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“DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF VISUAL AIDS TO FACILITATE THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TO EIGHT AND NINE YEAR OLD CHILDREN AT THE ABC ENGLISH INSTITUTE.”

Disertación de grado previo a la obtención del título de Licenciada en Lingüística Aplicada con Mención en la Enseñanza de Lenguas.

LINEA DE INVESTIGACIÓN: Desarrollo de nuevos formatos para la elaboración de materiales que faciliten el desarrollo de las cuatro destrezas principales en la enseñanza de lenguaje extranjero (ingles); hablar, escuchar, escribir y leer; tomando en cuenta el enfoque generacional de los estudiantes.

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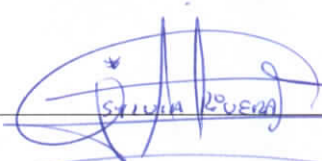
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Me gustaría dedicar esta Tesis a toda mi familia.

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## ABSTRACT

In a globalizing world, the ability to speak the *de facto* international language, English, is increasingly important and it, therefore, must be taught to the fertile minds of young children. The major difficulty in this endeavor is the short attention spans children possess. This project sought to improve the efficiency and efficacy of English teaching by incorporating visual aids into a systematic approach. A thorough researching of the nature of intelligence, the theories of multiple intelligences and learning styles and various types of visual aids was performed. The knowledge garnered from this research was actuated in a project to implement new methods at an afterschool English program teaching young children. Flashcards, posters, blackboards, and other visual aids were incorporated into lesson planning with the goal of capturing and focusing students' attention on English thus improving language learning and the efficiency of limited class time. The results showed that the use of visual aids enhanced the effectiveness of lessons and cultivated a learning-oriented atmosphere in the classroom. The success achieved demonstrated the value of using visual aids to more efficaciously teach English to young children.

## RESUMEN

En un mundo globalizado, la capacidad de hablar la lengua internacional de facto, Inglés, es cada vez más importante y, por lo tanto, se les debe enseñar a las mentes fértiles de los niños pequeños. La dificultad principal en este esfuerzo es el corto periodo de atención que los niños poseen. Este proyecto buscaba mejorar la eficiencia y la eficacia de la enseñanza de Inglés mediante la incorporación de ayudas visuales en un enfoque sistemático. Una minuciosa investigación de la naturaleza de la inteligencia, las teorías de las inteligencias múltiples y estilos de aprendizaje, y varios tipos de ayudas visuales se llevó a cabo. El conocimiento obtenido de esta investigación fue desarrollado en un proyecto para poner en práctica nuevos métodos en clases extracurriculares de Inglés para enseñar a los niños pequeños. Tarjetas, carteles, pizarrones, y otras ayudas visuales fueron incorporados en la planificación de las clases con el objetivo de captar y enfocar la atención de los alumnos en Inglés mejorando así el aprendizaje del idioma y el uso eficiente del tiempo limitado. Los resultados demostraron que el uso de ayudas visuales mejoró la eficacia de las clases y cultivó un ambiente orientado al aprendizaje en el aula. El éxito alcanzado ha demostrado la importancia del uso de ayudas visuales para enseñar más eficazmente el idioma Inglés a los niños pequeños.

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## INTRODUCTION

The style of this thesis paper is that of a project (“Project”) undertaken at the ABC English Institute (“ABC”) in Ambato, Ecuador. It was observed that children were not receiving the best education they could get. Teachers were using various traditional methods of teaching and the young students often lost focus. A number of behavioral problems also reduced the overall quality of education. My goal was to use personal experience and research into educational and psychological theories to improve the learning experience at ABC. The result was a concentration on visual aids in the classroom and the focus group for the Project was a class of eight and nine year old children at ABC.

The main focus of the Project was to maintain the attention of the aforementioned focus group of children on the classroom activities and lessons in order to improve the acquisition of English as a foreign language. Two important factors must be considered in order to accomplish this task. The first issue is the attention span of the average eight or nine year old student. It is a widely accepted fact in the psychological field of cognitive development that attention spans, while varying from individual to individual, gradually increase with age throughout one’s childhood. This is due to the physical development of the brain and the consequential increased capabilities of such. Additionally, with age, people gain a cognitive control, also known as executive function, over their attention. This means that adults, while still having limitations on their attention, have the conscious ability to refocus their attention on the same task repeatedly. At the ages of eight and nine, however, most children have not yet developed this level of control. It thus becomes

the responsibility of the teacher to refocus or redirect the students' attention at particular time intervals.

The second issue that must be considered is the theory of Multiple Intelligences and the consequent differences in student's individual learning styles. Traditional academia tends to focus primarily on linguistic and logical intelligences. The unfortunate result is that students who excel in one of the other six identified intelligences fall behind their peers. A lack of success in the classroom among these students may decrease their motivation and thus exacerbate the aforementioned attention problems. Every reasonable attempt must be made to ensure that all students' learning needs are accommodated. This requires the consideration of the multiple intelligences that students possess and their natural preferences for their individual strengths. Additionally, any methods of instruction that incorporate several learning styles should be utilized with the highest frequency possible.

Multiple Intelligences theory was developed because the traditional understanding of "intelligence" was far too limited, in its creator's opinion, given the wide range of human abilities. He identified eight categories of human ability and noted that each represented a different type of intelligence. The eight intelligences, according to the theory, are: linguistic, logical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. The theory states that, while each person has all eight types of intelligence, he or she may excel at only one or several relative to the others. A consequence of multiple intelligences is that individuals process and understand new information in different ways, known as learning styles. Given that students employ different cognitive methods of processing and storing information,

its manner of presentation affects whether or not it is understood and retained by the student.

The primary objective of the Project was to develop and implement effective, appropriate visual aids at the ABC English Institute. It was the stated goal of the Project to hold students' attentions for the duration of the class and consequently increase their rate of learning. This was accomplished in several specific ways.

The first way was diagnosing the classroom situation in order to determine which aids would be the most effective given the many factors involved, such as time, topics, and age. The second step was to design and develop the materials. Teacher budgets, time, and resource availability all limit what can be incorporated into the lessons, but there still remains available to almost all teachers a great deal of material that is inexpensive, easily produced, and widely available. The next step in the Project was to implement the materials in class. It was of course important that they be incorporated into well-designed lesson plans for maximum effect.

The Project consisted of applied research at ABC as to the effect of visual aids on the perceived under-performance of students. This was carried out by applying techniques developed in conjunction with an understanding of theoretical multiple intelligences and the limitations of children's attention spans. An observational technique was implemented and served the project well given the small size of the target group.

Chapter Two focuses on the methodology of the Project. Observations were first made at ABC regarding an insufficient use of attention-grabbing visual aids. Then, based on research, a new array of visual aids was implemented into the

classroom. A video was later taken after the implementation, school-wide, of visual aids in order to assess its effect. Included also are discussions of creating a lesson plan according to the framework of the Project and an overview of several important visual aid types.

Chapter Three covers the implementation of the learning devices and a discussion of several different types that were put into practice. Additionally, specific examples from implementation during the Project are provided and explained. Finally, an assessment of the effectiveness of this new approach is provided based on researcher observations and first-hand experience.

Chapter Four consists of conclusions based on the Project, specifically regarding the benefits realized for the students as well as benefits for the teacher. A number of indirect benefits were also observed and credited to the implementation of a new strategy during the Project. Finally, recommendations to other educators regarding the use of visual aids are included in this chapter.

# CHAPTER I

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 1.1 Attention and Cognitive Development

One of the primary obstacles this project attempts to overcome is the short attention spans of young developing children. It is a widely accepted fact in the psychological field of cognitive development that attention, while varying from individual to individual, “shows tremendous developments from infancy to adolescence.”<sup>1</sup> The ability of students to pay attention in class is thus proportional to their age. As the brain develops during childhood, it becomes increasingly able to perform a number of cognitive tasks. A number of scientific studies have been done on the subject and there are “documented developmental differences in the ability to sustain attention on a task, to switch attentional focus between tasks, and within a task, to focus on relevant versus irrelevant features.”<sup>2</sup>

These age-related, cognitive differences are due to the physical development of the brain and the consequential increased capabilities of such. Psychologists continue to debate whether this is a result of increased mental capacity or more efficient neural connections, but “what is clear is that with development, there are increases in the length of time over which information can be held or maintained and the facility and speed with which it can be processed.”<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this

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<sup>1</sup>Bauer, P. J. and M. M. Burch, “Cognitive Development in Childhood and Adolescence” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. (2004) 2101

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 2101

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2101

Project, the important fact is that the ability of children to focus and maintain their attention is a cognitive ability that increases with age. As a result, eight and nine year old students have not yet reached their optimal level of attention.

Additionally, with age, people gain a type of cognitive control, also known as executive function, over their attention. Psychologists have noted as a result of repeated experimentation that “with development, people become better able to attend selectively to the [material] at hand.” By the word “selectivity” cognitive psychologists mean that “at any instant, a perceiving organism focuses on certain aspects of the stimulus situation to the exclusion of other aspects.”<sup>4</sup> This means that all kinds of information are being absorbed by the unconscious brain, but it filters only a small fraction for the conscious brain. The ability to effectively filter information for the conscious brain increases, to a point, with age. Additionally, at a point, the conscious brain develops a cognitive control over this filter.

This is intrinsically related to our attention spans and means that adults, while still having limitations of attention, have developed the conscious ability to refocus their attention on the same task repeatedly. At the ages of eight and nine, however, most children have not yet developed this level of control and are prone to distractions. Studies have found that “the absence of irrelevant [sensory information] makes it easier for young children to focus”<sup>5</sup> on the relevant information. In other words, teachers must not only use effective and interesting teaching aids in their lesson plans, but also limit the number of possible distractions in the classroom. It also becomes the responsibility of the teacher to refocus or redirect the students’

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<sup>4</sup>Bundesen, C. “Attention: Models” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. (2004) 878

<sup>5</sup>Bauer, P. J. and M. M. Burch, “Cognitive Development in Childhood and Adolescence” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. (2004) 2101

attention at particular time intervals as they lack the necessary executive function to do it themselves.

## 1.2 Intelligence

Intelligence, according to one definition proposed by psychologists, is the ability to learn about, learn from, understand, and interact with one's environment. The word "environment" in this definition can be understood in several different ways. It does not necessarily refer to the environment of the earth, such as the desert or the mountains, although it can mean that kind of environment. It has a more general meaning that includes a person's immediate surroundings: the visual stimuli, sounds, smells, and especially the people around him or her. Environment can, therefore, be something as small as a family, the workplace, or, in the case of the Project, a classroom.

Children at a young age, tend to have the ability to get used to the new environments they are in. That means that children are capable of learning new things and can communicate effectively with the people around them. William Mackey notes that "in the first years of school, the child develops cognitive and communicative skills that by age twelve are almost equal to those of the adult... [and with time,] the child becomes less home-centered, as school and age peers become more important."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Mackey, William F., *Language Teaching Analysis*, London, Longmans, 1969.

This general ability, intelligence, consists of a number of specific abilities, including: adaptability to a new environment or to changes in the current environment, the capacity for knowledge and the ability to acquire it, capacity for reasoning, ability to comprehend relationships, ability to evaluate and judge, and the capacity for original and productive thought. These are the general human abilities that tend to be considered the intelligence of a human being. For example, a person who changes careers (new environment) and is quickly successful in his or her new profession is considered an intelligent individual. Also, a student who learns all the information in a university course and receives the top score on the exam (capacity for knowledge) is considered intelligent. Philosophers who can deduce profound truths through a series of logical steps from basic premises (both reasoning and original thought) are considered intelligent.

Education and intelligence are intrinsically intertwined with each assisting the other. Education helps augment intelligence and intelligence facilitates education. However, as was just noted, intelligence is not a singular entity and is still not entirely understood. Regardless, educators must appreciate this indisputable relationship. A number of theories have been developed to explain intelligence and its properties. One noted theory, which will be discussed at greater length in the following section, is the theory of Multiple Intelligences. This theory is based on the principle that intelligence is not a combination of different abilities, but that there are actually separate intelligences for these different abilities in eight distinct areas. While it is only a theory and not proven fact, this still has important implications for educators in the classroom.

### 1.3 Multiple Intelligences Theory

A cognitive psychologist at Harvard University in Cambridge Massachusetts developed a radical new theory regarding intelligence in 1983. Doctor Howard Gardner believed that the traditional understanding of intelligence, as measured by French psychologist Alfred Binet's Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and other similar standardized measures of "aptitude," was far too limited given what he considered the very wide range of human abilities. The first question Gardner asked is "what exactly is intelligence?" In answering that question, he "pluralizes the traditional concept" and asserts that intelligence is "the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community."<sup>7</sup> In that sense geniuses are not only astrophysicists and neurosurgeons, but also musicians, artists, and motivational speakers. Doctor Gardner thus went about developing his noted theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI).

The next question Gardner posed was "okay, now how many intelligences are there and what are they?" He explains in his book *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons* that he studied information on cognition from a plethora of sources. He studied the development of both "normal" and "gifted" individuals. He studied how cognitive function breaks down or is distorted during brain damage. He reviewed cases of savants, prodigies, as well as the autistic. He used statistical measures from psychometric studies as well as reviewed cross-cultural observations of cognition. In addition to all of this, he also included numerous other studies, observations, first person accounts, psychological tests, comparative assessments, and other resources in developing his theory. It was important for Gardner that "only those skills that are

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<sup>7</sup> Gardner, Howard. *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*. New York: Basic, 2006., p. 6

universal to the human species [be] considered.”<sup>8</sup> The reasoning for this is that in order to define “intelligences” as he intended to do, it was necessary that he find the “biological origin of each problem-solving skill.”<sup>9</sup> It was also essential that in order to be considered an “intelligence,” each category be associated with “a distinct module in the brain [that] operates more or less independently of the others.”<sup>10</sup> Support for this concept, though by no means conclusive proof, is the fact that the human brain employs different parts of the physical structure when faced with tasks requiring different intelligences as revealed through the use of positron emission tomography (PET) scans.<sup>11</sup>

Gardner listed seven separate intelligences and later added an eighth. No longer was there a singular intelligence that individuals possessed in various quantities. One could not be deemed smart or slow. Rather, there were now numerous different types of intelligences that people possessed in a limitless number of combinations. Two of Gardner’s eight categories are those traditionally considered the markings of intelligent people: logical-mathematical and linguistic. These are the types measured by many of the most noted tests including the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and the IQ (Intelligence Quotient). Both are clearly correlated to localized brain functions and are used to solve problems or fashion products of cultural consequence. Examples are mathematicians, scientists, physicians, writers, poets, and orators.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 7

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 7

<sup>10</sup> Gardner, H., & Hatch, T. (1989). Multiple intelligences go to school: Educational implications of the theory of multiple intelligences. *Educational Researcher*, 18(8), 4-9.

<sup>11</sup> Sternberg, Robert J. “Intelligence” *The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001. 410.

The other six intelligences are the true product of the theory and the ones that cause disagreement among experts. For that reason, each will be individually identified and briefly explained according to Gardner's rationale. The first intelligence is musical. Musical intelligence is a biologically innate aptitude for musical ability, whether that be the ability to play an instrument or compose music. It is intrinsically the understanding of music. It is the ability to hear and understand the particular melody and rhythm, which can be understood by musical notations, in a way few others can. This intelligence is generally demonstrated by rapid progression and improvement with a musical instrument or in composition, frequently surpassing the ability of the instructor. This is an intelligence often demonstrated by child prodigies, whose ability really cannot be described as anything other than innate, biologically instilled. Gardner provides the example of Yehudi Menuhin, perhaps the greatest violinist of the twentieth century. He began playing the violin at age four and gave his first concert with the San Francisco Orchestra at age seven. Gardner argues, "Yehudi Menuhin's musical intelligence manifested itself even before he had touched a violin or received any musical training. His powerful reaction to that particular sound [of the violin] and his rapid progress on the instrument suggest that he was biologically prepared in some way for a life in music."<sup>12</sup> Musical intelligence is also frequently demonstrated by persons with mental handicaps, such as autism, who can play an instrument beautifully but cannot converse and interact with other people. This intelligence is correlated to

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<sup>12</sup>Gardner, Howard. *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*. New York: Basic, 2006., pp. 8-9

localized brain activity, primarily in the right hemisphere, which fits with Gardner's requirement for intelligence.

The next form of intelligence for Gardner is bodily-kinesthetic. This intelligence has to do with control of bodily movement. In other words, it has a great deal to do with athletic ability. This seems to defy logic. Any person who went to high school knows that there are the smart kids and there are the athletes. How could athletic ability possibly be considered intelligent? Well, again, this comes back to Gardner's radical idea of different types of intelligences. The smart kids who did well in school had the logical-mathematical and/or linguistic varieties. Gardner argues that athletic ability is, in fact, a form of intelligence, as it does have a correlation to brain function. This is perhaps best demonstrated in W. Timothy Gallwey's description of the brain's particular role in kinesthetic control with regard to a seemingly simple game of tennis:

In order to anticipate how and where to move the feet and whether to take the racket back on the forehand or backhand side, the brain must calculate within a fraction of a second the moment the ball leaves the server's racket approximately where it is going to land, and where the racket will intercept it. Into this calculation must be computed the initial velocity of the ball, combined with an input for the progressive decrease in velocity and the effect of wind and of spin, to say nothing of the complicated trajectories involved. Then, each of these factors must be recalculated after the bounce of the ball to anticipate the point where contact will be made by the racket. Simultaneously, muscle orders must be given—not just once, but constantly refined on updated information. Finally, the muscles have to respond in cooperation with one another . . . Contact is made at a precise point that depends on whether the order was given to hit down the line or cross-court, an order not given until after a split-second analysis of the movement and balance of the opponent. . . . Even if you are returning the serve of an average player, you will have only about one second. Just to hit the ball is clearly a remarkable feat; to return it with consistency and accuracy is a mind-boggling achievement. Yet it

is not uncommon. The truth is that everyone who inhabits a human body possesses a remarkable instrument.<sup>13</sup>

As can clearly be seen, the brain is incredibly active in sports. Hand-eye coordination requires constant calculations to be made by the brain in a matter of mere nanoseconds. While perhaps strength, often an important part of athletic ability, is not directly related to brain function, one could argue that self-discipline and determination are. Additionally, some of the top athletes in the world participate in complicated team sports, such as American football or baseball, which require a complete understanding of formations, plays, routes, pitches, and the like. They also, like the example of tennis, require rapid decision making in response to the other team's formation, play, or pitch. Clearly, there is a correlation between movement and brain function, but it is also localized in the motor cortex and, as such, fits with Gardner's localized-brain-function requirement.

The next intelligence is spatial intelligence. This is essentially the ability to imagine something that cannot be perceived visually at that moment. This can be for a number of reasons. Gardner provides the example of navigators in the South Seas who can imagine the layout of the seas using only memory and the stars as their guides. The actual layout cannot be observed due to the darkness of night. He also contrasts spatial to visual with the example of the blind, who are able to imagine the spatial formation of an object by calculating the time it takes to move their hands around an object. In this case, the spatial environment cannot be perceived visually due to blindness but can, nevertheless, be comprehended. This is also a valuable intelligence in art. Certainly, it has some value in traditional arts such as sculpture, but in this case the reference is more apt for architecture, landscaping, and interior

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<sup>13</sup>Gallwey, W. Timothy. *Inner Tennis: Playing the Game*. New York: Random House, 1976. pp. 33-34

decorating. In those three professions, it is necessary to conceptualize a spatial environment that cannot be visually perceived because it does not yet exist. There are numerous component parts and the way in which they all come together is first imagined by persons with high spatial intelligence. In compliance with Gardner's criteria for being considered a type of intelligence, spatial intelligence is correlated with localized brain function in the posterior regions of the right cerebral cortex.

The next intelligence is interpersonal. Among the general public, this is often referred to as emotional intelligence. It is an innate ability to understand the emotional connections between human beings. It can be understood, according to Gardner, as a capacity to note subtle distinctions in another person such as "contrasts in their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions."<sup>14</sup> The example Gardner cites is that of Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller. It is a famous, true story of a deaf-blind Helen Keller who, with the help of Anne Sullivan, learns to understand and communicate with the world. Gardner argues that it was the particular ability of Sullivan to understand Helen and gain her confidence that she was able to achieve such a miraculous feat. Due to Helen Keller's deafness, blindness, and utter inability to communicate, this is clearly not related to language. This keen understanding of other human beings is often displayed by priests, therapists, marketing and sales people, and, of course, teachers. The higher the interpersonal intelligences of these people, the better they are at their job. As for localized brain function, a correlation exists with frontal lobe activity. This is further confirmed by a comparison of Alzheimer's to Pick's disease. Both are forms of dementia, but the former is characterized by deterioration of posterior regions of the brain while the latter is associated with frontal lobe lesions. Alzheimer's patients often lose a great deal of

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<sup>14</sup> Gardner, Howard. *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*. New York: Basic, 2006., p. 15

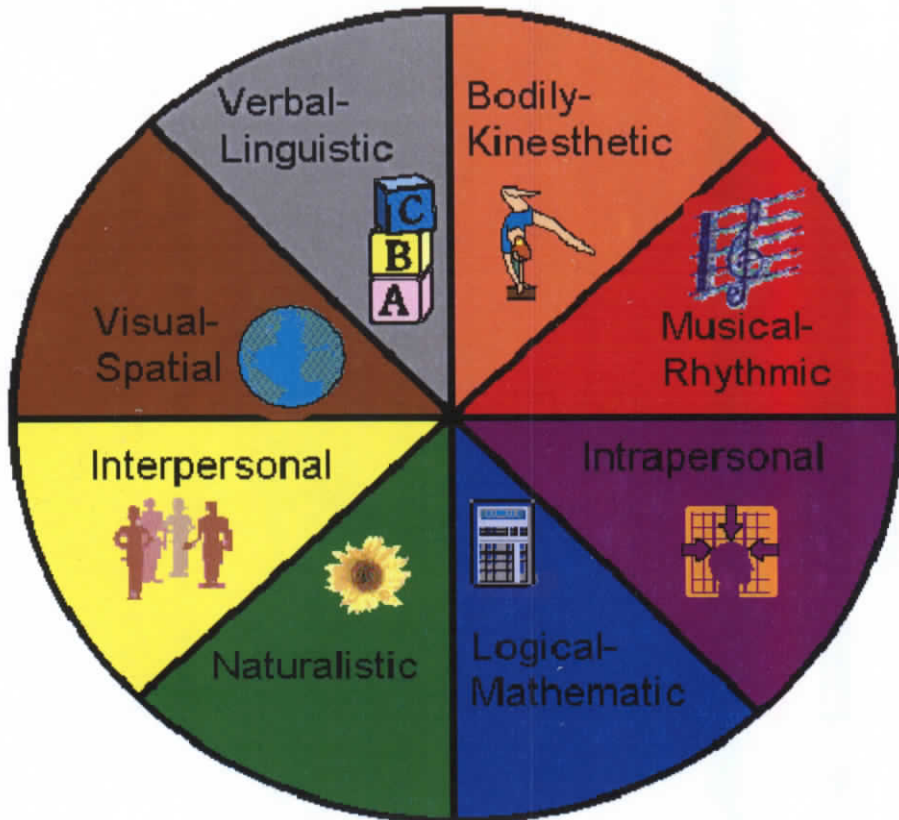
cognitive ability, but remain polite, apologetic, and socially aware. In contrast, Pick's patients often become disgruntled, unapologetic, and socially oblivious.

The next type of intelligence is intrapersonal. This is seemingly related to the last type discussed, especially with regard to brain function, but is different in several important ways. While interpersonal intelligence deals with the ability to read and understand others, intrapersonal intelligence is the ability to understand one's self, to identify one's motivating or driving forces, to isolate experiences which have had a profound effect on one's life and discover the way in which they have done so. Obviously, this is an intelligence that on its own is difficult to detect. The example provided by Gardner in his book is that of Virginia Woolf, a tremendously talented English author blessed with an incredible amount of linguistic intelligence. It is through her literary genius that her self-understanding shines through. She discusses in an essay three experiences in her life and the particular effect they have had. She even pinpoints that in her life which led her to become a writer. The example very clearly demonstrates Gardner's meaning by intrapersonal intelligence; however, he does not precisely explain how it is an "ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community." What is the value of self understanding to society? Perhaps there could be some increased ability to solve problems, but no scientific explanation of how this is so is ever presented. It does, however, have a connection to localized brain function in the frontal lobes. As such, it does meet this particular requirement. It remains to be seen, though, how it fits the other.

The final intelligence was added later by Dr. Gardner and was not one of the original seven. The last type of intelligence in MI theory is naturalist intelligence.

This seems to be the most specific and narrow of the eight intelligences. It is essentially the ability to classify and differentiate species and other aspects of nature such as weather patterns and geological formations. The most notable example of naturalist intelligence, especially here in Ecuador, is Charles Darwin. He had an unrivaled ability to differentiate among various species of insects, plants, and animals, most famously in the Galapagos Islands, where he discovered hundreds of new species, many of which evolved from the ancestral brethren of species found in other parts of the world. This naturalist intelligence allowed him to make insights few others had ever had and ultimately led to his development of the theory of evolution. Gardner believes that naturalist intelligence was tremendously important in the hunter-gatherer days, but that, in today's world, where most of our food is bought at grocery stores or even from the internet, its importance has greatly diminished. Nevertheless, Gardner does believe that this intelligence has incarnated itself in the way in which we differentiate which shoes we buy or shirt we wear. Gardner notes the relationship to brain function, but does not specify where such localized activity actually takes place.

**Fig 1.1 Graphic Illustrating the Eight Types of Intelligence in the Theory<sup>15</sup>**



MI theory can describe the diversity of abilities that individuals dominate, which varies from person to person according to the environment where the individual grew up. MI theory, because of its openness, has been supported and used by the “educational community around the world” and a number of schools and many teachers claim to use MI theory as the fundamental framework for their pedagogies.

Based on findings from related areas, this thesis aims to give a comprehensive understanding on how teachers can help the students to reach their

<sup>15</sup>Haywood, Erica; <http://expectumf.umf.maine.edu/mihome.html>

maximum development in the areas where they are better. For instance, teachers can develop their classes working with centers, which means that a group of students will work in small groups and each group is going to work with one skill in one day. In the **Personal Work Center** (Intrapersonal Intelligence), students explore the present area of study through research, reflection, or individual projects. In the **Working Together Center** (Interpersonal Intelligence), they develop cooperative learning skills as they solve problems, answer questions, create learning games, brainstorm ideas and discuss that day's topic collaboratively. In the **Music Center** (Musical Intelligence), students compose and sing songs about the subject matter, make their own instruments, and learn in rhythmical ways. In the **Art Center** (Spatial Intelligence), they explore a subject area using diverse art media, "manipulables," puzzles, charts, and pictures. In the **Building Center** (Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence), they build models; dramatize events, and dance, all in ways that relate to the content of that day's subject matter. In the **Reading Center** (Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence), students read, write, and learn in many traditional modes. They analyze and organize information in written form. In the **Math & Science Center** (Logical/Mathematical Intelligence), they work with math games, mathematical concepts, science experiments, deductive reasoning, and problem solving.

As every person has his or her own different level of varying intelligence, it is significant to identify the "dominant" intelligences as soon as possible and try to increase these intelligences. Even so, teaching for all types of intelligence is also important to develop the intelligences in which students have demonstrated weaknesses. Intelligences are not static and should not be neglected.

It is important that the “dominant intelligences also represent dominant learning modalities, and teaching should match the pattern of dominant abilities.”<sup>16</sup> For this reason, it is primary that schools are a source that allows students to develop their intelligences more easily. Schools should offer an education that is centered on individuals and their profiles of intelligence, not only on those that traditionally are more emphasized such as focusing on linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences.

In my experience as a teacher, it is important to assert that children are more available than adults to develop their intelligences, since childhood is the stage where they can develop their abilities. Additionally, it significantly helps students understand their abilities as well as the abilities of those around them. Also, “MI theory shows students how to use their strengths both to learn and to work on their weaknesses; builds students’ confidence to begin taking risks; provides for unforgettable learning, thereby helping students learn more.”<sup>17</sup> Furthermore when children are given the opportunity to use their stronger intelligences and when they have fun doing so, they become much more engaged in the learning process. Thus, we all learn from one another.

### 1.3.1 Learning Styles

The term “learning style” refers to the fact that when we want to learn something, each individual uses his or her own method or set of strategies. Although

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<sup>16</sup> Arnold, Jane and M. Carmen Fonseca “Multiple Intelligence Theory and Foreign Language Learning: A Brain-based Perspective” *International Journal of English Studies*. 2004. Vol 4, No. 1. 119-136.

<sup>17</sup>Elena L. Grigorenko, “Multiple Intelligences Theory,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

the specific strategies can vary according to the task we want to learn, each individual tends to have his or her own learning style preference. The use of the Learning Strategies is related to the perception that “learning is an active process.” This means that the learner is the one who is proactive and formulates the class according to his or her necessities. Learning styles group common ways that people learn. Everyone has a mix of learning styles. Some people may find that they have a dominant style of learning, with a correlating preference and with far less use of the other styles. On the other hand, some may find that they use different styles in different circumstances. In the classroom, teachers can develop ability in less dominant styles, as well as further improve the styles that students already use well.

Many factors are the result of these differences in learning, such as motivation, culture, and the student’s age. The particular challenge for teachers becomes deciding how to integrate didactic instruction and inquiry-centered experiences into the class. In the past, many teachers have tended to rely on books and pictures to teach science concepts. When possible, some have used hands-on experiences to reinforce that learning. The problem with this approach is that students may have no real-life experiences that relate to this information. Children learn best when they can fit new information into a concept frame they already have. The application of Learning Styles in education offers the students and teachers a great opportunity to reach a more effective level of learning.

According to the California Journal of Science Education, as part of the learning process, children develop theories about the world and how it works. That means that learners try to process the new information with the information they already know. That is why it is important, from early stages at school, to begin

building the children's responsibility and thus investment in the task assigned. Also, it is important that educators are prepared to teach what is going to be helpful to the students. Some prior knowledge is necessary to understand the task at hand, but having the prerequisite prior knowledge is still not always sufficient to ensure adequate results. People must remember and incorporate their prior knowledge into the learning process in order to be able to fully comprehend the new material within a preexisting paradigm. Research shows that students do not consistently see the relationships between new material that they read and what they already know. It is also shown that learning is enhanced when teachers pay close attention to the prior knowledge of the learner and use this knowledge as the starting point for instruction.

The way children begin to structure information in their minds depends on a variety of factors, including their individual experiences, their temperament and personality, and their culture. As these factors come together, children develop unique and enduring theories about the world and how it works. That is why it is important that within the educational field, it is meaningful to know how teachers can help students to learn in a better way using the learning styles. This is not just because it is going to facilitate the students' learning and their higher-quality of understanding, but also because this can help the teacher to manage the group in a more effective way.

“Children have a strong, innate desire to make sense of the world—and for good reason. With an array of sensory information flooding into the brain, coupled with growing motor skills and cognitive abilities, it is imperative for even the very

young child to organize the data.”<sup>18</sup> Many articles affirm that from birth to age eight is the best time to ensure that the developing neuronal nerve cells get a varied and adequate amount of stimulation. Many school activities are not meaningful since students understand neither why they are doing them nor what their purpose and usefulness are. Sometimes, school activities are not meaningful because they are not culturally appropriate.

The process used by O’Brien has been refined and developed into a “*learning cycle*”<sup>19</sup> that can be incorporated into the science curriculum. The learning cycle typically includes four phases. The first one is “Focus,” where students describe and clarify their ideas about a topic. This is often done through a class discussion, where students share what they know about the topic and what they would like to learn more about. For the teacher, this is a good time to develop an understanding of students’ current knowledge and possible misconceptions and to consider how to incorporate this information into the planned lessons. This is also a time to spark excitement and curiosity and to encourage children to consider pursuing their own questions.

The second is “Explore.” In this phase, students engage in hands-on, in-depth explorations of science phenomena. During this phase, it is important for students to have adequate time to complete their work and to perform repeated trials if necessary. Students often work in small groups during this phase. They also have

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<sup>18</sup> *National Science Resources Center*. “Science for All Children: A Guide to Improving Elementary Science Education in Your School District” (1997), 2, pp. 21-31. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

<sup>19</sup> “Teaching for Conceptual Change: Confronting Children’s Experience,” *Phi Delta Kappa* (May, 1990): 683-85.

the opportunity to discuss ideas with their classmates, which is a valuable part of the learning process.

The third phase is “Reflect.” In this phase, students organize their data, share their ideas, and analyze and defend their results. During this phase, students are asked to communicate their idea, which often helps them to reinforce their learning. The last phase is “Apply.” In this phase, students are offered opportunities to use what they have learned in new contexts and in real-life situations. This stage is very important because in this way teachers have the opportunity to prove that students have learned what has been thought.

“Because experience has shown that most children need some guidance in order to learn, by the 1970s, many educators believed that a more realistic way to organize the classroom is through a combination of instruction and hands-on experiences.”<sup>20</sup> As a result of many years of study and working with children, curricula and instruction are changing in schools today. They are attempting to become more student-centered than teacher-centered, to connect the school to real-life situations, and to focus on understanding and thinking rather than on memorization, drilling, and practice. Children, consequently, develop strategies to help themselves solve problems from an early age. For example, when pre-school children are told to go to the supermarket to buy a list of food items, they often repeat the items on their way to remember them better.

When they go to school, children need help from teachers to develop appropriate strategies for solving mathematics problems, when understanding texts,

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<sup>20</sup> *National Science Resources Center*. “Science for All Children: A Guide to Improving Elementary Science Education in Your School District” (1997), 2, pp. 21-31. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

doing science, learning from other students, etc. Research shows that when teachers make systematic attempts to teach learning strategies to students' substantial gains can result.

#### **1.4 Visual Aids in the Classroom**

A teaching aid is a tool used by teachers, facilitators, or tutors to help learners improve reading and other skills; illustrate or reinforce a skill, fact, or idea; and relieve anxiety, fears, or boredom, since many teaching aids are like games. Visual Aids help teachers to make the class more active and creative. There are some types of Visual Aids that can help teachers in the learning process. Learning can be reinforced with learning aids of different varieties because they stimulate, motivate as well as arrest learner's attention for a while during the instructional process.

Learning aids are instructional materials and devices through which teaching and learning are done in schools. Examples of learning aids include visual aids, audio-visual aids, real objects and many others. The visual aids are designed materials that may be locally made or commercially produced. They come in the form of wall-charts, illustrated pictures, pictorial materials, and other two dimensional objects. There are also audio-visual aids. These are teaching machines like radio, television, and all sorts of projectors with sound attributes. Audio video devices enhance the interest of students, especially students of quite young ages. As children take interest in colors and different devices and instruments, it becomes quite easy to teach them. This is due to the fact that they are very young and

everything is new and calls their attention in a fast and easy way, so audio video teaching is much more effective than conservative teaching.

Various researchers found that teachers, who are trained and untrained, use some form of materials to teach their lessons. However, the relevance of the choice of instructional material types that were used and the quality of the instructional material types that teachers use have not been investigated. Some investigators claim that whenever they taught with some of the learning aids, their students were more stimulated because the learning aids help them (students) to become more attentive. In addition, students positive attitude generate more interest for the lesson they teach. As a result, students participate better in class activity.

Visual aids help the teacher to reach the objectives by providing emphasis to whatever is being said. Clear pictures multiply the student's level of understanding of the material presented, and they should be used to reinforce the message, clarify points, and create excitement. Visual aids involve the audience and require a change from one activity to another: from hearing to seeing. When visual aids are used, their use tends to encourage gestures and movement by the teacher. This extra movement reinforces the control that the speaker needs over the presentation. The use of visual aids, then, is mutually beneficial to the audience (students) and to the instructor (teacher). Visual aids add impact and interest to a presentation. They enable the teacher to appeal to more than one sense at the same time, thereby increasing the audience (student's) understanding and retention level. With pictures, the concepts or ideas the teacher presents are no longer simply words - but words plus images.

Audiovisual aids are defined as any device used to aid in the communication of an idea. From this definition, virtually anything can be used as an aid, providing it

a successfully convey of the idea or information for which it is designed. An audiovisual product is any audiovisual (AV) item such as still photography, motion picture, audio or video tape, slide or filmstrip, that is prepared singly or in combination to communicate information or to elicit a desired audience response. Even though early aids, such as maps and drawings, are still in use, advances in the audiovisual field have opened up new methods of presenting these aids, such as videotapes and multimedia equipment which allow more professional and entertaining presentations to be presented.

The teacher should select the aids which will be most effective in presenting the skill(s) and knowledge that are to be gained in the lesson. Charts, slide presentations, motion picture film, are some of the aids which may be used. The teacher must take into account, however, the limitations of the instructional aids that are available for use in the lesson, for instance, it is important to suggest that when we work with children the use of videos has to be for a short period since children have a short period of attention. That is why motivation has an important role in the learning process, the instructor lists the method or techniques which are to be used to gain the interest and attention of the students. In some instances, goals may be set, encouraging remarks may be offered, honor roll or competition with self and others may be used as the motivating force.

Young children learn from everything they do. They are naturally curious and want to explore and discover. If their explorations bring pleasure or success, they will want to learn more. The use of visual aids in the classroom keeps the children interested in the activity and therefore they remain motivated to continue the activity.

The use of visual aids, such as flashcards, videos, and posters, helps children to learn more from these sorts of activities and they retain that material better.

Elmer, *et al* argue that “learning requires the active, constructive involvement of the learner.”<sup>21</sup> Effective learning at school requires students to pay attention, to observe, to memorize, to understand, to set goals and to assume the responsibility for their own learning. These cognitive activities are not possible without the direct involvement and the active engagement of the individual learner. Teachers must help students to become active and goal oriented by building on their natural desire to explore, to understand new things, and to master them.

This is why teachers can apply some strategies in order to get the students’ involved in their learning. Teachers should avoid situations where the students are passive listeners for long periods of time, which can cause the students to become bored easily and thus distracted by another activity that can interrupt the class development. Providing the students with hands-on activities, such as experiments, observations, and projects can improve the participation of the students during the different activities given in class. In addition to that, teachers can encourage participation in classroom discussions and other collaborative activities. This also allows students to take some control over their own learning. Taking control over one’s learning means allowing students to make some decisions about what to learn and how. Finally, assisting students in creating learning goals that are consistent with their interests and future aspirations is important. By intrinsic motivation, the children are inherently more involved in their own learning and development.

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<sup>21</sup>Elmore, Peterson & McCarthy, 1996; Piaget, 1978; Scardamalia&Bereiter, 1991.

It is important to remember that “as well-intentioned parents and teachers, we all sometimes end up taking charge of learning by trying to stuff [the child] rather than arranging things so that the youngster’s curiosity impels the process. Children need stimulation and intellectual challenges, but they must be actively involved in their learning, not responding passively.”<sup>22</sup> All teachers want their students to understand what they are learning and not to memorize facts in a superficial way. Research shows that when information is superficially memorized it is easily forgotten. On the contrary, when something is understood, it is not forgotten easily and it can be transferred to other situations. In order to understand what they are being taught, students must be given the opportunity to think about what they are doing, to talk about it with other students and with teachers, to clarify it and to understand how it applies in many situations. In this way, the student is able to process the information in an easy and in a fun way. A child learns better when he or she is involved in the learning process and can learn by listening or doing.

Learning and teaching is the concern or mission of the trained teacher, “but learning is a complex process. It can however be defined as a change in disposition; a relatively permanent change in behavior overtime and this is brought about by experience.”<sup>23</sup> Learning can occur in many ways, such as a result of a newly acquired skill, knowledge, perception, fact, principle, or new information at hand.

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<sup>22</sup> National Science Resources Center. *Science for All Children: A Guide to Improving Elementary Science Education in Your School District* (1997), 2, pp. 21-31. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

<sup>23</sup> Adeyanju, G.A. (1977); *Creativity Learning and Learning Styles*. Zaria: Nigeria. Isola Ola & Sons.

### 1.4.1 Flash Cards.

A flashcard is a set of cards bearing information, such as words, pictures, or numbers on either one or both sides, used in classroom drills or in private study. One writes a question on a card and an answer on the other side. Flashcards can bear vocabulary, historical dates, formulas or any subject matter that can be learned via a question and answer format. Flashcards are widely used as a learning tool to aid memorization by way of spaced out repetition. Flash cards are useful for drilling vocabulary, grammar rules, exceptions to those rules, and a variety of other material. They are often used in the classroom as part of the lesson, but can also be used more informally by the students themselves. Flashcards exercise a mental process known as active recall. Given a prompt, i.e. what is on the front of the card, one produces the answer that is on the back. They are “flashed,” i.e. shown quickly, one by one to a learner to elicit a quick response.

Flashcards are the effective and easiest way to learn and remember new information; furthermore, they simplify and condense information so that students only learn the important facts and ideas. In teaching to children, the use of flashcards is important to explain the content of a book in an easy way. Its essence is placed into a format that is easy to read and understand. Additionally, flashcards are colorful, easy to use, small, and catch children’s attention easily.

Using flash cards in class reduces the need for the teacher to translate and speak in the students’ native language. For instance, showing the students a picture of a fish is an effective way of teaching the word “fish” without saying or writing “*peces*.” Flashcards help to reduce the amount of native language in the classroom. Flash cards are used to teach and revise vocabulary. However, the way they are used

can mean the difference between the students losing interest in English and acquiring the language in a fun and meaningful way. Flash cards give support to different types of learners. The written word and/or pictures support visual learners. However, as they can be touched, rearranged, moved, shuffled and pointed to, their use also helps tactile/kinesthetic learners. Finally, as they often involve verbal cues, repetition, and pronunciation, they are also very valuable to the students with an auditory learning style. The use of flash cards in the classroom thus caters to different learning styles.

At the ABC Institute, having flashcards in the classroom makes the teaching process even easier. The ABC Institute, though, should update the existing material in the institute, since many of the cards are widely used or have already lost some of the flash cards, thus interfering with the proper development of activities of some items included in the weekly plan. Teachers can share their card sets with their work mates or if there are not enough flashcards or any flashcard according to the topic needed in the institute, teachers can make them by themselves according to their purposes. The most important information can be condensed into a small set of cards that can be reviewed rapidly and speed the transition of information to long-term memory.

#### **1.4.2 Posters.**

A poster is any printed-paper designed to hung on a wall or other vertical surface. Typically, posters will include both textual as well as graphic elements, but a poster may be either entirely graphical or entirely text. Posters are designed with

the purpose of being both eye-catching and able to convey information. Educational posters, which may be about a particular subject for educational purposes, are used for the teachers in the ABC institution to explain a specific topic such as: the neighborhood, parts of the body, or the solar system.

Some benefits of using posters in class are that they are portable and teachers can use them when the teaching process requires them. Also, this material often contains high-resolution images that catch the children's attention immediately. Most of the posters are relatively inexpensive, which makes them easy to purchase. However, one of the disadvantages of its frequent use is that posters are easy to damage because they are made of paper and therefore easy to destroy. With regard to teaching, there are not as many techniques for using posters as other visual aids like the flashcards or toys.

The ABC Institute needs to implement more posters to make the learning process more interactive using new posters in topics like the alphabet, shapes, numbers, and the universe. Just like with the flashcards, teachers can make their own posters according to their necessities. For instance teachers can make posters involving the students in its decoration according to the topic. This way, teachers save money and students have fun and learn by doing. Displaying posters in the classroom not only makes the classroom look more visually appealing, but they are also a great learning resource.

### 1.4.3 Audiovisual Aids

Audiovisual aids are, as the name suggests, any aids that have both an audio and visual component. The most obvious and most common example is video. There is a multitude of different types of videos that can be used in class. There are educational videos for all levels and purposes. Some include cartoons, puppets, and other methods to appeal to children. Others are much more informative and detailed appealing the adult who values time and efficiency. Teachers can also use movies made by Hollywood or other independent or international producers. They obviously were not all made with an educational purpose, but they were made to be attention-grabbing and entertaining. This accomplishes that goal and the teacher only needs to find a way to adapt the lesson plan to incorporate the movie in an educational way, whether that be to initiate discussion or simply focusing the students' attention on certain aspects of the film that they will be quizzed on. In the same way, teachers can adapt any of the millions of videos available on the internet from YouTube or other video-hosting sites.

In addition to video, there are other less common audiovisual materials. The most common example here is software programs. Interactive games and lessons made by software designers are a very effective way to reach the students according to their various learning styles, whether auditory, visual, or tactile, and in an attention-grabbing, entertaining way. PowerPoint, while not an interactive computer program for students, can be used as an audiovisual aid in the classroom as it contains both visual stimuli as well as an accompanying audio presentation (given either separately by a presenter, e.g. the teacher, or within PowerPoint). One

example of this is a PowerPoint slideshow with the lyrics of a song which are timed to the audio recording of the song.

In the Institute movies are included in the week planning, one day per week the teacher has to take the students to watch a movie for 10 to 15 minutes. Usually the film is related to the topic learned in the class. The film used by the teacher has to provide the students educational content but also it can and should be entertaining. This way, children are in contact with the second language all the time. Even when watching a movie, children are learning the pronunciation and the culture of English speakers without really noticing that they are learning. As far as they are concerned, they are just watching a movie, which is fun.

The use of video material in class like movies and the use of software to practice reading, grammar, listening, or vocabulary help children to develop new skills and it also increases a child's linguistic abilities because they are better able to comprehend the complexities associated with a particular language's meaning and grammar. Using sight and sound, video is the perfect medium for students who are auditory or visual learners. Video taps into student's emotions, which stimulates and captivates them. It also provides an innovative as well as effective means for educators to address their curricular objectives.

A major drawback to the use of video in classrooms is that media libraries quickly become date. It requires constant vigilance and a lot of money, to constantly update the media library. There are thousands of new videos produced every year. One of the primary purposes of video is to capture the students' attention. Using videos that are five and ten years old usually is not as capable of doing that as what is currently popular. Additionally, technology is rapidly changing. Video cassettes

were the vehicle for wide distribution only a few years ago. Then there was the short-lived laser disc, which many schools invested in, and lost money on when the DVD quickly became the popular method. It will not be long before companies stop producing DVDs and switch completely to Blu-Ray discs leaving entire media libraries obsolete.

#### **1.4.4 Puppets**

The use of songs and puppets in the lesson helped the teacher to get the student's attention more easily and therefore the students learned new vocabulary and there was better interaction of everyone as a group. An important character in the song was the puppet; the teacher used the puppet to call students' interest and to make the activity funnier. However, an additional objective of the teacher was to make the children learn experientially through visual, auditory and kinesthetic involvement in the activity. Puppets are usually interesting-looking little characters that can take on equally interesting personalities. They are interesting to look at, they usually include the thrown voice of the teacher, and the children can touch and play with them. They are engaging to the child as a whole person bringing in several of Gardner's multiple notably linguistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. The use of puppets increases the children's interest in the lesson and leads to a much deeper learning.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Research Environment

This Project is being undertaken, with the consent of management, at the ABC English Institute in Ambato. The institute was established in 2003 with the mission of improving academic English abilities in the Central Sierra region of Ecuador. The initial ABC team received its training from the Andean Center for Latin American Studies (ACLAS) regarding new trends in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language to children. ACLAS is a nonprofit organization recognized by the Ecuadorian government since 1994. ABC made use of the organization's development of customized courses and seminars with respect to the teaching of English as a foreign language. Additionally, ABC is constantly searching for new teachers who have both a specialty in teaching English to children as well as requiring that these prospective teachers have lived at some point previously in an English-speaking country. This additional requirement for employment, the ABC Institute believes, places a more formidable role model in front of ABC's young students.

The number of students at the ABC Institute increased by 80 percent in its second year and continues to grow annually. In 2006, the school moved to a more spacious location, where the research for the Project was undertaken and completed, to accommodate the larger student body, faculty, and staff and indeed will be

moving, after this Project, once again to an even larger facility. They included in this schoolhouse a new, modern library stocked with numerous English language materials that have been imported from the United States. This library is an important educational resource that is available to all of the ABC Institute teachers for use in their classes.

The ABC Institute operates under two guiding principles: (1) students learn by having fun and being able to customize their learning experience in a meaningful way according to their own particular interests and (2) children best learn a second language the same way they learned their first. These principles are followed through the development of four centers: the Reading and Writing Center, the Grammar Center, the Art Center, and the Manipulative Center. These four centers are also complemented by a spacious outdoor play area where children are actively encouraged by the staff to enjoy themselves and interact with their peers all the while practicing English.

### **2.1.1 Study Target Group**

The group of students that will be involved in the Project includes children, both boys and girls, ranging from eight to nine years old in age. Some of these children have been taking the English courses at the ABC Institute for several years as a part of their overall English education. This has helped them to develop some important skills that for other students, who have not been in the Institute before, the development of those skills has been a little more complex and complicated to achieve. Because the research was performed on a small target group, a short

description of each subject will follow. In order to protect the privacy of the subjects, pseudonyms will be used.

**Paul.** He is eight years old. He appears to enjoy the work but he can, at times, be hyperactive. He generally tries to use the target language in class. He does, however, become uninterested during class from time to time. His response to this boredom is to entertain himself by playing an invented game alone or, worse, talking to, and thus distracting, another student in the class. His level of reading is not good, but he likes to put in the effort and he also enjoys reading, he is not ashamed of making mistakes; his writing level is good, he enjoys writing on the board; his listening level is excellent, he understands all the things that are explained in class and finally his speaking level needs to be reinforced because his pronunciation is a little poor because most of the time he uses his first language with his peers.

**Alejandra.** She is nine years old. She has a good level of English. Consequently, she tries to speak English all the time. If she has a doubt about something in particular, she always asks the teacher and then tries to remember the new information. She has perfect attendance in class. She helps the teacher frequently and participates often. She seems to pay attention all the time. Her reading level is good even though she needs to practice more in class; her writing level is really good, she enjoys to participate in class and loves to write on the board even if there is something new she does not know; her listening level is excellent, as she does not miss a class she is improving every day her listening ability, this fact also affects her speaking level, since she is in touch with the English language every day

she becomes familiar with the second language and her pronunciation is better every day.

**Carla.** She is nine years old. She persists at a very low level of English despite a number of years studying at ABC English Institute. Her primary problems in the classroom are that, firstly, she is easily distracted and, secondly, that even when she is in fact paying attention, she often has great difficulty completing the assignment required. This is likely the cause of her slow rate of progression. Her reading level is rather poor and she does not understand the word even if there is a picture next to the word; her writing level is really basic, she needs to practice more on this skill; her listening level is fair (more or less), despite of her poor general English and despite of her many absences to the institute; her speaking level is good in general.

**Elizabeth.** She is eight years old. In class, she appears to have difficulty understanding the classroom activities. It seems to go beyond simply her level of English, but often this difficulty relates to simple instructions and commands. She often makes mistakes by confusing up and down, left and right, top and bottom. These problems results a difficulty in finishing tasks and leads to her confusion. Her writing level is really basic, she needs to participate more in the class especially during the daily routine activities, where she can practice the writing skill writing the date, colors, opposites etc; her listening level is fair, its is important to refocus her attention every ten minutes, because she gets distracted very easily; her reading level is poor; but she can get the word easily by looking at the picture, that helps her a lot in her reading; her speaking level is low in general.

**Andrea.** She is nine years old. She has a low level of English. She is rather shy in the classroom setting as well as when interacting with her classmates. She has poor class attendance, which is the likely culprit for her relatively low vocabulary as compared to the other students because she does not show difficulty in learning new material. She does not, however, participate voluntarily in class. Her reading level is poor; as she likes to talk with her peers she does not pay attention; her writing level is very basic, she does not participate in class; her listening level is unsatisfactory as well as her speaking.

**Pedro.** He is ten years old. When he is in the classroom setting, he rarely pays attention to the teacher and bothers his classmates frequently. When he is in the outside play area, he is rude and obnoxious with the other children. He is a highly active child and is constantly fidgeting, getting up, touching other students, and even knocking over desks and chairs. His general level of English is good even when he sometimes does not pay attention in class. His writing level is good, he does not complain when he is called to write on the board; his reading level is poor, though his oral and writing level is good.

**Mateo.** He is ten years old. He is energetic and participates frequently in class. When he does pay attention and is engaged, he appears to enjoy classes a great deal. The problem, however, is that sometimes he talks with his friend and starts to disrupt the class. His level of English, in general, is good, but his reading is incipient. His writing most of the time is good but it needs to be reinforced as well as his speaking.

**Juliana.** She is 9 years old. She has a high level of attendance and seems to really enjoy her time spent at ABC. She is a very social child and interacts well with

the rest of her classmates. Academically, however, she is very slow to learn new material. She has a low level of both reading and writing, but in speaking her level is higher.

## **2.2 Classroom Observations**

In the class, the boys try to sit next to the boys to play and girls like to sit next to the girls to talk. Seating arrangements are a main part in a teacher's plan for classroom management, not only because teachers need to consider the physical arrangement of the room but also the nature of the students involved. The students who are sitting together start to bother or distract the others and that can interfere in the teaching process.

The considerations that are made in arranging the physical environment of the room are so that teaching and learning can occur as efficiently as possible. The teacher needs to be able to walk around the room without the students having to move their desks. The students who are seated in the front or center of the classroom tend to interact more frequently with the teacher. There is a noticeable correlation between the distance students choose to sit from the teacher and the behavioral problems exhibited by those students. This is the reason why teachers, as soon as the class starts, try to change the student's seats by introducing a game, activity or visual aid.

There are other common arrangements used in the class, such as: cluster, table rows, centers or activity zones, and the semi-circle. The best arrangement depends on the situation of the class and teacher. A cluster arrangement consists of

some desks pushed together in groups with clusters dispersed around the class. This is great for group activities with students working collaboratively in their respective clusters. The teacher can walk freely around the room from group to group. Clusters are also utilized when the students are divided into the four “centers.” Table rows arrangement consist of tables that are placed in rows or lined up in the traditional classroom style. All students are facing the teacher and thus this is a good formation for presentation of material with visual aids. Of course, this setup allows for the “back row kids” who sit far from the teacher and misbehave. This is probably the best seating design for testing. The activity zone sting arrangement consists of about five or six tables set up in the room. This is for larger groups with an activity that must be completed as a team. This setup is best utilized when divided into the four “centers” for larger group activities. The semi-circle arrangement consists of the students moving the desks or tables into a semi-circle design. This setup places the focus on the teacher and the visual aids, but eliminates the problem of the “back row kids.” Everyone can clearly see each other and universal participation is easily achieved. This arrangement requires more space and is not possible in all classrooms.

Another problem that has been noticed is that sometimes the students do not pay attention to the class because they lose their concentration easily. For instance, two of the research subjects have great difficulty concentrating on the great majority of the teacher presentations as well as other classroom activities. They are very frequently distracted even when the room is quiet. One method that has been tried to regain their focus is making them participate involuntarily, but that has not seemed to have had the desired effect. Once in a while, they seem to get involved with a project

and be productive but it is generally short-lived and they will inevitably get sidetracked.

As teachers, we should try to find what the problem that is affecting the child is. Most of the time, the problem does not only surface in the afterschool program, but in all facets of the child's life, such as at home and in school. It is important to analyze the children's situation with a psychologist. ABC Institute has a specialized children psychologist who works with the children that present a behavior problem in the institution. The psychologist helps teachers to manage discipline problems by giving them advice on how to teach a class with problematic students. Also, the psychologist talks with the parents of the child and tries to find what the factors are that may be affecting the child at home.

Having a psychologist at the school helps teachers to understand and help children with discipline or learning problems. Teachers, when they are in class, need the guidance and support of a specialist to solve problems that most of the time originated in the student's home. The psychologist provides reasons for children's behavior and also helps their parents to counteract any feelings of depression and discontent towards the child's behavior.

Ultimately, teachers should try to understand what works for each individual child by profiling her or his unique characteristics by giving him or her the chance to make activities that they like to do such as coloring, decorating, writing, or building with legos. This way the teacher knows how to motivate students to feel comfortable with the learning process and to develop students' abilities.

Another problem often observed in the classroom is hyperactivity. Hyperactive children can be difficult to teach as well as disruptive to the class. This is a big problem because the rest of the class is paying attention to what the hyperactive kid is doing and therefore teacher loses concentration on what he or she is teaching. Students who have problems paying attention are easily distracted. They may often look around the classroom instead of at the teacher or chalkboard or stand up and start bothering their classmates. Generally speaking, these kinds of students do not read directions or follow instructions and then make silly mistakes. These students are, usually, very disorganized.

In the classroom the teacher has worked with activities that involve Multiple Intelligence theory, because not all the students have the same learning skills. The use of Multiple Intelligences in the classroom has shown that the students' development increased responsibility, self-direction and independence increase over the course of the year.

To implement the use of Multiple Intelligences in an educational setting, in the Institute the learning process is developed through the use of "Learning Centers" which goal is to develop the different skills of the students in class. Students love the challenge and the change of pace that promote the learning centers. The class was organized into four learning centers, each dedicated to one of the seven intelligences. The students spend the week moving through the centers - 20 to 30 minutes at each center. Curriculum is thematic, and the centers provide four different ways for the students to learn the subject matter.

Each day begins with a quick review of various basic things children should have learned in previous levels so that they do not forget them. Examples include

counting, colors, weather, and other such concepts. After the routine activities, the teacher gives a brief introduction of the topic using fun activities, referred to as the warm up. For example, during a unit about animals the teacher can show the “animal” flashcards and students repeat the name of the animal and its color, e.g. “brown horse.” Then, students sing Old Mc Donald using puppets of the animals and after students may draw their favorite animal. Finally comes the centers, which are where the development of some of the activities related to the topic viewed in the warm is carried out.

In the classroom, the activities are divided into four “Learning Centers.”

**ART CENTER.** The purpose of this center is to develop the creativity of the children. Consequently, activities in this center include, but are not limited to, making collages, painting with water colors, making masks, and decorating with materials such as glue, glitter, beads, and lentils.

**MANIPULATIVE CENTER:** Activities to make students manipulate objects, and make activities like: cut out, match, form words, order sentences, put parts together, make books, make paper balls to decorate something, paste grains, etc.

**GRAMMAR CENTER:** Activities to practice grammar structures, or play with the grammar, also develop learning strategies such as inducting rules

from examples, fill in gaps, copy words, take the odd one out, match parts of speech, etc.

WRITING /READING CENTER: Activities to practice reading and writing skills, develop learning strategies such as: inferring meaning from context, getting the main idea, scanning specific information, develop fine motor skills, through activities like: read and write, copy words, complete words, complete dots, color according to given codes, etc.

Learning centers allow children to explore, apply newly learned skills, feel independent, be creative, and interact with peers.

Working with small groups, children learn better and they are more excited and are encouraged to cooperate and work independently. In the classroom it is important to develop activities, which can develop multiple skills and the use of activities that engage Multiple Intelligences, the students became skilled at developing their own projects, gathering the necessary resources and materials, and give them the chance to learn at their own pace in their own style.

### **2.2.1 Observations before Substantial Use of Visual Aids**

A number of problems have been observed in the behavior of the children at ABC Institute. Without stimulating visual aids, the young students have, at times, become bored with the class material and begun to entertain themselves in ways that distract the other students in the class. Many have initiated conversations with their

neighbors, begun to draw pictures in their books, play games, or even leave their seats. Problems have too frequently been encountered during the teacher's explanation of instructions as students may not understand them or simply do not pay attention to them. This has the unfortunate effect of compounding the teacher's difficulties as he or she later tries to lead the class in an activity that the students do not understand.

Another problem observed in the classroom is that the teachers do not always have time to make new posters or flashcards, and that is the reason why some old posters are still used in the classrooms to teach the children. Some of the pictures pasted on the walls of some classrooms are not related to the topic being studied; most of them are old and unattractive for students and they do not pay attention to what is being explained. Most of the students apparently do not understand the topic clearly, because they, as young children, need to have some visual support in order to understand the topic; this has meant that some of the children in their evaluation test did not perform well.

It is important for us to realize, as teachers, that we would not be able to stay seated and remain quiet for an extended period of time. Children need to be active and, as teachers, we have to figure out different ways to get the students up and moving around more in the classroom. This may make the classroom a bit more chaotic, but if it they are more engaged, and therefore learning more, it is going to be better for them and therefore better for the teachers in the long run.

Without the use of visual aids, children are afraid to speak the second language because they are not used to speaking English outside the institute and they are afraid of embarrassing themselves in front of their classmates. Puppets work

especially well with younger children and provide excellent ways for children to work through their fears or express their feelings through puppet play.

While older children may well respond positively to puppets, there are great opportunities for the teacher to work with puppets to teach in a much more effective way. Children often become more vocal when a puppet is at hand and can provide a way to engage even the shyest of children in the activity.

Some of the students are very hyperactive; therefore, the absence of visual aids in the class makes the situation worse. This is because the non-use of visual aids allows the hyperactive child to do anything more interesting than what the teacher is doing and it makes the child begin to seek new ways to re-focus their attention, such as: standing up, playing with their color pencils or markers scratching the desk, talking with peers, or making jokes, thus causing other children to focus on the activity he or she is doing and starting the indiscipline in the classroom. However, with the use of visual aids teachers can stop this type of behavior and most of the time the students are connected and involved with the activity and are active to participate in the class. Effective visual aids promote understanding and help memory.

### **2.2.2 Assessment of a Video Made after Incorporation of Visual Aids**

The following observations are based on a video made at the ABC Institute with the group of students from the summer course. The topic of the day was “water.” The duration of the course for the day was three hours. During the

recording, we can see the use of audiovisual material, not only used by the teacher, but also visual material posted on the walls.

During this observation of the class, students were sitting in a circle and they had the chance to interact with each other. The teacher explained what the topic is for that day and the activities they are going to perform. The teacher started the class singing a “Hello” song where all the students have to participate. Then the teacher asked the students “what color are you wearing today?” and all of the students stood up when the teacher said a color.

After that, the teacher asked the students if they remember the opposites, then one student started saying a word and the others say its opposite, while the teacher was checking if they had the correct answer. As soon as they finished the opposites, the teacher and the students checked the calendar together for the day, month, and year. When they finished completing this task, the teacher and the students repeated the date together.

Then, the teacher went outside with the students to do some stretching; the students and the teacher sat in a circle and the teacher explained the activity and how the students were going to play. The teacher used a puppet during the activity. One of the students participated in the game while the rest sang “Charlie over the ocean.” In this activity, the children were attentive because they did not know who was going to be the next to participate. When they finished the activity, the next game to play was “Freeze,” in which they made two groups with one being a group of boys and the other of girls.

After a couple of minutes, the teacher and the students came back to the class and she started to explain the next task or activity the students had to do. Then the students sat again in a circle and the teacher asked the students places where they can find water, the day's theme. Then children started, with the teacher's help, to name places where they thought they can find water, such as a house, a lake, the ocean, mountains, a river, and lagoons. After that, the teacher presented a mind map written on a big piece of paper where she explained the water cycle: the places, stages, characteristics, and uses. The students were then invited to participate and started to fill in the mind map with their own personal contributions.

Some students started to get a little bored because the teacher was using the same material (mind map) for a long time. However, the teacher soon changed to another activity and started to draw the water cycle; while she was drawing she was also explaining the water stages and soliciting the help of the students. Then, when she finished the drawing, she showed a water cycle poster to the students, who can now see the process clearly. It is easy to see that the students seemed to be more interested in the poster than in the mind map. The teacher made the students repeat each stage while she was showing them on the poster. After that, the teacher explained the work students were going to do in class. For this, the teacher divided the class in two groups: boys and girls. Then the teacher gave the students a work sheet. The girls had the work sheet where they had to complete the water cycle and the boys a water cycle mind map to complete. Both groups had the instructions written on a piece of cardboard, so they could read and do the work. Both groups had visual aids: a poster and a mind map.

The group of girls had a poster of the water cycle and the activity instructions on a piece of cardboard. They had to complete the water cycle and color it following the instructions provided. Some of the students did not understand what the activity was about so the teacher explained it in more detail. The boys group had the instructions on their table to do the activity and the mind map as a guide to complete the work sheet. The students started to complete the mind map immediately following the instructions. While the groups were working, the teacher played music in English. As a result, the students felt comfortable and constantly in touch with the language.

The students felt free to call the teacher when they needed to ask for some help. Some of them, the majority in fact, spoke to the teacher in Spanish and very few spoke in English. Whenever a student asked something in Spanish, the teacher always repeated the same question in English in order that the student can learn it in the second language. Only then did the teacher answer the question. In both groups, the teacher was constantly supervising the activities that the students are performing.

In the other group, the boys were performing the activities according to the instructions, like cutting, pasting, and coloring. The boys finished the first activity and started to work on the next activity the teacher had assigned them, which was to re-order the pictures according to the story the teacher had given them before. The girls continued doing the activity in a very quiet and organized way. The teacher sent the students to the computer lab according to the order in which they completed and finish all the activities set in the day. The main teacher assigned the assistant teacher to go to the computer lab with the group that already finished the activities. Thus,

the teacher kept the class organized and all the students had the chance to work and play on the computers.

The students entered in the computer lab, which had colorful decorations all related to the subject at hand and also some vocabulary used in the in the room to ask for help, all of which is in English. Students had interactive videos related to geography, vocabulary, pronunciation, and mathematics. Children enjoyed spending time on the computers because they could learn and have fun at the same time. Each student had a computer for himself or herself. This facilitated the student's discovery on his or her own, though of course with the teacher always available to lend a hand, of how to use the computer programs and how to be responsible for the use of the computer.

Back in the classroom, the class time had ended and all the groups had finished the assigned work. The teacher verified if their work was done properly, corrected them if there were any mistakes, and asked the students to take their work with them. The teacher requested that the students clean up the room and put the used material in its rightful place. The students picked up the trash from the floor and put the chairs up. Before leaving the classroom the teacher asked the kids to line up and leave the room quietly.

### **2.2.3 Assessment**

Most, though of course not all, of the behavioral problems in class are due to the student's boredom. This is also the culprit for lower academic achievement. During the limited use of visual aids in class, many of the behavior problems were

temporarily mitigated and learning was far more efficient. This was substantial support for the hypothesis that significant use of visual aids in the classroom would decrease problems and increase learning. With that, the decision was made to increase the use of visual aids in the classroom in order to further observe their benefit. The following sections in this chapter detail the methodology of developing lesson plans that utilize visual aids in the classroom as well as an overview of a number of materials that were to be incorporated.

### **2.3 Lesson Plan development**

Lesson planning is one of the most important aspects of teaching. It is where theory meets practice. There are so many important things for a teacher to consider and they all come into play at the lesson planning phase. Keeping the students' attention requires planning many different activities at specific intervals that coincide with students' attention spans. Learning styles requires planning different ways of presenting material that appeal to the various intelligences of the students. Planning ahead allows for a more organized approach that is methodical and easy to understand and not a chaotic mess of unrelated lessons. Also, practically speaking, lesson planning is important so that all the materials can be bought, borrowed, or made in time for class. Each of these becomes more and more important the younger the students are. Younger students have very short attention spans which means a lot of activities prepared at regular short intervals and lots of materials need to be ready for class.

Each week at the ABC Institute, lesson plans are written for the following week. Planning ahead is important for several reasons. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, one needs to be sure that he or she can get all of the materials together and ready for class. When one is teaching a group of young children with short attention spans, it is nearly impossible to simply “wing it” in class. Certainly, there can be some flexibility, but games, videos, flashcards, puppets, and like must be ready to use or students will lose focus. Additionally, learning a language is a time consuming process, so the short amount of time students are in class is too precious to waste. The teacher needs to maximize those hours by working in lots of practice without losing students attention. It is not an easy task and all the more reason that lesson planning is so important. Without a good plan, a teacher cannot reach his or her ultimate effectiveness. Not only is it a good idea for teachers to plan and to plan ahead, but it would be best if entire English departments or schools required teachers’ lesson plans for at least a week and that they are submitted at least a week in advance.

Planning ahead also allows the teacher to create an arching theme that connects lessons together. At ABC, lesson plans always adhered to a theme that covered two weeks’ worth of lessons. A theme is something as simple as “family.” Then for two weeks, most, if not all, of the activities will be related to family. It is the basis for introducing new vocabulary, new grammar, and practicing the four skills. By organizing the material according to a simple theme, it makes it easier for young children to understand and accept what they are learning. It all fits into ideas they already have. The great thing about using themes is that they are so versatile. The main purpose is to create a framework for understanding; thus the framework

can be used to teach many different topics. For example, the family theme is not simply limited to teaching vocabulary such as “mother,” “father,” “brother,” “sister,” but could also be used as the basis for teaching vocabulary about professions or diseases that family members may have. Of course, since teaching younger children, the teacher rarely strayed from the basic vocabulary and grammar points within a theme.

In the lesson plans, each class begins with what the Institute called a “routinary [sic] activity.” These routine activities are done each day as a quick review of some of the most basic elements of the English language that are going to be used every day. Language learning is a process with each step based on the step before it. One cannot simply forget everything from the last level and continue on without problems. These quick reviews are essential to help cement in the minds of these young learners the lessons they have learned before. This task is accomplished in two ways. First, the repetition of old material helps to build stronger neural connections in the brain and thus improve memory and recall of the lessons. Second, it reinforces the initial lesson as students know they cannot just forget it. For younger children some of my routine activities were those such as: singing the “hello song,” writing the date, and asking them how the weather was like. For somewhat older students, it is important to practice a bit more complex activities like opposites, adjectives, prepositions, actions, and pronouns.

After the routine activity, teachers do a warm up to prepare the students for that day’s lesson. A warm up is a short activity that gets the students ready for that day’s lesson. It is used to put the students in the right mindset for learning new material. A warm up is usually fun but also simple. Typical warm ups are games or

songs. Using the same example of “family” as our theme, the teacher might have each student draw a picture of his family. The students know we are going to be talking about families and they know who the people are in their picture. They just do not know the English vocabulary yet. That of course is the point. The teacher is getting the students warmed up to talk about families and getting them in a mindset where they are ready to learn about families. Teaching the names of family members now is much easier. Even if the teacher were using a visual aid of her own, a picture of a man and the word “father” probably is not as clear and straightforward as using the visual aids the students just made and calling the man in that picture “father.”

After the routine activity and warm up, the teacher would begin the proper lesson. As the students were very young, there was little lecturing. The teacher may use some flashcards or a poster to teach some new vocabulary or grammar, but the goal was to move as quickly to the Learning Centers as possible. A Learning Center is any part of the classroom designed for independent learning. These centers, as used at ABC, were divided into four parts: grammar, where they practice grammar structures; reading and writing, where they learn to read and write new words; art, where the children can decorate with different materials; and manipulative, where they have to cut, paste, and work with objects. The teacher used centers in class because they allow children to explore and apply newly learned skill. Children feel independent and creative when working in the centers and they can also interact with peers. The teacher used centers because the groups the teacher used to work with were small and that made learning in small groups easier.

In addition, learning centers provide opportunities for children to learn responsibility, decision-making, and self-evaluation. Children can work at their own

pace and use their own style. The way the teacher used to develop learning centers was to divide the students into four groups. Before the teacher gave them the paper work, the teacher would use clear and specific instructions with a visual aid such as pictures and explain to all the groups about the work they were going to be doing and the way they had to behave during the activity. The teacher used to use examples from the materials at each learning center. The teacher would paste the instructions on the wall for all the groups, and one student from each group was in charge of reading the instruction for the rest of the team. The teacher used to do that because that way the children become more invested in the activity and also they become more independent and start to develop the activity by themselves with the teacher help as only a guide. For instance, if the teacher is working with the theme “the body,” she may have the manipulative center stocked with lots of magazines. Students would then have to search through the various magazines and cut out as many different body parts as they find in the pictures. Then, they could paste these body parts to a piece of construction paper and write the name of each body part underneath with colored pencils or markers.

The following is an example of how a teacher would make a **daily** lesson plan:

### **CALL STRUCTURE**

1. Students line up outside and get in the class when the bell rings.
2. Hello song
3. Routine activities (R.A): Teachers choose three activities daily and have a balance between oral, writing and reading. Ex: calendar, opposites, pronunciation, game.

Students should do all the R.A; the teacher is just a guide.

They should be motivating and let students THINK, TALK, PLAY, AND HAVE FUN.

4. Warm up: This activity should be motivating and can be: a game, a song, a story, flashcards showing, etc.
5. Presentation of the topic: Present the topic in a nice and attractive way, teachers can use flashcards, posters, mind maps, pictures. Teachers can involve the kids in a controlled practice, like the game: show me, where is, complete, etc.
6. Activity or Learning Centers:

First show students the paper.

Give clear instructions.

Do an example on the board or in the same paper.

Assign a student to hand the papers.

Monitor student's work, help them if necessary.

Assign a time.

Check students' work.

7. Cleaning up:

Students place their paper in the folders and their working material on the right place.

Students clean up their working area.

8. Wrap up and bye- bye:

Students line up, assign places so the one that does something well is the first and teachers avoid fights.

Sing a song or say a chant reinforcing the content covered in the day.

The following is example of **weekly** lesson planning. Included are two weeks' worth of planning:

## TOPIC: THE UNIVERSE

Week: 01

Date: 07 June – 10 June 2010

MONDAY 07	TUESDAY 08	WEDNESDAY 09	THURSDAY 10
<p>R.A: - Date/Attendance - Opposite (flash cards) - Prepositions</p> <p>W/UP: - Hokey Pokey (song) - Show Solar System (flashcards) - Draw on small boards the EARTH PLANET. (Characteristics: round, rotates around the sun)</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative.</p>	<p>R.A: Attendance /Date -Action flashcards - Head &amp; Shoulders (song)</p> <p>W/UP: - Comparatives: bigger than, smaller than, closes than, farthest than. - Show Solar System (planets flash cards); the students touch the planets their classmates say.</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative. (Computers)</p>	<p>R.A: - Attendance - Prepositions (matching) - Numbers (touch the #)</p> <p>W/UP: - The 9 planets (chant) - Ordinal numbers: the first, second, third. - Make a mind map about: Influence of the sun in our lives.</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative. (Videoland)</p>	<p>R.A: - Hello - Pronouns (matching) - Hang man (action and numbers)</p> <p>W/UP: - Colors (memory game) - Make a student read the story about "Mars" - Solar System Planets</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative.</p>

TOPIC: COOKING WITH MY FAMILY

Week: 02

Date: April 03 – 06 April 2010

MONDAY 03	TUESDAY 04	WEDNESDAY 05	THURSDAY 06
<p>R.A: - Hello/Date - Opposite (flash cards) - Prepositions</p> <p>W/UP: - Show family members</p> <p>Flashcards (students say) - Show food (flashcards) - Students name the family members or the food f/c, other student touches as a chain.</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative.</p>	<p>R.A: - Action flash cards - Numbers (write on small boards) - Colors (touch the color)</p> <p>W/UP: - Show family members flashcards. - Students draw their family &amp; words on small boards. - Students say what action each member does. (Use actions. Ex. My mom cooks)</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative. (Computers)</p>	<p>R.A: - Attendance - Routine Activities - Head &amp; shoulders (song)</p> <p>W/UP: - Show toys. (Play a store game) - Students separate the vegetables, dairy products, meats &amp; sweets. - Each student says his/her favorite food.</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative. (Videoland)</p>	<p>R.A: - Hello - Hang man (actions and numbers) - Write on small boards the numbers.</p> <p>W/UP: - Write down a recipe.  - Explain Ordinary numbers. (First, second, third, fourth)  - Verbs: cook, cut up, chop up, mix, clean up, eat, drink, taste.</p> <p>CENTER: Grammar, Art, Reading &amp; Writing, and Manipulative.</p>

## CHAPTER III

### MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

#### 3.1 Use of Materials in the Classroom

For a new language to be easily understood without translation there must be some kind of context to understand the new language. This is where visual aids come in. In the classroom setting, there is a limitation as to how many physical objects can be used. When teaching household items, for instance, it is not feasible to bring them all into the classroom in order to point at them and say the name in the new language. So, how do we get students to connect the idea of a stove, which they already know is that thing in the kitchen that mommy says not to touch because it gets very hot, with the English word “stove?” The answer to that is by using visual aids.

This can be demonstrated using the example of the stove. First, introduce the concept of stove with some type of visual aid, such as a flashcard, poster, video, or toy. Now students know what the teacher is talking about and have connected it to their own concept of what is a stove. Then you teach the vocabulary word “stove.” Hopefully, the student will build neural connections between their concept of stove and the English word “stove.” This is fluency in language. If the student sees a stove and the visual information first travels through a neural connection to come up with *cocina*, which then travels through another neural connection to translate that into “stove,” the student is not building fluency. Therefore, visual aids, and not

translations, are the best method for instilling true understanding and ability in the new language.

Of course, as was just mentioned, the “point and name” strategy only goes so far. One of the best places to start is decorating the classroom with relevant, on-topic visual aids, such as posters, photos, maps, diagrams, and especially any student-created projects. This creates a stimulating atmosphere for the students to learn. It is important, though, that the decorations are relevant to the weekly theme, or their stimulating power can have the unintended consequence of distracting the students during class.

Decorating the classroom, of course, has its limitations. As decorations remain on the walls for a long time they stop drawing the attention of the students. In most cases, this is actually good. It would be unreasonable for the teacher to redecorate the entire classroom every week. Thus, many items that can transcend themes will often remain on the walls for longer and we do not want them to become a distraction. So, the more effective way for the teacher to spend his or her time is preparing teaching aids that can be used only on a particular day or even just at a particular time and then be stored away. Charts, flashcards, videos, and toys are some such aids that may be used in the class.

The instructor should take into account, however, the limitations of the instructional aids that are available for use in the lesson. Visual aids are a very useful tool for teachers that can add reality, clarity and variety to the lesson, which is necessary for students at the earlier stages of language learning. The advantage of

using visual aids in the classroom is that it helps to create a situation outside the classroom walls, in giving reality to what is said.

While the focus of this Project is visual aids, it is important to remember that visual learning is not dominant for all students. Audiovisual and tactile-visual aids have been included under the umbrella of visual aids because they have such a strong visual component, but as has been seen from the theories of Multiple Intelligences and Learning Styles, all of the available methods need to be included to varying degrees.

Audiovisual aids provide a necessary variation and change of pace in the lesson to help maintain the students' attention and interest. Also, audiovisual aids help teachers to get students using the language, especially at the beginning stages. For example, pictorial materials can provide students with something to talk about with each other, getting a conversation started. Additionally, teachers can ask students to perform a particular task with the help of a teaching aid, either individually or in groups. This involves not only the visual aid but also student creativity and personal investment in the lesson.

Though students should be the center of instruction, in many cases, teachers and students rely on materials and, thus, the materials become the center of instruction. Since many teachers are busy and do not have the time to prepare extra materials, textbooks and other commercially produced materials are very important in language instruction. Therefore, it is important for teachers to know how to choose the best material for instruction, how to make class materials that can supplement

those commercial products, and how to adapt materials to their own lesson plans and teaching styles.

### **3.1.1 Flashcards**

Flashcards are one of the most important visual aids the teacher can utilize in class. They are not too large and thus highly portable and space efficient. Several hundred flashcards can take up the same amount of space as a text book and weigh roughly the same. Thus, a teacher can have dozens of flash cards to introduce as well as practice a number of different lessons, though primarily vocabulary. The unique benefit of flashcards is the utilization of both sides of the card.

The development of flashcards by the teacher allows the materials to be directed toward the class focus. They are also more cost effective, requiring only a few simple cheap materials. On one side of the flashcard, the teacher writes or prints the word or phrase. On the other side she draws or pastes a picture. It is that simple. There are also great professionally-made flashcards available for purchase. Such cards are often more durable and thus last longer.

One side is presented to the class while the other remains hidden. This way, the concept, such as a stove, is first presented visually. Then the English word, with its correct pronunciation, can be introduced without any confusing spelling possibly causing problems. Finally, the spelling of the word on the back of the card can be shown to the class. With this method, learning is separated into easy steps with knowledge being progressively accumulated. The double-sided cards are also invaluable for drilling. Students are quizzed to recall the vocabulary word by only

being shown an image. Thus, it is clear whether the student(s) remember(s) the word or not. On the other hand, simply reviewing a list, students may mistakenly believe that they remember all of the vocabulary.

The following will provide the readers with a number of specific ways that flashcards can be incorporated into the classroom:

*Pronunciation*

1. Present the topic.
2. Show the students the flashcards.
3. Teacher pronounces the word of the flashcard.
4. Make students repeat the word that the teacher says while he or she is holding the flashcards.

*Identifying objects using numbers*

1. Have an array of flash cards for the students to view within a particular theme or category, e.g. methods of transport.
2. Call out the names of individual items and have the students say how many of those items are on that card.

**Fig 3.1 Professionally-made Flashcards**



Example Teacher-Student Conversation:

Teacher: "Water colors"

Students: "There are six water colors."

Teacher: "Yes, well done."

Teacher: "Fish."

Students: "There are three fishes."

Teacher: "There are three *what?*"

Students: "Fish!"

Teacher: "Yes. There are three fish. The plural of fish is fish. Very good."

3. Now that the teacher has taught the correct pronunciation of the words, he or she reverses the process.
4. The teacher calls out the number and has the students name the objects that exist in that quantity on the flash cards.

#### Chores flashcards

1. These cards can be used for daily routines to teach Simple Present or for teaching the actions in the Present Continuous form.
2. The teacher writes the actions of the flashcards on the board such as “she is washing” or “he is sweeping the floor.”
3. The board is divided in two parts: on the left side of the board, the teacher has written the actions; on the right part of the board, the teacher pastes the actions that are written on the left part but in disorder.
4. The student has to match the picture and the action.

#### Family Flashcards

1. Teacher shows flashcards of family members.
2. Teacher says the family member name aloud.
3. Students draw their family with the words (father, mother, sister, brother)
4. Students explain what they draw.

#### Alphabet Flashcards

1. The teacher uses alphabet flash cards to spell out a word.
2. Have the students say the word
3. Get the students to close their eyes and remove one of the letters

4. Now have the students open their eyes and choose an individual student to tell you the missing letter.

Body Flashcards.

1. Teacher shows the body flashcards
2. Teacher pronounces the word on the flashcard.
3. Make students repeat the word while the teacher is showing the flashcards.
4. Students play in front of the mirror and they touch the part the teacher is showing with the flashcards.

Food flashcards

1. Show food flashcards to students
2. Students repeat the words
3. The teachers ask the students to divide the flashcards into: sweet, salt, vegetables, fruits.
4. The teacher paste some flashcards on the board, each student has to touch one of the flashcard and say the word, the next student has to touch a new flashcard and the flashcard that the last student touched and say the words aloud, all the students has to touch the flashcards as a chain.

### **3.1.2 Posters**

Posters are large visual aids that have the benefit of incorporating large amounts of information into one aid. They can show connections and relationships.

Professionally-made posters can be very visually stimulating and captivate the students.

Fig 3.2 Example of a Professionally-made Poster



The development of posters by the teachers themselves is a cost-effective way to utilize this fantastic resource. In fact, homemade posters can allow for student involvement as they can be invited to add their own contributions to the poster. The following is one way the teacher can make use of a poster in class:

1. The teacher introduces the topic by showing the poster of the topic.
2. The teacher names the objects that are in the poster.
3. One student asks other classmate to touch the object he or she says.
4. To help the children practice counting skill, the teacher uses a Numbers Poster, the teacher counts out the number of objects for each numeral and the student repeats it.

5. To teach the topic “The Solar System,” the teacher shows the solar system and names the planets, the students repeat the names as the teacher says them. Then, the students draw the solar system on the small boards as close as they can to the poster.
6. The teacher can present and interact with the students using the poster by making questions:

Teacher: “What is the orange ball on the left side of the poster?”

Students: “It is the sun.”

Teacher: “Can you see the sun outside?”

Students: “Yes. It is in the sky.”

Teacher: “What is the planet with the big ring around it?”

Students: “It is Saturn.”

### **3.1.3 Videos**

In order to get the children more involved in the learning process, the teacher looks for different instructional media that can help the teacher catch the children’s attention. The use of video in the classroom during lessons is a perfect way to reach students who are auditory and visual learners. Using videos in the classroom allows students to learn, enjoy and remember the information given during the session. The video used in the lesson needs to be prepared beforehand, as with other resource material used in class. Also, videos can be reinforced by other visual aid material,

such as flashcards, posters, or puppets, thus strengthening the vocabulary watched previously in the video.

The development of videos by individual teachers is not common, but certainly is possible. It is also a great way to let students take control of their learning. With current technology, teachers can take videos during class with as little as a cell phone and even put the class video on YouTube to share with family and friends. The development of these videos can also be more complex with use of various video editing software programs. This, of course, is not essential and most video materials used in class are professionally developed.

These are some ideas on how the teacher can use video in class to improve the children's learning.

1. When watching a video in order to develop children's imagination the teacher shows the cover of the movie and asks the students to guess its title.
2. The teacher can stop the video and challenge the students to predict what the next scene is.
3. The teacher can practice the vocabulary learned in class using scenes from the video.
4. The teacher asks the students some questions about the movie, for instance:
  - What is the name of the main character?
  - How many people are in the scene?
  - What is next to the door?
  - What is the boy doing?

5. When children are using Power Point presentations or interactive games, the teacher makes the students follow the instructions and the children practice vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and pronunciation.

### **3.1.4 Blackboard**

The use of the blackboard (or whiteboard) helps the teacher with instructions. It is easy to use and to correct mistakes. The blackboard is the first thing students see when entering to the classroom, so it is important to use it properly and in a way that the teacher can capture the children's attention.

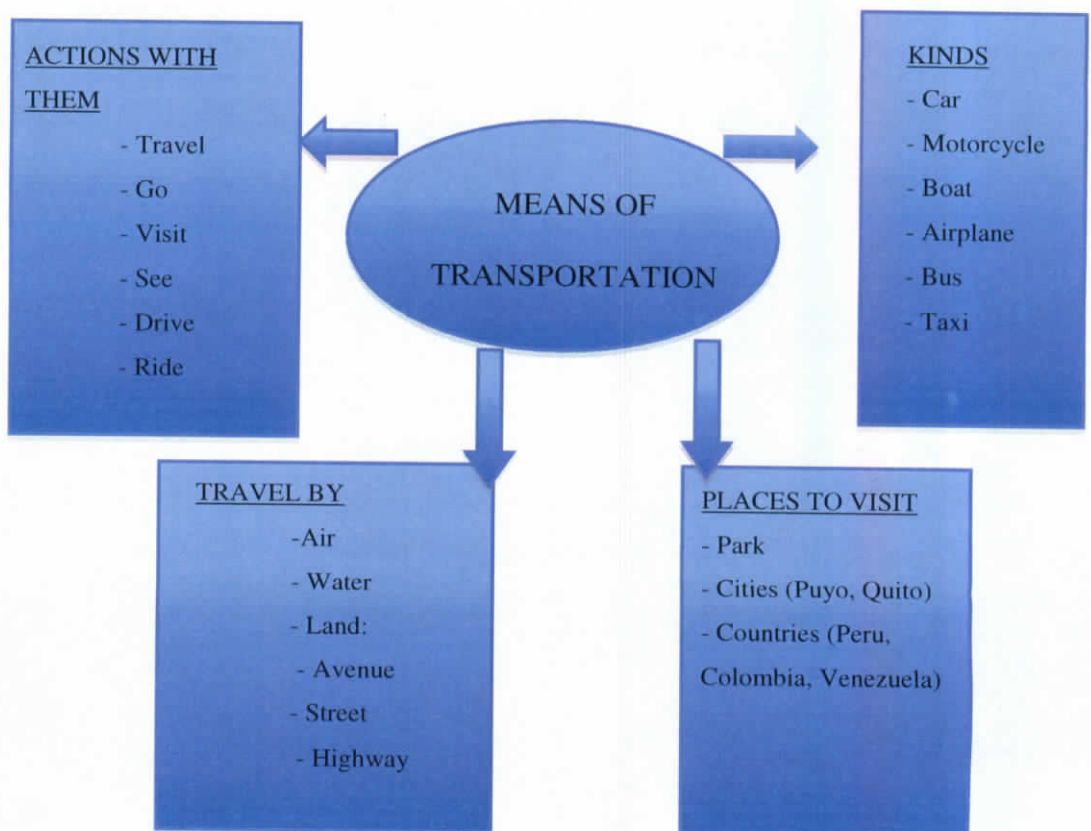
Children love to help the teacher and it is an incentive for them to use material that "only the teacher uses" so, students can contribute with the teaching process by letting them use this material. The following is a number of ways for the teacher to utilize the black board in class:

1. When listening to a song, the teacher writes down the lyric so students can read the lyrics and sing the song at the same time.
2. Teacher draws the main characters of the song and writes on the board the important words. Students know what the song is about. Students know the new vocabulary and sing with the teacher.
3. To practice vocabulary, the teacher plays "Hang Man." The teacher draws some lines according to the number of the letters of the word; students start saying the letters they think belong to the word. The teacher starts to fill up the word with the letters that are correct but if

the letters are incorrect the teacher draws a man part by part hanging from a noose and when the drawing is complete the students lose.

4. The teacher can use the top left part of the board to present the topic of the day and the activities of it.
5. A student writes the date on the board at the beginning of each day.
6. The teacher uses the board to do and to explain a mind map of the topic, e.g. “means of transportation.” Then students have to choose one mean of transportation and then they have to fill in the information.

**Fig. 3.4 Example of a Mind Map**



## STRUCTURE:

1. This is a / an   car   .....
  2. I use it to   go to Quito  .....
  3. It travels by   land  .....
7. The blackboard is very important for the teacher to explain some grammar points, e.g. the present continuous, the future, regular and irregular verbs.
8. To teach the topic “body parts,” the teacher asks the students to draw a person on the board. Each student has to complete and draw a part of the body and write the name of the body part.

### 3.2 Teacher - made Material

The ABC Institute has a wide variety of visual aids that are used everyday in teaching. There is plenty of material that all the teachers can use at the same time, even though, it has been necessary for some teachers to develop different visual aids according to the topic taught during the week. Some of this material is already damaged as a result of extensive use; therefore it has been required to develop new visual aids, such as set of flashcards, puppets, posters and worksheets.

Teachers at ABC, as it is established in their week planning, devote 10 minutes before the class starts to organize the materials required for the topic of the day. Occasionally two teachers have the same topic for the week, for this reason they

need more than one set of flashcards or posters to share. Teachers make their own material according to their students' needs since every student perceives and processes the information in different ways.

Teacher-made material helps educators to be aware of how feasible it is to prepare things by themselves nowadays. Internet access, the variety of new textiles, objects that can be used during the process of making their own material, everything makes their work easier and faster than before. Furthermore, this helps teachers to develop their own "creativity", which becomes a challenge in every teacher's life because it is their duty to attract and maintain students' attention during the entire lesson.

### **3.2.1 Flashcards**

Some set of flashcards have been elaborated according to the topics needed to teach. During their development, materials which were simple and easy to work with have been used. These sets of flashcards were developed because in the Institute every teacher can make their own material, which can be used for other teachers as well. Some of the resources used during the elaboration of the flashcards were:

Photocopies: The photocopies have been made from other teachers who have bought professional flashcards. Make photocopies from an existent material allows teachers to save money, time and some times take advantage of some other elements that are included in the same flashcard. For instance, the numbers which are at the bottom of the card could be used by the teacher to practice numbers and new vocabulary at the same time (see Annex 1). To preserve the new flashcards in good

conditions it was necessary to paste the photocopies on a thick piece of cardboard and then stick protective paper in both sides.

Internet: The internet provides a wide range of resources and information that allows the teacher to discover exciting and new things. On the internet many websites with interesting ideas about teaching and how to elaborate new activities can be found. These resources are designed to help teachers to find useful printable material. Several websites with appropriate pictures for kids and related to the topics required were printed on normal paper. After that, they were pasted on a thick piece of cardboard to make them more resistant. Finally, the flashcards were covered with protective paper so that they can last longer (see Annex 2).

Some of the websites

Self-made: Sometimes when teachers do not have access to the Internet or when there is a topic that needs to be explained in certain way, they can create the material without the use of the technology. This material has the advantage to be adapted according to the teacher's needs.

One of the groups with which visual aids were implemented had an intermediate level of English. For them special material had to be created so that students and the teacher could have a conversation integrating some elements such as grammar, adjectives, pronouns and the introduction of some memory games as well. Some flashcards were made by using magazines colorful pictures that could call children's attention. Besides, small pieces of cardboard of different colors were cut to write on them the vocabulary to be taught using markers of different colors to make the words look more attractive to students' eyes (see Annex 3).

### 3.2.2 Posters

Posters are essential material when teaching because it helps the teacher to have in paper a lot of graphics, words and detailed explanation about a topic. Posters are colorful, bigger than flashcards and allow students who are sitting at the back of the classroom to have a better view of the material presented at the front of the class.

Some posters for different purposes were elaborated. A number of them were basically instructions for the four centers ABC Institute works with, reading and writing, grammar, art and manipulative center. Instructions posters help students to know the steps they have to follow to complete a worksheet without the teacher's help. To make these posters the teacher requires the worksheets students will be working on. In this way the teacher writes on the posters the instructions to encourage students develop the worksheet accurately and stimulate pupils to work independently (see Annex 4).

Many posters were developed with the purpose of having students sing songs in English. With the lyrics written on a big piece of paper, students who already know how to read were motivated to sing. This helps students to improve their reading skills, vocabulary and also their English pronunciation. Chants are also a good way to improve students listening and pronunciation skills in the class. Students feel motivated to learn, especially if they are little and posters contain more pictures than words. To make the posters the lyrics of the songs were looked up on the internet and they were written on a big piece of paper with markers. Finally, a picture of the main character of the song was pasted to give students clues about the main idea of the song (see Annex 5).

### 3.2.3 Puppets

Puppets are a good mechanism to grab children's attention during class. They help children to interact with their peers without any restriction. Due to the big importance of using puppets in class, teachers need to make their own puppets. Puppets could be elaborated in different ways. For instance, some pieces of clothes of different colors and sizes were cut according to the characters wanted. Pieces of paperboard and flex foam were also cut in the needed shapes to form the puppet. Later, all the parts were sewed together and small parts were pasted with some special glue. Some parts of the decoration were made with fomix (see Annex 6).

### 3.2.4 Worksheets

Worksheets are used at ABC to make children practice what they have learnt in class. At the Institute, worksheets work together with the learning centers to make children think and make decisions by themselves. The worksheets are designed to practice: Grammar, Reading and Writing, Manipulative and Art.

Some worksheets were developed according to the topic of the week. On papers some activities in the four different centers were written. For example, several grammar rules to make children form sentences according to the pictures they could see were included. Some traffic rules were drawn on worksheets with a blank space to make children read and understand the rule first and then complete the sentence. Other worksheets were used with students to encourage them to read and cut out words and paste them on the right place. Using the developed worksheets students

had to read and use their imagination to draw and decorate the drawing as they wanted (see Annex 7).

### **3.2.5 Handcrafts**

Handcrafts are quick and easy to make, handcrafts require minimal equipment and materials, and offer satisfying instant results. Children could be stimulated to learn by doing fun things, because kids like to see the product of their work, especially if they are doing nice things by themselves with the supervision of the teacher.

During the topic of “Animals” students could make a hat with their favorite animal on it. However, since they are little it was important to make the handcraft in advance to show them the final result as an example. To make the hat two pieces of cardboard were needed. They were clipped to make them fit on students’ heads. Then a drawing of children’s favorite animal was cut, colored and pasted on one side of the cardboard. To make it look nicer the two sides of the hat were decorated with yellow paper and also some grass under the animal was drawn (see Annex 8).

### **3.3 Assessment of Material Effectiveness**

The implementation of the visual aids at the ABC Institute has helped the students to develop different learning skills. Before the implementations of materials in the classroom, students used to have low grades on their exams. Now with the use of the materials during the teaching time, students have improved their grades (see

Annex 9). Visual aids in class have become mediators aimed at achieving the objectives that are set in the weekly planning and they are the most effective instruments of intellectual activity promoting the creativity of both the teacher and the children.

The type of visual aid used is not always as important as the fact that they are being used. For instance, the solar system can be taught using a poster(see Annex 10), flash cards, a physical model, a power point presentation,a video or other visual aids. What is important is that something is being used to demonstrate the concept without using the primary language. Of course, some aids lend themselves better to different situations, but there is not an inherently “right” or “wrong” aid.

With the implementation of visual aids, students have learned while they were having fun, which has led the children to be more motivated and enthusiastic during the English classes. If the child is properly motivated, he or she is going to be able to stay with a task for a reasonably long period of time. It is an undeniable fact that children have a short attention span. As they are very young, they cannot concentrate on one activity for a long period. However, a highly motivated child will stay involved for a longer period of time, whereas the unmotivated child will give up very easily when they are not involved in the learning. If they are motivated enough and engaged in the activity, children persist to finish a challenging task and they want to succeed. Visual aids help to stimulate their interest and motivate them to engage in the activity(see Annex 11).

Students learned to respect one another’s property. Of course the teacher was always fomenting respect for the others, but, as they are very young, the way the

teacher tried to teach respect to the children was by using visual aid materials like puppets. Children learnt best experientially: through getting visually, auditory and kinesthetically involved in a subject. Puppets are bright, colorful, tactile, and animated. It also can be given a different personality. It is no longer the teacher talking, but rather our friend the puppet. Using this technique, children paid more attention to what the puppet said. Thus the puppet, and not the teacher, was the one who was teaching. This increases the children's interest in the lesson and leads to deeper learning.

Involving the students in the class with visual aids allowed them to learn to construct their own learning, thinking and understanding through the exploration of the materials. When the teacher plays with the students, children make their own choices, develop new skills, solve problems, and make sense of the world they live in. When the teacher gives time to children to play with the materials, they benefit. They need free time to play, time to imagine and create, and teachers need to provide an environment and resources that interest children and encourage their curiosity to ask questions. Through the different activities that the teacher developed in class with visual aid material, students improved their oral, listening, and comprehension skills.

With visual aids that introduce concepts and ideas (such as stove) before they introduce language, students learned to relate their previous knowledge (about what a stove is, does, and is for) with the new language. Students learn more effectively when they already know something about a content area and when concepts in that area mean something to them. When teachers link new information to the student's prior knowledge, they activate the student's interest and curiosity, and infuse

instruction with a sense of purpose. When this occurs, teaching starts to focus on meaning rather than on form. For teachers the most important thing is that the student tries to communicate their ideas in English and it does not matter if the sentence is properly structured or not.

Students further developed their unique learning strategies, but were also pushed to improve other strategies as well. From weekly use of the four learning centers (reading and writing, grammar, art, and manipulative), the children were able to figure out for themselves which strategies worked best in general for them as well as for different individual tasks. For instance, cooperative learning is a teaching strategy that involves children participating in small-group, learning activities that promote positive interaction, especially when they share ideas that make them learn from each other. This ultimately leads those children to lose their fear of speaking or acting in front of others by taking the initiative and taking risks, even if that means making mistakes.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following is based on firsthand experience working as a teacher with the students at the ABC English Institute and using various visual aids in the lessons. One of the easiest observations to make regards the level of interest and attention the students give to the lessons. The implementation and use of visual materials in class have greatly helped all of the teachers at ABC Institute. Before, the material necessary to explain certain topics did not exist and this made the teaching process more difficult. With its implementation, that has changed and now teachers can access the material needed for each class and this benefits both the teachers and the students.

#### **4.1 Benefits for Students Realized at ABC Institute**

The use of visual aids at ABC Institute during the Project has had a number of benefits for both the teachers and the students. The use of visual materials helps students to develop skills, especially in children with visual and spatial intelligence as this kind of intelligence increases the ability to think and perceive the world in images. People with a high level of this type of intelligence are very conscious of their surroundings and therefore are good at remembering images as well as, usually, creating them. Students with a great deal of this intelligence generally learn best through drawings, photos, physical objects and other such visual aids. The teacher

has the capacity to help the student develop this ability and therefore give them some ideas of what he or she might want to be in the future.

#### **4.1.1 Capturing Students' Attention**

When topics are introduced using visual aids, whether they be flashcards, a poster, plastic toys, cd rooms, or any number of physical items, the students are immediately interested in what is going to come next in the lesson. They are better behaved and focused on what the teacher is going to do with the visual aid. It recaptures their attention. They are curious about what the teacher is holding and they give him or her the opportunity to explain what it is that is in his or her hand. It redirects their attention from wherever it was before and gives it briefly back to the teacher. This creates a powerful learning opportunity that the teacher can utilize. This is one of the clearest benefits that has been observed.

During the hours of observation it is clear that children enjoyed the learning process more when they have visual material as a teaching tool. They were more attracted to colors and shapes rather than just books and teachers' explanations. The proper use of materials helped children to develop different skills and this allowed the teacher to create strategies to improve their learning, taking into account the various types of intelligences the students have. Children, when learning something new (in this case L2- English), associate symbols and concepts; for instance, it is easier for a child to remember the meaning of "apple" if he or she sees the object. That is why the use of visual aids is so important.

Similar to the first observation regarding interest and attention, another possibility when using visual aids is the ability to sustain that attention by using the visual aids in an interactive activity. Students can be asked to take a “hands-on” approach and use the visual aids themselves in a creative way. For example, after teaching fruit vocabulary using flash cards, students could be asked to use these same flash cards of various fruits to create a fruit salad. This could also be done with plastic toy fruit or, better yet, the students could even bring in real fruit to class. In this way, they are directly involved in the activity and they have an incentive to finish the project successfully: they get to eat the fruit salad, whilst practicing English.

Through the use of audiovisual aids, it has been observed that not only helps keep the children’s attention for a longer period of time, but also has been shown that by using songs and puppets, children acquire the skills to speak in front of the public, especially when they are very young children. The use of audio-visual aids in the institute has helped in the children’s learning since group study enhance students’ performances, both in class activities, as well as on tests.

Motivation makes students feel attracted to this type of material, the materials include elements to capture the attention of children and hold their interest (activity, reinforcement, attractive presentation). Motivation is an important factor in the learning process, if there is not motivation there is not learning. Young children learn from everything they do. They are naturally curious; they want to explore and discover. If the experience of explorations brings pleasure or success, they will want to learn more. During these early years, children will form positive attitudes about learning that will last forever. Motivation leads to creativity. Children who receive

the proper type of support and encouragement during the school years will be creative, adventurous learners throughout their lives. Capturing their attention with visual aids is an effective way to keep the child engaged and thus provide that support.

#### **4.1.2 The Learning Environment**

It is important to know that there are many environmental factors that are important in the child's development of communicative skills and the child's interaction with others, especially when they are learning a language which is not his or her native language. There must be an accurate English atmosphere both at home and at school. Language is learned in dynamic social interactions involving the child and the language users and, in this case, the Institute is the right environment where teachers, the staff and children are using the same "code." Students, therefore, learn to take risks with the language, because even when their English is not perfect the students are required to communicate with the teacher using English. The teacher also uses different games where the students are encouraged to talk and work together.

The decoration of the classroom is a very important factor in the learning process specially if we are teaching children. This enables a greater motivation of students, also provides an optimum environment for teaching and learning, promotes active student participation because they feel more confident. Also it stimulates creativity, provides a pleasant environment for other activities apart from the daily

routines for instance, group meetings and extracurricular activities, and the most important fact is that through the pictures on the wall they learn vocabulary.

#### **4.1.3 Visual Aids and Memory**

Other observations have been made regarding some of the more specific benefits of using visual aids during these classes. When teaching vocabulary, using visual aids allows students to make more connections in their brain that allow them to more easily recall the vocabulary at a later time. For example, if the students are shown an image of a pineapple, they know what it is. They have previous experience with it. They know it is a fruit. They know it is yellow inside. They know whether or not they like the fruit. They also have a word connected to that piece of fruit. These are all various connections in the brain between the parts that understand that image to other parts including language. In teaching these students English it is important that they can connect a picture, an object, an idea, or piece of fruit to the English word. If they connect it first to a Spanish word that they then translate into English, they are not properly acquiring the new language. For this reason, visual aids help the students to make these direct connections and learn that the image is of a pineapple.

The use of visual aids allows the teacher to involve the students in the learning process, the students enjoy participating in the activities because through the visual material the new content (topic) is reinforced and therefore is clearer to understand. The use of visual aids makes that the learning process occur in two ways: by hearing and by seeing. The importance of listening in communication is

something valuable to consider. When the student is a good listener he/ she has the chance to improve his/ her pronunciation, and generally has good grades in the speaking exams. As well vision is an important sense in building knowledge of the world around us as well as in the development of communication and language. When the student can see the material that the teacher is using, the student tend to develop some skills like the visual intelligence, which allows the child remember things through images.

#### **4.1.4 Visual Aids and Pronunciation**

Another important conclusion is that using visual aids makes it easier, as a teacher, to focus on pronunciation. Using the same example, a teacher can show the class a picture of a pineapple. The word is not particularly difficult to say. The teacher can pronounce the word clearly for the class and then ask them to repeat it. It is simple: look at the picture, hear the word, and repeat it. There is no confusion. If the students were looking at the word as it is spelled, there would certainly be more confusion. The word is not pronounced phonetically, which is perplexing for many Spanish speakers. The experience, however, using visual aids to teach pronunciation is that students understand and accept it very easily. There are very few questions about why a word is pronounced the way it is. They see the visual aid, hear the sound, and generally remember it.

## **4.2 Benefits for the Teacher Realized at ABC Institute**

Visual aids of all different types have been, when used at the ABC English Institute, the source of dynamic, engaging, and successful opportunities for teaching and practice. A particular benefit that has been noticed with the use of visual aids during the class activities is that the use of such visual aids strengthens the clarity of the speaker's message, in this case the teacher who is in charge, and to make children understand in an easy and fun way what is being taught. Visual aids engage the students and require a change from one activity to another: from hearing to seeing and sometimes touching. They enable you to appeal to more than one sense at the same time, thereby increasing your student's understanding and retention level. With drawings, posters, transparencies and other visuals, the concepts or ideas teachers present are no longer simply words - but words plus images.

The use of visual aids makes a speaker's message easier for listeners to retain information. When flashcards are used in class to explain a topic, children remember the vocabulary they have just been given much better. The colors, shapes, letters, and all these elements make the visual aid catch the children's attention in an easy and attractive way. A teaching aid is a tool used by teachers, facilitators, or tutors to help learners improve reading and other skills illustrate or reinforce a skill, fact, or idea, and relieve anxiety, fears, or boredom, since many teaching aids are like games.

### **4.2.1 Training in Proper Use of Visual Aids**

It is important to give a proper training to the teachers on how to teach accurately and in such a way that the students understand and are capable of

developing their own knowledge. The training should be related to children's cognitive development; as such, teachers can be able to know the process by which children acquire knowledge and create memories. The child's development of language and other skills is dependent upon his capacity to learn. Furthermore, training helps teachers to be more effective in their job, using different methodologies and not improvising the activities so pupils learn and behave better and achieve higher standards. Moreover, teachers improve their teaching level and consequently they feel like successful professionals and thus become more motivated to generate new ideas.

A recommendation would be that the teacher should learn the proper use of the material. New materials like games are implemented in the Institute for the teachers to use with the children, but, as the material is new, some teachers do not know how to use them properly. This leads to the frequent misuse of the material. The teacher tends to use the material they already know and are comfortable with using far too often despite of having lots of new material available to them. The teacher often prefers to use the same material that he or she is familiar with plenty of times rather try something new, which has the unfortunate effect of causing children to lose interest.

It is necessary to constantly maintain the materials such as the flashcards, posters, toys, and board games. Since these materials are widely utilized by both the teachers and the students, the physical condition of these resources quickly deteriorates. Their attractiveness in class and ability to call the attention of the child also declines. There must be adequate communication between teachers and the

principal of the institute in order to achieve a common agreement on the daily maintenance of the materials used.

With regard specifically to flash cards, if there is not enough money in the budget to buy new ones, teachers can rather easily make their own cards according to the particular topic that will be taught in class that day. A good way to improve learning is to incorporate color in the process of card making. For example, if the teacher is using flashcards to study new vocabulary, he or she can group the words together according to similarities and then assign each group its own unique color flashcard. Color-coding is especially useful for students who are visual learners or tactile.

#### **4.3 Indirect Benefits of Implemented Strategies at ABC Institute**

Students had a positive attitude towards the language, because they were using it for real purposes. The use of hands-on, real-life materials in the classroom along with continuous use of English by the teacher instills in the children a sense of the importance that English has not just at ABC, but in general as well. In addition, they know that many of their favorite songs and movies are produced in English so they make an effort to understand and learn the language. This helps to motivate the students to learn to take risks even when they are not necessarily proficient in the language.

In class, students learned to work cooperatively in groups with the materials as the teacher tried to mix the students in every group activity in different combinations. This helps the children to know all their classmates and build

friendships with them. Also, students learned to be involved in the class because they felt they could contribute to the lesson. Students developed more confidence with the teacher, which led them to use the language to communicate their feelings, thoughts, and ideas. The teacher's personality and teaching style have an impact on how children behave in class and their academic performance. It is important to create a positive environment in which the student feels comfortable and can foster their confidence.

Students learned that English could be acquired in different ways, according to their needs, likes and abilities. Teachers created a student-centered classroom environment by knowing their abilities, weaknesses, learning strategies, as well as their individual likes and dislikes. The students were encouraged to participate actively in learning the material. Often, the children would present the material in some activities or games rather than just being passive and listening quietly. Students are always involved throughout the class time in activities that help them construct their understanding of the material that is presented. The teacher does not present a vast quantity of information, but uses a variety of hands-on activities to promote learning.

Students learned to follow rules and instructions properly. They realized that goals could be reached if they followed the teacher's explanations and if they followed the instructions written on the paper to develop the project. This led the students to learn to work faster and to take advantage of time. In addition, they learned that in order to have a very nice job done, they had to develop and add some creativity and imagination when doing their activity. Furthermore, students learned that if they work very hard with effort and perseverance, they could finish their work

successfully. The children's success increased their self-confidence and they started to know and value themselves and to value and respect their work and the work of others.

#### **4.4 Recommendations**

Based on experience during this project, the incorporation of visual aids into the curriculum is an often under looked, but incredibly valuable, tool in the instruction of English, or any foreign language. The best way to do this is by imagining what type of visual aid is suitable for their age. Most children feel attracted by colorful objects, things that they can touch and play with. So, it is important to incorporate into the curriculum the correct materials and specific activities related to the topic, only by doing this they are going to remember what they have learned for a long time.

Teachers should know what exactly is going to teach in class ahead of time. To make the instruction easier it is important to make an effective lesson planning, where you can write the activities you are going to do for the month, week or day. This is going to help to organize the ideas and to have the materials ready that are going to be used for the activities even when the required materials are not available at that moment. Planning provides the chance to look it up on the internet and print the material needed and, through this, possible problems can be predicted and thus solutions considered.

Teachers have to encourage students to participate in class, giving them the opportunity to help the teacher with the flashcards, posters, toys, etc. This activities

are going to help students to build confidence in themselves and enjoy the learning process. Teachers have to be careful if the student is fearful and does not want to cooperate, do not force the student to do an activity that he or she does not want to do, this can make the student not want to cooperate never again.

Teachers can only embrace the fact that young students will inherently have short attention spans and no executive control to refocus their attention on the same material. Teachers thus have the responsibility to keep refocusing the students on the day's particular theme. Fortunately, as we have seen in this Project, there is a multitude of ways to combat short attention spans with the world of visual aids. Teachers should try to use as many different visual aids as possible in a class in order to have them interested and focused the whole time.

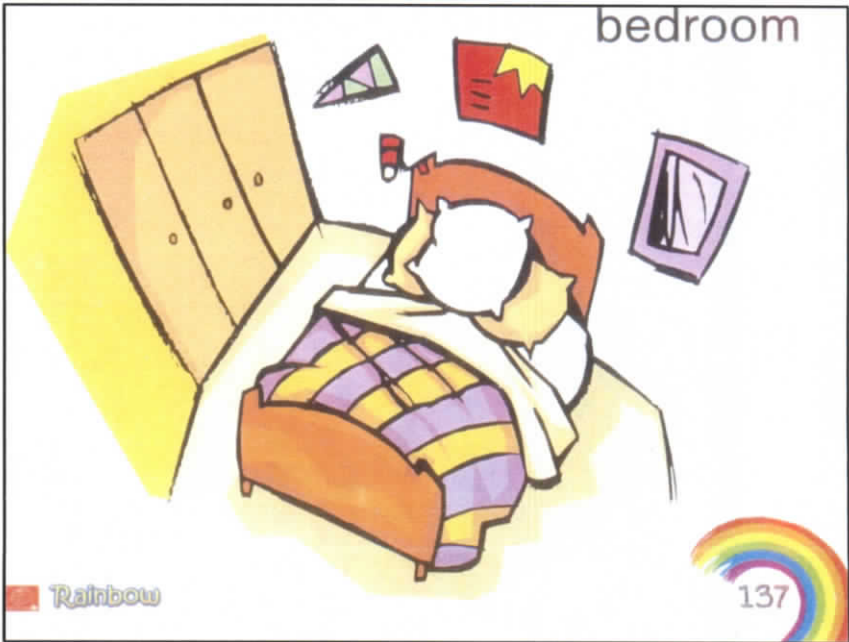
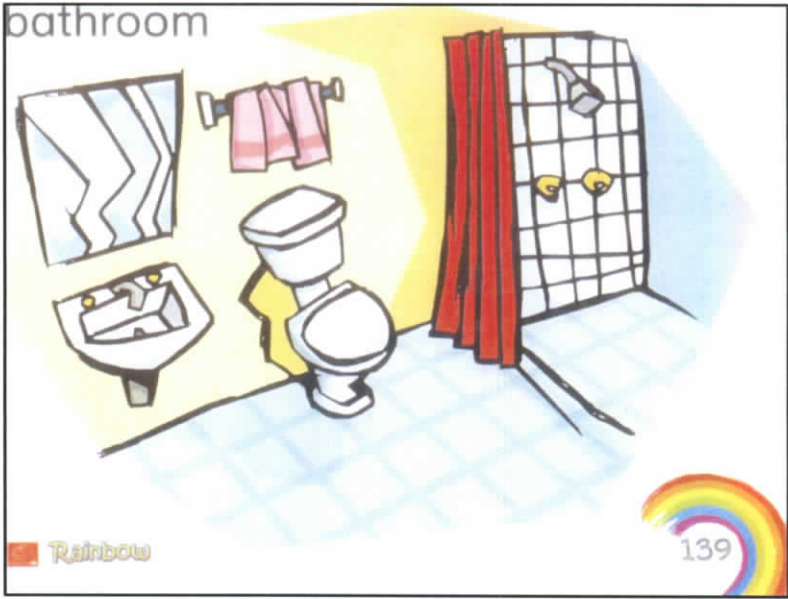
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Annex 1

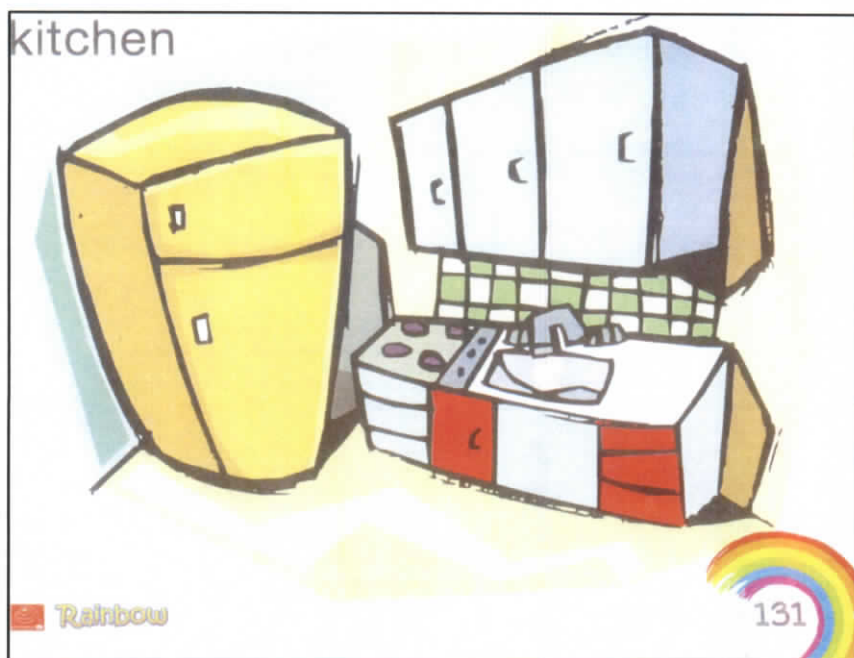
HOUSE



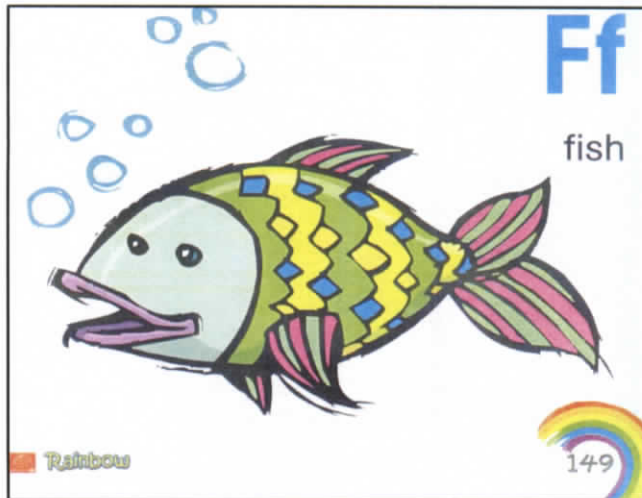
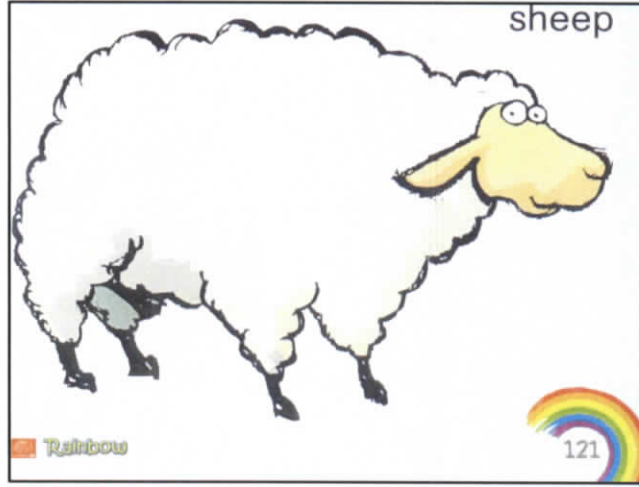
dining room

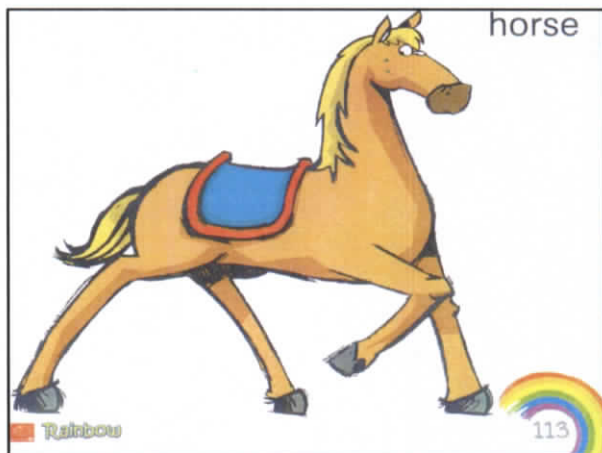
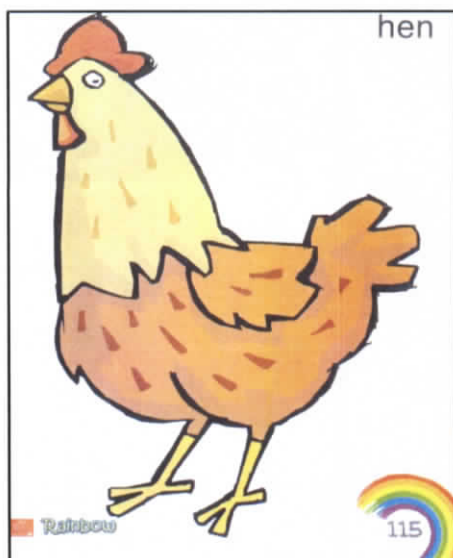


kitchen



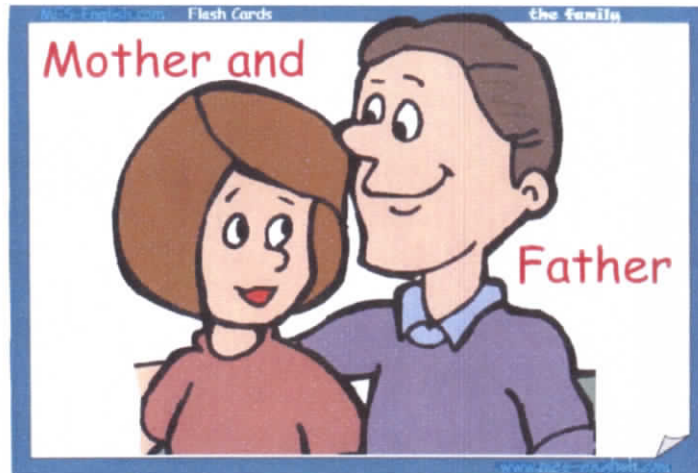
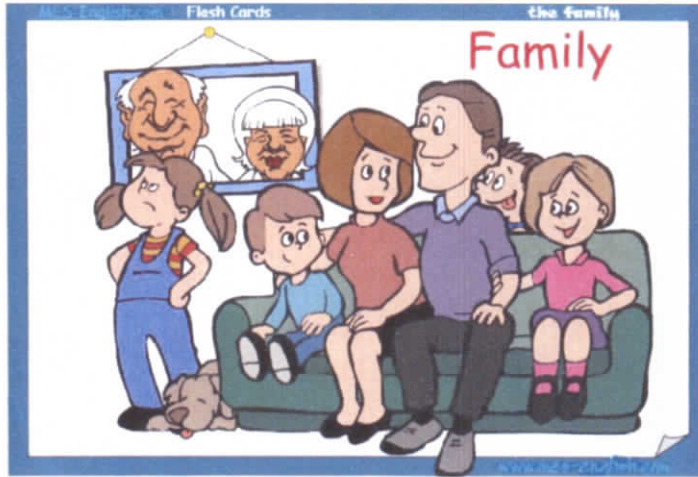
ANIMALS

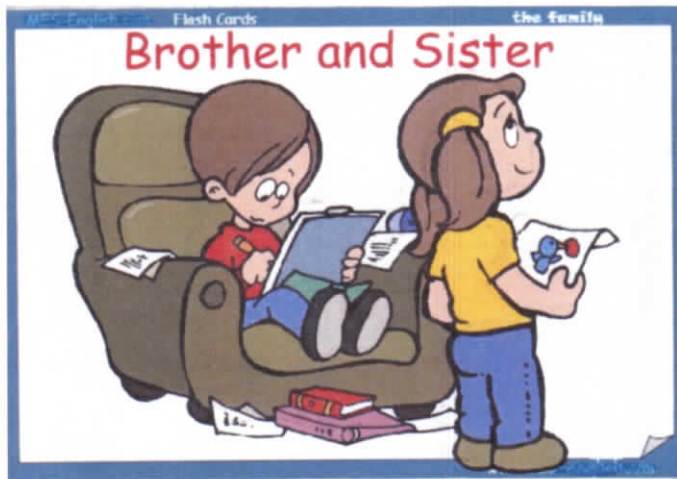
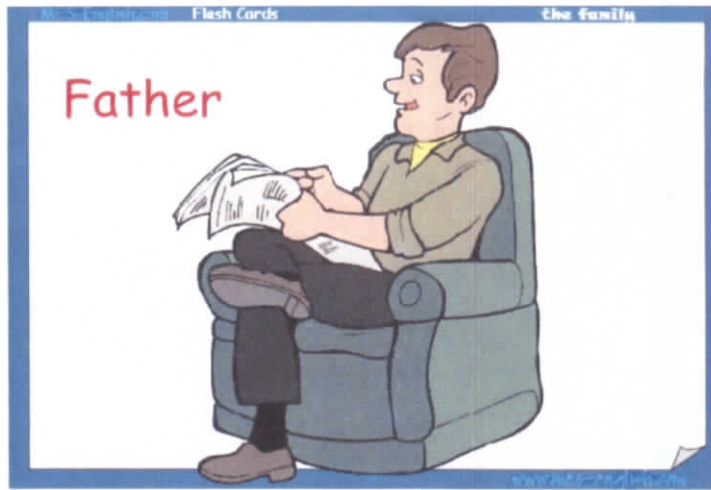


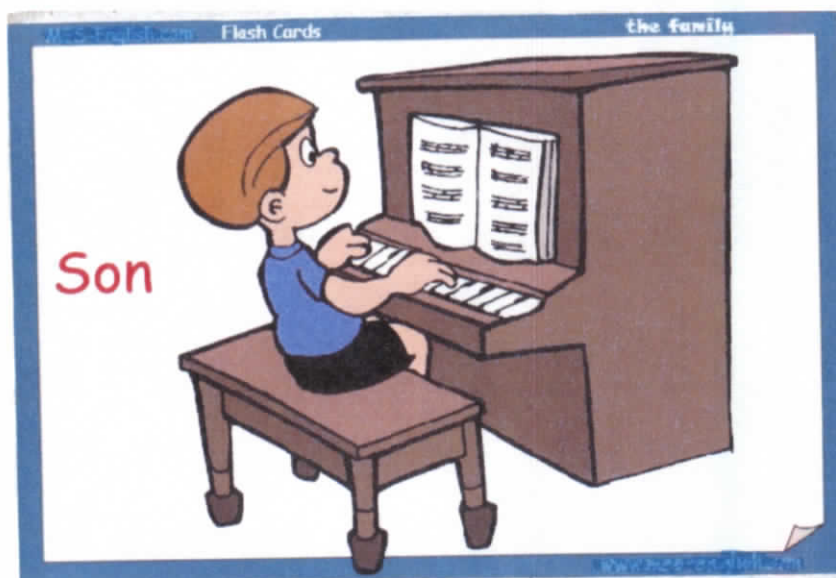


Annex 2

The Family



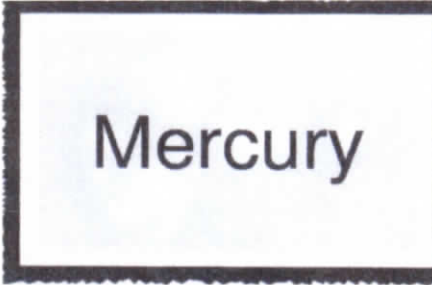




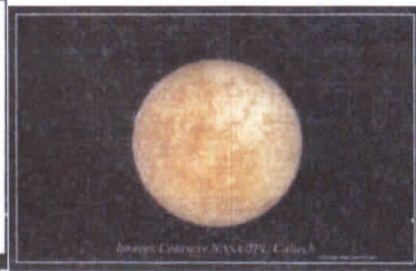
Grandfather and grandmother

Universe

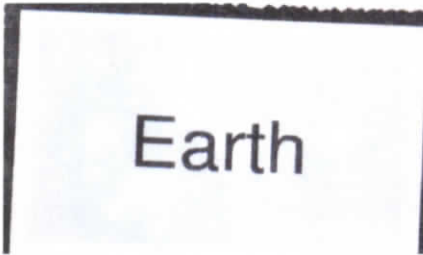
Front of flashcard



Back of flashcard



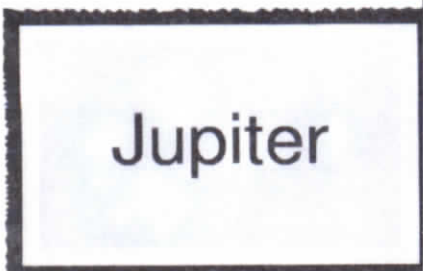
Front of flashcard



Back of flashcard



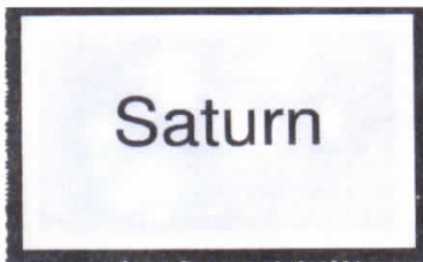
Front of flashcard



Back of flashcard



Front of flashcard



Back of flashcard



## Annex 3

Clothes



Adjectives, verbs, means of transportation

car walk

airplane play

study airplane

clean horrible

truck

pretty

train

good

airplane

nice

Months

Front of the flashcard



Back of the flashcard



Front of the flashcard



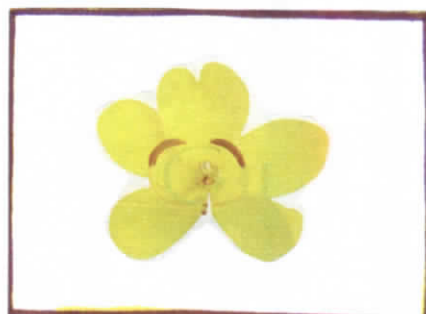
Back of the flashcard



Front of the flashcard



Back of the flashcard



Front of the flashcard

May

Back of the flashcard



Front of the flashcard

October

Back of the flashcard




## Annex 4

## Grammar Center

Grammar Center M.E


Means of transportation

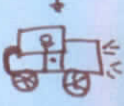
① Look at the pictures 

② Compare how fast they can go.

Use: < slower than  
faster than

Ex: The bicycle is slower than the car





## Reading and Writing Center

My Clothes

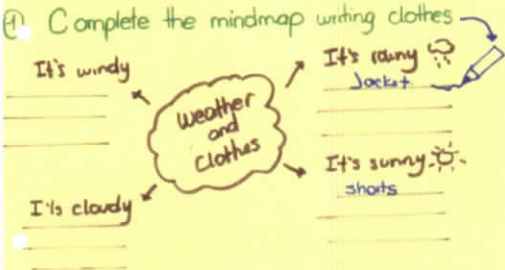
## Writing C


① Complete the mindmap writing clothes

It's windy

\_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_



It's rainy 

Jacket \_\_\_\_\_


\_\_\_\_\_

It's sunny 

shorts \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

② make sentences about what you wear according to the weather


- when it's rainy, I wear a jacket
- when it's rainy, I wear ..... 

## Manipulative Center

ME  
"THE UNIVERSE"

MANIPULATIVE  
CENTER

1) Cut out the name of the planets  
and paste these in order



2) Complete the fantasy trip based  
on the picture.


First Unscramble the words:  
Mars jupiter saturn pluto neptune  
uranus venus earth mercury

## Art Center

Art Center

Means of transportation

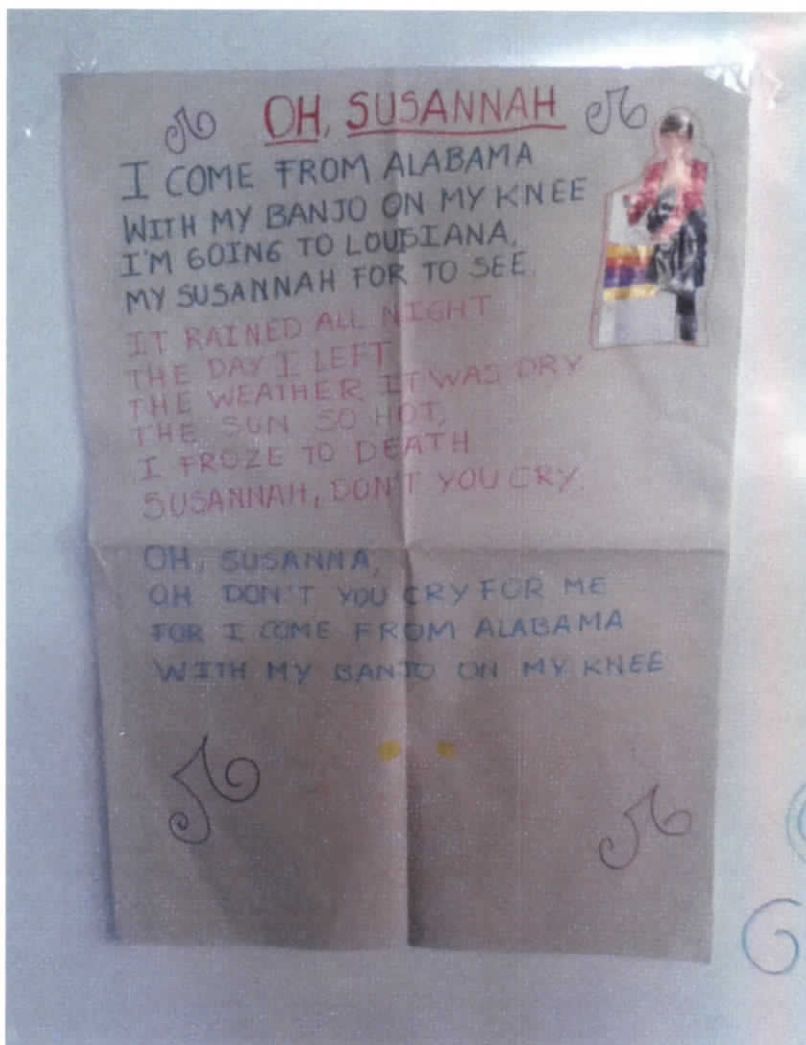
① Color with water paints



② Write the places you can go by plane, motorcycle,  
helicopter.

Plane :- England	Van :- Puyo	Underground :- London
- Brazil	- Cuenca	- Paris
- Chile	- Baños	- Holand
- United States	- Quito	

## Annex 5

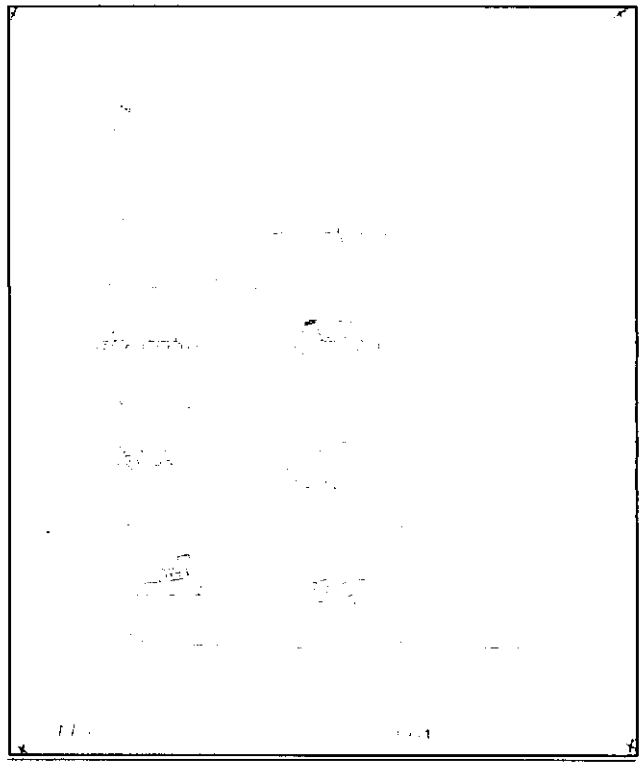
Song Poster "Oh, Susannah"

## Annex 6

Puppets

Annex 7

Grammar




Reading and Writing

ABC ENGLISH  
ME 2


**MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION**

Look at the traffic sign, circle the right meaning of it and write it down.


 It means you  park here (should / shouldn't):

turn right (should / shouldn't):

stop here (should / shouldn't):

 It means you  stop here (should / shouldn't):

park here (should / shouldn't):

 It means you  park here (should / shouldn't):

turn left (should / shouldn't):

turn left (should / shouldn't):

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Manipulative

ME. Lv. 5

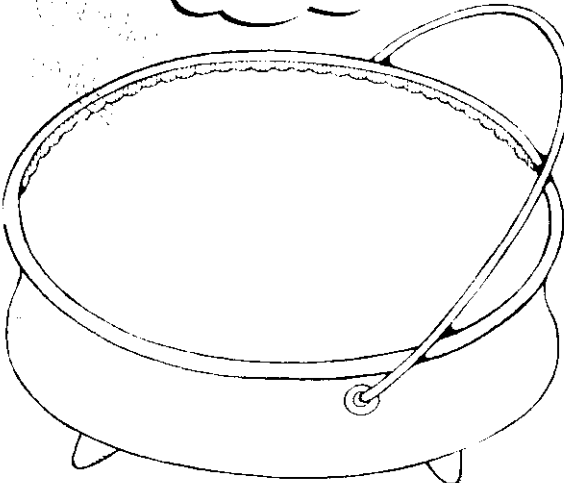
Cooking with my family

1. Cut out the words and  
Paste them on the picture

table	door
chairs	drawer
picture	cupboard
plant	floor
lamp	fridge
TV	towel

Art

My Soup



What are you cooking in your soup?  
Draw in the pot. Check the word.

carrots	onions	beans	rice
spaghetti	potatoes	tomatoes	beans

Decorate your soup with ART material

## Annex 8

Hat

Exam

**ENGLISH INSTITUTE**


ABC ENGLISH  
MIDTERM EVALUATIONS


AREA: Writing LEVEL: 5  
GROUP: ME


NAME: ARLETT E DATE: 19-05-2020

**1. Complete the crossword (40 pts)**


**ACROSS**


1  Popsicle ① P ② P s i c l e


3  Tomato e a H


5  Jars ③ T ④ M a t o

**DOWN**

1  Peach h a l d

2  Potatoes o K o

4  Hot dogs e g

6  Milk ⑤ J A R S




40







**2. Match the numbers in column A with column B (30 pts)**





"A"	"B"
Twenty	100 ✓
Sixty	79 ✓
Fourteen	20 ✓
One hundred	60 ✓
Seventy nine	12 ✓
Twelve	14 ✓







30

**3. Write the numbers of each object (30 pts)**

Example How many can fly? 1   

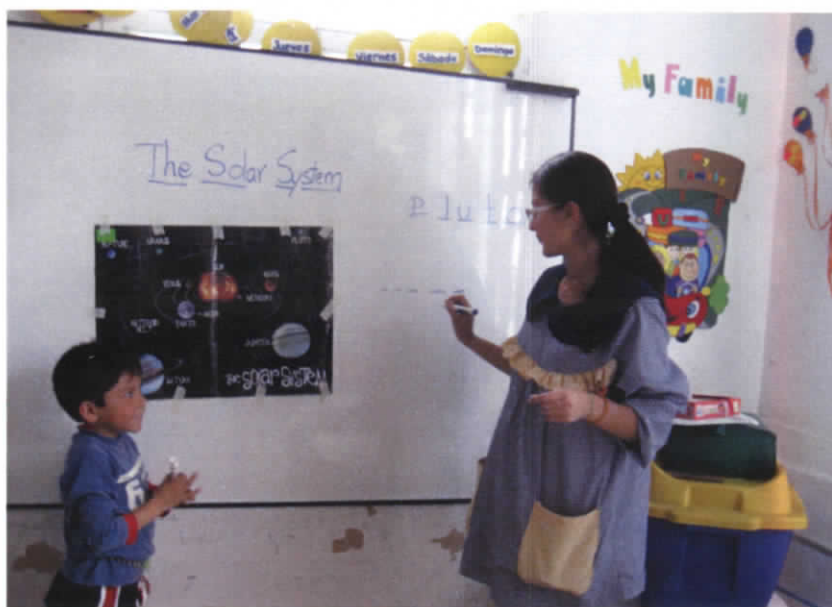
How many can walk? 3      

How many can swim? 3    

How many can jump? 3      

30

## Annex 10



Annex 11



