Medellín, Colombia.

Acknowledgements

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Preface

Over the time, teachers and researchers have been interested on improving foreign language teaching throughout the implementation of a variety of approaches, methodologies and strategies, aiming to fostering effective learning outcomes. As a result, nowadays, there are several methodologies that suggest teachers to move away from the traditional classes and to implement new teaching alternatives. In this regard, the present AR project aimed to enable Ss' engagement thought the implementation of a new methodology known as Students-centered classroom.

The idea of holding Students-centered classroom emerged after analyzing the observations carried out during the first part of my practicum. Most of the time the Ss' opportunities to interact among them were undertaken. Because of that, in the second part, I wanted to implement more dynamics classes and to create a learning environment where Ss could learn from each other and have a more active role. To do this, I designed an action plan focused on improving students' learning skills and enable a deeper engagement through the implementation of three main strategies. During the development of each strategy in the second part of my practicum, I collected, interpreted, and analyzed data in order to reach some final results and conclusions about the impact of this AR project.

Context

The Institucíon Educativa Miraflores Luis Eduardo Valencia is a public school located in Buenos Aires on the street 48N° 27-05. From 1963 to 1994 it was a private institution directed by the nuns of "El Sagrado Corazon". In 1995 the institution started to operate under the name of "Colegio Miraflores". Then, in 1997 the previous named was changed by "Institucion Educativa Miraflores Luis Eduardo Valencia Garcia" in honor to the teacher and social leader.

The building has three floors, the institution has 21 classrooms, some of them have a TV set, all of them with a loudspeaker; 3 internet rooms, a video beam, 4 laptops for teachers, a teachers' office, 1 library, 2 sports fields, a gym, a food service, a cafeteria, a playground to be used exclusively for pre-scholars, an auditorium, a girls' bathrooms, a boys' bathroom, and a covered terrace to be used in the art subject.

Regarding to the school's philosophy, its pedagogical model is based on Giovani Iafrancesco's proposal of a transformative education, school and pedagogy through the holistic transformative pedagogical model.

The mission of the institution: to generate appropriate learning and coexistence environments in the community in order to train respectful and responsible people with sense of identity, people able to think, to lead, to transform, and to transcend in their social environment to adapt themselves to the new global trends.

The vision of the institution: to consolidate itself for the year 2018 as an institution of meaningful learning for promoting the knowledge, the knowing how to be, and the knowing how to do, through different human, technological, cultural, and communicative alternatives.

Focusing on the use of the TIC and the English language, thus, improving the quality of life of the educative community.

Some of the institutional projects are: Family school, the democracy, the environment, the sexuality, vial education, ethics and values, strengthening of the oral and written language, the school life, use of the free time, English, and playful-pedagogic. Additionally, there are others institutional activities that allow students and families to be part of the institution*: "día de la familia, día de la antioqueñidad"* and *"día de afrocolombianidad"*.

This school offers education from pre-scholars to eleventh graders, it has about 1300 students most them belong to the 9 & 8 communes of the city. Regarding the human resources, the institution has 38 teachers, a principal, 2 coordinators, 1 psychologist, a person for logistical support, and 3 persons for institutional cleanliness. Furthermore, the institution has a quality committee composed by 4 teachers, a representative of students, a representative of students' parents, 2 coordinators and the principal. Additionally, the school government is composed for a teacher of each area (11 teachers), a representative student for each grade from forth to eleventh grade (22 students), a student's parent for each grade (31parents), 2 coordinators and the principal.

The school offers English as a foreign language, the English department (*Humanidades idioma extranjero-Inglés*), follows the guidelines of the national program "*Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje y Currículo*", with the aim to foster the communicative and sociocultural competences; linguistics, pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Besides, the institution makes part of the bilingual project; it counts with two English assistants that come from other countries to support the English classes in the 10th and 11th grades. On the school's library there are some books that can be used in the English classes like *English please* but it is not mandatory to use

them. There are four English teachers, three of them have a bachelor in foreign language teaching and the other one has a bachelor in technology.

The observation was carried out in a six grade (6°1); the classroom where I am observing is located in the second floor of the building, it has a TV set, a white board, a teacher's desk, and some posters in English; room size is appropriate but it needs to be painted.

The class is made up by 39 students, 15 girls and 24 boys, they are teenagers between 10 and 15 years old. Most of the students belong to the 8th and 9th commune of the city. In general, students' attitudes towards English learning is very changeable, sometimes they do the activities and participate, other times they misbehave and do nothing. The English classes are Mondays and Thursdays from 6:15 am to 8:05 am. The classes are divided into two sessions. The first one is from 6:15 am to 7:10 am, the second one is from 7:10 am to 8:10 am.

The English teacher in charge of the English classes in this group does not have a bachelor in foreign languages. However, she has some basic knowledge about the use of English related to grammar structures and pronunciation.

For the second part of the practicum it was a new CT, Zoraida Córdoba, she has 20 years of experience in foreign language teaching, graduated from the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. In addition, the class observed during the first part (6°1) was promoted to a seventh grade (7°1) and this new group is made up by 41 Students.

Statement of the problem

Over the years, in Colombia, the teaching practice has been a hotly debated issue; often highly controversial in the foreign language education field in public schools. Doubtless, dozens of methodologies, theories and approaches have emerged to highlight several options for

developing and implementing suitable teaching strategies. Unfortunately, a large number of teachers show a strong resistance to change their traditional teaching practices. On the one hand, many English teachers are not academically or vocationally prepared for teaching the language subject. One the other hand, sometimes, teachers are neither prepared nor willing to face the challenges of implementing non-traditional lessons; they do not see the value of getting out of their comfort zone. As a result, they continue implementing classes in the conventional way.

Generally, the CT implemented teacher-centered lessons. It was the most controversial issue that I noticed during my observations. I could find different situations which have caught my attention and those situations are the fundamental support and the main reason why I decided to work on the implementation of student-centered lessons as a manner to tackle my problematic situation and find a better way to facilitate students' English learning. Recent researchers highlight the valuable role of teachers in classes as facilitators of the learning processes where the students have an active role for constructing knowledge. As Jones, L. (2007) argued:

"In a student-centered class, students don't depend on their teacher all the time, waiting for instructions, words of approval, correction, advice, or praise. They don't ignore each other, but look at each other and communicate with each other. They value each other's contributions; they cooperate, learn from each other, and help each other." (p. 2)

Over the last few years, students' interaction and participation have become increasingly important, there is an increased awareness for developing adequate learning skills when learning a foreign language.

Nonetheless, during the class observed, Ss frequently received their English classes in a traditional way which is teacher-centered lessons. There was not a high promotion of students'

interaction. Students were taught through teacher explanations and the group activities were not privileged. Additionally, when the students worked together, they did not have a specific role or responsibility to make the classes more coherent and effective.

> *"The main objective of implementing group work activities is to make students to share their knowledge and have a specific responsibility. Otherwise, all the members need to participate and accomplish a common goal. This allows them to take actions in the group and be aware of the activity." (Journal entry August 18th, 2016).*

Regularly, the students had the opportunity to participate in active activities where the teacher used different materials to hold the class as flashcards, videos or images, but the activities proposed do not provide them a supportive learning environment. Often, students needed to do some simple exercises but they did not have neither clear examples nor clear instructions to accomplish the goal. Moreover, the distribution of time was not enough. Because of that, many of the students got lost and did not finish the activities proposed by the teacher.

Through the observations I found that many of the students did not pay attention to the explanations and do not feel engaged on the English class because it was teacher-centered lessons. How they behaved during the classes allowed me to realize that they were not engaged to learn from a traditional class.

After considering the issues mentioned above, I realized that when teaching a foreign language, student-centered lessons could be a good opportunity to facilitate students' interaction and participation in order to help them to construct knowledge and learn from each other's experiences, and enable a deeper engagement by giving them the space to become active subjects of their learning process.

Theoretical framework

This theoretical framework presents some relevant concepts that support my action research project. First, I will give the definitions of teacher-centered lessons and its implications. Second, I will tackle the concept of students-centered classroom. Third, I will address the relevance of group work in a student-centered classroom. Finally, I will define scaffolding and engagement concept.

In general education, and particularly in foreign language education, teachers direct learning process and students have been seen as passive subjects. The teacher is the one in power making decisions about what activities to implement, how students must learn, and what they need to do and what not. Likewise, students have not many opportunities to interact among them because usually the teacher is speaking and explaining and the students must learn by listening to him/her. Thus, in a teacher centered-classroom "The teacher is the authority in the classroom. Students do as the teacher says, so that the teacher's knowledge can be transmitted to them. In this type of classroom, teacher-student interaction is minimal and is dominated by the teacher." (Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Lörscher, 1986 as cited in Antón. M. 1999, p.304)

I consider that learning is not a lineal process where the teacher speaks and the students listen passively, it is really important to create teaching and learning environment where students can interact not only with the teacher but also with their classmates in order to learn from each other. This kind of learning and teacher environment is possible by implementing students-centered classroom. As Jones, L. (2007) states:

"In a student-centered class, students don't depend on their teacher all the time, waiting for instructions, words of approval, correction, advice, or praise. They don't ignore each other, but

look at each other and communicate with each other. They value each other's contributions; they cooperate, learn from each other, and help each other."(p.2)

In this sense, students-centered classroom favors students' active participation and interaction, the teacher and the students can negotiate the topics to be covered and the way in which they will be carried out. Moreover, the teacher has to consider students' real lives and needs to hold the class. Even though in a students-centered classroom the aim is to foster students' interaction this strategy enables different modalities to carry out the classes. Jones, L. (2007) mentioned that at times students can work alone, in pairs, in groups or interacting with the teacher and the whole class. Moreover, it can be also teacher led. (p.3). In teacher led classes there is not a lot of teacher-Ss interaction. Notwithstanding, in the whole class modality the students and the teacher can interact among them and Ss' experiences and perspectives are taken into account.

Students-centered lessons give the teacher the opportunity to create an appropriate environment where learning can occur easily. Through this project group work activities will be favored because they provide many benefits for both the teacher and the students. As Coppock and Dwivevi (1993) said: "Group work can help pupils to form better relationships with their peers and with their teachers, which can directly affect behavior in the classroom." (p.267)

When students interact among them, they can be encouraged to become active learners and learning outcomes are improved. They can feel more engaged to participate and share their ideas than in the teacher-centered classes. In small groups they can feel more comfortable even if they make mistakes. After a whole class explanation, the students can practice what they have learnt and explain to those who did not understand. "The act of teaching or explaining to others

may help L2 learners construct a more coherent and clearer representation of their own L2

knowledge" (Allwright, 1984, as cited in Storch, N. 2002, p.122)

Considering the support that students receive for others during their learning process,

there is another relevant concept what is scaffolding. As Guerrero and Villamil (2000) mention:

"The metaphor of scaffolding has been extended in educational psychology to refer to the

process by which tutors—parents, caretakers, teachers, or more expert partners—help someone

less skilled solve a problem." (p.52) In this sense, it is true that a more expert partner can help

someone less skilled, but even if they have similar language skills what might be confused for a

student might be easy for another and they could learn from each other. Larkin (2002)

mentioned:

> When students are learning new or difficult tasks, they are given more assistance. As they
>
> begin to demonstrate task mastery, the assistance or support is decreased gradually in
>
> order to shift the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the students. (p. 5)

The main objective of scaffolding process is to provide a learning supportive

environment. It can go from appropriate material, and corrective feedback to clear instructions.

Additionally, scaffolding can benefit students because when they think they are able to

accomplish a particular task, they will feel more engaged and more willing to work on it.

Finally, I want to highlight the importance of students' engagement. When students are

engaged the classes can be more successful in terms of time management, input and output. As

Newmann, F. (1992) says: "We define student engagement in academic work as the student's

psychological investment in and effort directed toward learning, understanding, or mastering the

knowledge, skills, or crafts that academic work is intended to promote." (p.12). Teachers need to

consider the kind of classes or activities they are carrying out to be sure their students are interesting on it. In this regard, Thaliah & Hashim (2008) said: "Understanding of engagement in classroom is essential for teachers to sustain positive learning outcomes from students." (p. 496)

Considering all the aspect mentioned above, I think that through the implementation of students-centered lessons I can enable a deeper engagement towards the English learning, and to create a learning environment where students can have a more active role and be responsible of their educative process.

Research question

How can students-centered classroom enable a deeper engagement in a seven grade course of an ESL classroom?

General objective

- To enable students' engagement by using student-centered lessons

Specific objectives

- To implement student-centered lessons for helping them to develop the production language skills.
- To use group work for encouraging students' interaction and participation.

Action strategies

For the purpose of analyzing the impact of this AR project and seeking to answer the research question mentioned above, it was designed a set of strategies considering the objectives of the institution which are based on the BLR (Basic Learning Rights) for English language learners and the suggested curriculum.

The strategies included in the action chart were focused on the implementation of students-centered classroom keeping in mind relevant principles mentioned by Jones, L. (2007) aimed at engaging students by enabling interaction and participation.

To develop the first strategy (The implementation of students centered-lessons for developing the foreign language production) students will create a booklet related to the physical and emotional health where they will write about what make them feel positive and negative, how managing big emotions and their ideas related to healthy and unhealthy habits. For the second strategy (Group work for encouraging students' interaction) the teacher will implement reading comprehension activities; the students will read a bully story and discuss about how to deal with the situation based on some reactions of a bullied person.

All the strategies implemented in this AR project aimed to create a learning supportive environment where Ss can receive support of their classmates and the teacher through along the classes. The activities proposed will take into account students' daily lives, ideas and opinions while encouraging them to be more active learners. In the chart below there is a description of the methodology and activities for this AR project.

ACTION STRATEGY	METHODOLOGY	ACTIVITY	MATERIALS & RESOURCES	INSTRUMENTS	TIME	FINDINGS
The implementation of students centered-lessons for developing the foreign language production.	Written activities connected with students' daily lives for helping them to improve their productive skills.	Productive skills: 1.Ss create a booklet related to physical and emotional health. (group activity) 2.Ss present their productions orally. (group activity)	-Images, photographs, and Drawings. -An Ilustrated and crative booklet.	-Check list. - Journal entry. - Ss' Written production. -Video recording.	- February 23rd -March 2nd -March 27th	This strategy let the Ss to be the center of the class but they did not take advantage of it. The most relevant problematic of this strategy was the lack of attention, responsibility, and autonomy for students to be in charge of their English learning process.
Group work for encouraging students' interaction.	Students share their knowledge and learn from each other.	1. Students read a short story about bullying and aswer some questions about it. (pair work) 2. Students read some reactions of a bullied person and discuss if it is a good or a bad way to deal with it. (group work)	-Flash cards with new vocabulary -The story. -Chart about a bullied person reaction.	- Students' written Production, -Teacher's journal -students' survey.	-April 18th -April 24th -April 25th	This strategy enabled Ss interaction and had good results in terms of final product (reading comprenhension activities) Nevertheless, along the process students did not show a high interest on value each other contributions. Mainly during the socializations.

Developments of actions

Through the observations carried out during the fisrt part of this AR project Ss' opportunities to interact were undertreath and, as a result, in this second part, it was designed some activities in order to create a classroom environment where Ss could have a more active role. In this regard, the fisrt strategy was the implementation of students centered-lessons, as a strategy to help Ss to connect their daily lives with the foreign language for improving their productive skills (writing and speaking)

The teacher proposed the elaboration of a booklet considering the school English program about emotional and physical health, the booklet included 5 writing exercises. For this strategy students worked in small groups (three members) and decided by themselves who work with. Each class, before students gathered in groups the teacher shared some aspects for accomplishing the task (Grammar structures, content, examples, feedback, explanations, instructions and length of the writings).

During the classes the Ss had opportunities to partcicipate and to give ideas in spanish and then they took the information shared in the whole class or in small groups to write sentences in English. The last activity of this estrategy was the presentation of some activities from the booklet orally. For the oral presentation the students were interested in asking questions related to the pronunciation of some words. This strategy helped students to share orally and writing ideas and opinions of their fellings, emotions, and actions.

For the second strategy Ss worked in small groups; first of all, they read individually the story "The english test nightmare" and answered some questions about it. Even Ss did not know

all the vocabulary of the story they demonstrated to have a general idea of it. Secondly, Ss

gathered in groups to compare their answers and to share their undertandings of the story.

Third,the teacher and some students did a role play of the story and students made constributions

in the whole class to help their classmates to better understand it. Fourth, Ss were provided with

a chart with 9 posible reactions of a bullied person and disscussed about the good and the bad

ways to deal with bullying. Then, they differentiated them with two different colors. Finally, the

teacher socialized the Ss' answers and ideas of each reactions in the whole class. Durign the

activities the students made use of their notes and their classmates' notes and the teacher was

constantly monitoring them.

Findings and Interpretations

In order to enable a deeper engagement in a seventh graders English course and

considering some issues related to the foreign language learning and teaching, it was conducted

this AR project seeking to move away from the traditional teaching practice and creating a

learning environment where the students could become the center of the class better known as

students-centered classroom. For the purpose of achieving the main objective of this AR project

they were used three strategies some instrumets to collect data as teacher journals, a check list,

the students written production, an interview (in spanish), a questionnary (in spanish) and video

recordings.

For the fisrt strategy (implementing students centered-lessons for developing the foreign

language production) the students created a booklet in small groups to share ideas and opinions

of their daily lives. (see apendix 1). For helping Ss to accomplish the assigned tasks, the teacher

provided them with explanations and examples. Then, students gathered in groups. However, to

keep Ss attentive was really difficult; because they did not pay attention and many of them were usually confused. 32% of the booklet's assigned activities were not fulfilled with the requirements established by the teacher. The main reason was the lack of attention through along the lessons and Ss' time spent. During the activities students did not show a deep engagement except coloring and they wasted the class time talking about nonacademic issues. In general, Ss did not make considerable efforts to achieve the lessons goals. (See appendix 4, check list February 23th, 2017).

According to Jones, L. (2007) "in a student-centered classroom students talk more, share ideas, learn from each other, are more involved, feel more secure and less anxious, use English in a meaningful realistic way, and enjoy using English to communicate."(p.3). In this sense, during the design of the booklet the students shared ideas and were involved in the creative activities like coloring but in many opportunities they did not do the writings exercises. (See appendix 2). Students shared ideas and opinions, and talked more. Unfortunately, many of the conversations they had were not focused in accomplishing the activities.

Evidently, the implementation of the first strategy took more than expected; it was a lot of time consuming. Constantly, the teacher had to clarify specific aspects of the lessons and monitored students' process, but it was not enough to make Ss' to be on tasks. Certainly, Ss worried about the booklet and were interested on doing all the pending activities just at the end of the first term. Many of the Ss did not work neither in the classroom nor at home; usually most of them did not do homework. "They had to bring to the classroom the assigned homework but just 3 of them did it." (Journal entry 2, February 14th, 2017).

Although 87% of the activities were delivered, Students did not show a high interest on tasks. Conversely, Ss were focused on the results instead on the process. As a consequence, time used and Ss'attitudes reduced the effectiveness of this strategy.

In conclusion, in this first strategy, the need of providing the Ss with clear examples, grammar structure explanations or proper instructions, was not enough. This strategy let the Ss be the center of the class but they did not take advantage of it. The most relevant difficulty of this strategy was the lack of attention, responsibility, and autonomy for students to be in charge of their English learning process. Although the teacher tried to contextualized activities in order to make them more meaningful it did not seem to have a strong impact on the students' engagement.

The second strategy was about encouraging students interaction and participation through group work. This strategy helped students to share their ideas and knowledge to accomplish the reading comprenhension tasks. Students interact among them and with the teacher to develop the activities proposed. Along the classes, some Ss showed high interest on understanding the activities by asking questions: "Teacher, esta reaction es mala por que Marcos golpeó la cara de Hector" , "profe, yo me estoy guiando por las palabras claves, por ejemplo esta reacción es mala por la palabra agressive" (Journal entry 9, April 25th, 2017).

Although most of the students acomplished the tasks (see apendix 5) and did a good job, the time for finishing the activities took more than expected as a consequence of Ss' attitude as lack of attention and waste of time. For instance, during the socializations it was really hard to keep students attentive to their classmates' contributions; many of them did not care about their classmates answers and were not able to support their teammates. "Most of the time it was a small group that participated and when I asked another group for the general idea of the reactions

they seemed not to have it clear" (Journal entry 10, May 2, 2017). In this sense, the Ss'attitudes showed that for them it was not easy to value each other contributions.

Certainly, this strategy enabled Ss' interaction; they were really motivated to be in groups. For this strategy it was conducted an interview (see appendix 6), all the students interviewed on April 25th expressed that they felt comfortable working in groups, it can be shown through some of their answers: "Did you feel comfortable working in small groups?": "Sí, porque en pequeños grupos podíamos hacer bien el trabajo entre todos", "Si, eh…no sé, pues porque todos compartíamos ideas y aportábamos varias cosas". As Coppock, C., & Dwivedi (1993) established "for most children and adolescents, the small group is a natural and highly attractive setting." (p. 10) according to this experience, being together was different from working together. Most of the time the students were together but not making efforts to do the given task. The teacher had to monitor them to have them work.

Group work could lead to some benefits as long as the teacher considers certain aspects. According to Pesce, A. (2017) for managing class time it is fundamental to analyze class goals and the time required for lessons and activities. Additionally, teachers have to skip all unnecessary content and focus on goals and Ss' needs. In this regard, use of time can be reduced when Ss help each other to do activities. However, Ss did not spend the class time appropriately within the groups because they did not use adequately the peer support as their teammates' contributions, and the previous information they had on their notebooks. During most of the classes, students misbehaved within their groups and implemented few minutes of the class to do the activities proposed. In the interview Ss were honest and mentionned some disadvatages of working in groups "Algunas desventajas de trabajar en pequeños grupos son que muchas, o sea que hay mucha recocha por decirse así y hablan mucho, entonces eso sería una desventaja", "Que

si alguno se para, o... o no ayuda, pues, nos demoramos más o no va hacer lo mismo" (Interview April 25th, 2017).

To conclude, the implementation of this strategy has good impact in terms of the final final product (see appendix 5). Nevertheless, the aim of implementing group work activities was to be aware not only about results but also about the process. Evidently, it was not positive enough because Ss were not involved as it is supposed they should have been. In this regard, students expressed what they should change for next group work activities: "Eh pues, ser más juiciosa y poner más atención", "Poner más atención y hacer todas las actividades bien".

Conclusions and suggestions

Certainly teachers around the world and especially foreign language teachers are provided with a set of strategies (methodologies or approaches) that establish how to develop a class for improving its outcomes. Evidently, those strategies are not adequately for all the different settings. Being aware of the particularities where the classes are taking place is fundamental in order to benefit the language acquirement. In this regard, Student-centered classroom was the main strategy of this AR project.

The aim of this research study was to enable a deeper engagement through students-centered lessons. They were provided with enough time, clear instructions, explanations, and feedback to accomplish the lessons goals; they received peer support and teacher support to do the proposed activities. Based on the findings it is possible conclude that this strategy helped students to be more active learners. The action plan fostered Ss' interactions for sharing opinions, ideas, and experiences and they demonstrated to be comfortable working in small groups. Nevertheless, it is important to clarify that even Ss valued each other ideas and opinions within the small groups, during the class' socializations it was difficult to keep them attentive to their partners' contributions.

The evidence shows that Ss developed and understood a high percentage of the activities, this project made possible to have positive language outcome. Nonetheless, it could have been better. Considering Ss' attitudes, it can be seen that they did not followed instructions the first time and were not involved on most of the activities; they spent more time than expected to reach the classes goals. In the same way, they did not contribute to the creation of an adequate learning environment; it was a challenge to manage discipline.

It is worth highlighting the fact that the third strategy (Students receptive skills through scaffolding) was not implemented as a consequence of the teachers' strike. This issue could be associated with a reduced likelihood of positive outcomes. In brief, the implementation of the action plan of this research study did not have a significant impact on students' engagement.

Reflection

From the begging of my practicum I was willing to discover and experience the challenges of teaching in a public school. I wanted to know how well prepared both physical and mental I was to face the different situations. After this experience I confirmed that there is indeed a gaping hole between theory and practice. Theory gives us the foundations but it is certainly in practice where we show our abilities. This experience let me put in practice my knowledge and enabled me to discover my strengths and weakness.

I have been studying for becoming a foreign language teacher for five years and I am aware that when we are in the classroom sometimes it is the second priority. There you have to think about other aspects that could impact the language learning as discipline, Ss' motivation, Ss' responsibility, and so on. As teachers we need to consider all those aspects and then try to do our best for teaching the language.

During my practicum occasionally I felt good; usually I was really disappointed because I would like to have had better results in terms of Ss' attitudes. However, I realized that it is possible to teach a language creating learning environments where students can be the center of the class. Now the challenge is to implement more strategies to manage discipline to have more satisfying teaching moments.

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Appendixes

Appendix 1

Appendix 2 (Activity related to managing emotions)

Appendix 3 (Triangulation activities of the booklet)

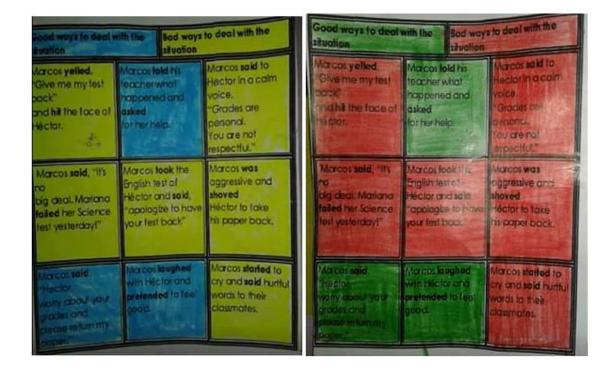| ASPECTS	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Acomplished activities	52	87%
Not acomplished activities	8	13%
Completed activities	45	75%
Incompleted activities.	15	25%
Fulfilled requirements in the activities:	41	68%
Not fulfilled requirements in the activities:	19	32%

Appendix 4 (Check list first strategy)

Check list. Students' attitudes							
February 23th 2017	A.E	M.T	A.B	A.F	A.N	N.T	Comments
1 Students pay attention to teacher whole class explanation.			x				Constantly it was necessary to ask them for silence.
2 Students were attentive and participated.			x				Few of them were not paying attention. The teacher tried to keep them attentive by asking questions but it was not easy.
3 Students make efforts to solve the problem.(dictionary use, using their notes)					x		Instead using the dictionaries some of them asked the teacher for the unknown vocabulary.
4 Students were respectful and willing to work in groups.	x						In this class there was no difficulties among the Ss.
5 Students ask for explanation when necessary.					x		

		A.E	M.T	A.B	A.F	A.N	N.T	
6	Students used the vocabulary and expressions tackled to work on the class task.					x		The pre-activity helped them to better understand the vocabulary to be used.
7	Students were willing to support their group.					x		They knew what they had to do but did not take advantage of the peer support.
8	Students were focused on the class activity.					x		They were talking among them about non-academic issues.
9	Students show a good understanding of the contents.				x			
10	Students accomplished the task.					x		Ss invested the time just coloring the hand.

A.E :All the students.
M.T: Almost all the students.
A.B: A high quantity of the students.
A.F: A few quantity of students.
A.N Almost none of the students**.
N.T: none of the students.

Appendix 5 (Final product second strategy)

Appendix 6 (Questions for the interview)

1. Did you feel comfortable working in small groups?

2. Did you benefit from working in small groups?

3. Did you communicate effectively with your teammates?

4. Were your ideas and opinions taken into account?

5. Could you mention some disadvantages of working in small groups?

6. Did the teammates make contributions to accomplish the tasks?

7. What would you improve for future group work activities?

8. Were the teacher's interventions enough? What could the teacher improve?