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BAAMBOOZLE’S INFLUENCE ON WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH IN SMALL GROUP PRIVATE LESSONS

Tesis para optar al grado de Magíster en Innovación de la Enseñanza, Aprendizaje y
Evaluación del Inglés.

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Abstract

This paper examines the results of an action research project on the use of Baamboozle as a gamification strategy to influence students' willingness to communicate in English and their perception of the game. The study is developed in a Chilean context in which English does not play a fundamental part in the learning process during the early years of education. Therefore, a variety of relevant problems arise when learners need to work on the oral productive skill. The sample of the research includes four private lesson students between 10 to 11 years old who usually work individually with the teacher, yet during the period the research took place, they worked together as one group. Considering this, several researchers have discovered that gamified activities play an essential role when teaching young learners since it provides unusual elements learners are not used to applying during class time. Six interventions were carried out twice a week for three weeks in order to collect the data through observation and the application of a Likert-type scale and a focus-group interview. The data collected during the interventions suggested that students the activity can be applied in an online context with small groups and students stated they felt willing to participate in the task using English as the main language.

Keywords: gamification, willingness to communicate, speaking, private lessons, online teaching.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem statement

Online private lessons have become an effective resource when learners decide how to start acquiring a new language. Nowadays, methodologies when teaching English as a foreign language are the communicative approach and the integration of the four skills in a lesson. Based on this, the Ministerio de Educación de Chile (2021) indicates in its program for 5th grade that in order to manage the language effectively when speaking in English, students should master vocabulary, morphosyntactic structures, and pronunciation. In addition to this, it is suggested that English must be used as the only means to express ideas during the class. As soon as the pandemic started in early 2020, I decided to teach English in online private lessons. In this particular context, I realized that students were not willing to participate in activities that involve using the target language, especially if they were speaking activities. Two years have already passed, and I have been teaching English online for both individual and small-group lessons during this time. About this, I realized that there were frequent cases in which learners believed some particular activities, especially the ones that require speaking in English, were aimless, boring, or simply not attractive enough to be completed. After doing the proper research, I found Baamboozle (<https://www.baamboozle.com/>), a web-based platform game that requires an electronic device with an internet connection to be used. The teacher is the controller of the game and students are divided into teams in order to answer questions about any topic discussed during the lesson. The platform allows students to answer questions directly from the screen shared by the teacher during the videocall. Considering the former, I decided to investigate the influence that the website/game Baamboozle can have on students' willingness to communicate when practicing speaking.

1.1 Research aims

1.1.1 General objective

The general objective of this action research is to examine the effect that Baamboozle has on 4th and 5th-grade EFL learners' willingness to communicate when speaking English in a small group private lesson.

1.1.2 Specific objectives

To examine 4th to 5th-grade EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English when working with Baamboozle during the interventions.

To analyze 4th to 5th-grade EFL learners' perceptions regarding a gamified activity when speaking English after the intervention.

CHAPTER II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Developing speaking in an EFL context

According to Richards and Schmidt (1985), the concept of young learners refers to students who are between pre-primary to primary school age, which can be considered to be 6 to 11 years old. Considering their ability to learn a new language, Bland (2019) claims that “children are cognitively stimulated when offered opportunities for developing language-learning strategies, their curiosity and interest in languages are awakened (p. 83). In addition to this, Damar et al. (2013) studied the appropriate methodology for teaching English to young learners, and they found out that it is necessary to develop tasks and activities that are both visual and kinesthetic while being surrounded by an enjoyable environment. Moreover, these scholars discovered that the majority of teachers’ perspectives on language development were principally focused on listening and speaking. In this sense, these two skills are the focus of teaching English to young learners’ curriculum which includes child-centered activities to boost communication using the target language.

Speaking is one of the four abilities that must be practiced in an EFL context so as to accomplish mastery of the language. Nunan (1991) indicates that the speaking skill in the EFL context can be also known as oral interaction, which in general terms, means to present information or share ideas an individual has in their mind. Furthermore, Bygate (2001) argue that developing speaking is a reciprocal process in which any speaker is allowed to contribute to the discourse at the same time, hence it needs to be situated in a face-to-face context. Baleghizadeh and Nasrollahi (2014) indicate that speaking can be the skill teachers take for granted the most, whilst students consider more relevant since, in their eyes, “it is the yardstick by which proficiency appears to be measured at least by the layman” (p. 739).

Regarding speaking development in the EFL classroom, Toledo and Hoit (2016) suggest that teachers must be able to carefully select the aspect of the language they want their learners to work on and choose the most proper assessment tool to provide feedback. To accomplish the former, these scholars state that providing students the opportunity to work with non-traditional types of tasks, gives them the chance to use the language not using textbooks since they participate in real spoken interactions. For instance, Sariçoban and Karakurt (2016) determine that in a university context, a task-based learning approach was able to improve students’ listening and speaking abilities effectively, since it helped them to practice real-life language. Additionally, Sirisrimangkorn (2018) declare that in order to boost learners’ ability to produce the language fluently, it is of fundamental importance for the teacher to include communicative and authentic aspects into their context. Despite this, the author adds that for students who have practiced the language for several years, it is still exhausting to use it outside of the classroom.

Derakhshan et al. (2016) also indicate that teachers need to be able to encourage both young and adult learners to speak using English with a communicative purpose in real-life situations where this type of interaction must be developed with the aim to communicate a message. In addition to this, the scholars state that it is not enough to manage the grammatical and semantic rules to properly develop oral production since the “knowledge of how native speakers use the language in context” (p. 180) is of vital importance as well. Lastly, the same

authors establish that two functions can be identified when talking about the speaking ability of the language: interactional and transactional. The first one is connected to social relationships and the second one is about passing information from one person to another one, for obvious reasons we are constantly using the language aiming to be more interactional rather than just transactional.

Regarding the young learners' ability to produce the language orally, Cameron (2001) indicates that for young learners, spoken language is considered to be more than one skill, but the actual channel through which language can be understood and learned while being practiced. The scholar also states two principal guidelines which need to be considered when teaching speaking to young learners. First, meaning needs to come first since children will not be able to learn the target language if they do not understand it. Second, children need to be active participants in order to expand their knowledge to participate in real-life situations where they can have the opportunity to communicate a message with a real purpose. Supporting this, Graham-Marr (2004) mentions that some of the speaking skills that students need to work on are: fluency, phonology, and strategies while producing chunks of appropriate language using interconnected devices.

Asmali (2017) investigated young learners' attitudes and perceptions toward learning English. In this study, learners showed a positive attitude and were intrinsically motivated since they stated it was fun and they wanted to continue practicing. The only negative aspect this scholar could identify was that, in most cases, students felt learning English was difficult and they felt constantly frustrated when practicing it. Regarding this, Günes and Sarigöz (2021) found out that for the purpose of abolishing young learners' negative attitudes towards the target language, it is necessary to foster their motivation and increase their level of willingness to communicate. One method to accomplish this is by implementing tasks and activities that catch the learners' attention and help them to be as much involved as possible.

Sari et al. (2020) studied two teachers who implemented games at the beginning of their lessons in order to discover the problems they needed to face while dealing with teaching speaking in a young EFL classroom. The scholars could conclude from their research that two main outcomes were accomplished. The first one is that by starting the class with a game, students felt more energized and eager to learn the lesson of the day and that these types of activities were triggering for students to speak in English during the class. They also add that learning should be "a fun and relaxed environment to increase students' concentration on the materials being learned" (p.443). However, Ramirez-Avila and Guzman (2020) claim that the strategies or methodologies applied in the EFL classroom to practice speaking are more likely to be limited to the repetition of patterns or short conversations. Another research conducted by Inawati (2014) studied the use of role-plays when teaching speaking to young learners. The findings showed that as a means to implement a successful activity, it is necessary to design interesting material, promote a learning environment that is enjoyable, and not use a large period of time to develop the task. Furthermore, it is also advisable for the teacher to tailor the students' roles based on their strengths and weaknesses, so all of them can take a part that they feel comfortable with.

2.2 Learners' willingness to communicate in English

The first authors to present the concept of Willingness to Communicate (hereafter WTC) were McCroskey and Baer in 1985. These scholars identified a regularity considering frequency and amount of talking in communication behaviors that can be defined as a personality variable they decided to name WTC. This variable can be considered situationally dependent, which means that depending on the context the speaker is involved, their willingness to communicate might vary (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). Considering this as a personality-based construct might be the explanation for why some people seem to be more willing to communicate than others under the same circumstances. Almost a decade later, Richmond and Roach (1992) came up with a more constructed definition that illustrated WTC as a dominant communication personality aspect that is thought to have a significant impact on all facets of a person's life and greatly enhance their chances of succeeding in relationships, the workplace, and other areas of their lives.

Considering WTC in an L2 context, MacIntyre et al. (1998) redefined the former definitions by including the L2 factor and representing it as “a readiness to enter into a discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons, using an L2” (p. 547). These scholars also identified that it is almost impossible that WTC in L2 could be a reflection of WTC in L1 mainly since the factors that affect one or another are completely different and not correlated. Figure 1 explains the Heuristic Model of L2 WTC which features 6 layers and 12 levels. The base of the pyramid presents the social and individual contexts which include the intergroup climate and personality itself. At the top of it, there is the communication behavior by using the L2. In the middle of these two, there is a variety of situational and context-oriented factors that converge with the learners' attributes namely communicative competence, interpersonal motivation, and desire to communicate with a specific person.

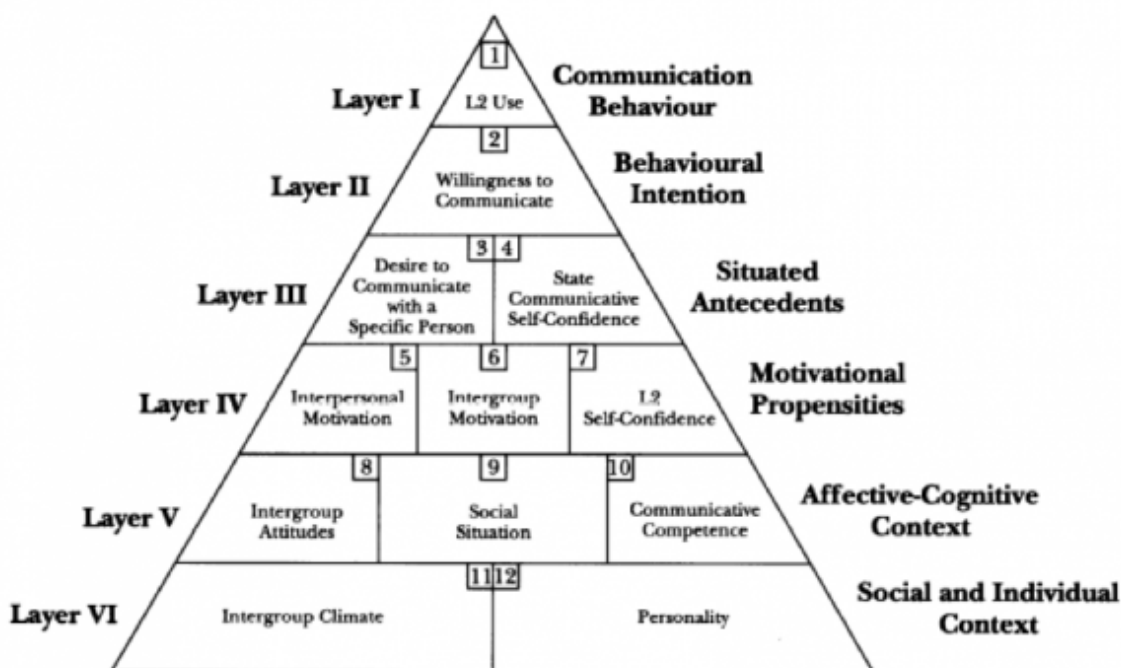


Figure 1: The Heuristic Model of L2 WTC (MacIntyre, et al. 1998 p. 547)

Basöz and Erten (2018) indicate that, during the last two decades, WTC has been deemed as an essential aspect of the L2 learning and acquisition process and research has deepened its studies so as to explore learners' L2 WTC. Considering this, Altiner (2018) studied Turkish EFL learners' WTC, and the results showed that in controlled situations that include pronunciation and vocabulary learning, students accounted for a higher level of WTC in comparison to less-controlled situations such as giving a speech. Moreover, Altiner's research demonstrated that students were less willing to communicate using English when the task involved them being in the front of the class using a more complicated level of English.

According to Oz (2014), some of the factors to be considered to affect learners' WTC are related to extraversion, friendliness, and openness to experience. Regarding this, Weda et al. (2021) investigated high school EFL students' WTC in Indonesia and the results showed that the principal factor to influence this is related to keeping speaking activities at a group level by giving them topics to talk about. The study also evidenced that students considered classroom discussion the best method to practice speaking in English and they enjoyed starting the group discussion with several critical questions. Within the same line, Toyoda and Yashima (2021) studied how transient and situational contextual variables may directly affect the learners' desire to communicate by introducing TBL. The research showed that two interactive conditions were fundamental for learners to accomplish their desires to communicate a message using L2, for instance, a task and interlocutor. However, novice learners found it difficult to do so, thus their communication stress increased, and consequently, their WTC decreased. Considering the former, Robinson (2002) indicates that there are two main limitations that task performers might go through. The first one is the cognitive demand and the second one is the interactive conditions. In this sense, novice learners are more likely to consider cognitive demand as a limitation since they see themselves as not proficient enough and the task turns overly difficult for them.

2.3 Online learning for young language learners

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the lessons had to mutate into an online version of themselves in order to provide a safe learning environment for everybody involved, and this was considered to be a demanding challenge all teachers had to face. As Turnbull et al. (2021) state, this impact has been deeply significant since education was rapidly forced to implement new technologies that could facilitate engagement when working remotely. In addition to this, continue the scholars, "this has led to the creative deployment of learning and communication platforms that have profoundly transformed the teaching and learning landscape for disciplines and institutions that traditionally were thought of as being conducted in a physical environment". (p. 6402).

Gonzalez and Louis (2018) defined it as any type of learning that is developed from a distance through electronic devices such as smartphones, computers, or tablets using an internet connection. Likewise, Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) add that the online learning context features learning activities that provide the opportunity to access and exchange knowledge. Furthermore, Rahman (2020) declares that the online learning context can be classified considering the type of communication used and how many people are involved in the process. First, asynchronous communication is basically one-way and there is no need for

interaction in real-time to be developed. Second, synchronous communication demands an active real-time interaction that can be carried out through means such as live chats or video calls. Rahman (2020) indicates that online lessons can be considered a reasonably new way of teaching and learning and, undoubtedly, that there is a need to deepen the knowledge and teaching methodologies since there is no common foundation to be served as a basis. According to Ally (2008) chapter 2, there are different terminologies to refer to online learning. Some of the most commonly used terms are e-learning, internet learning, distributed learning, networked learning, tele-learning, and virtual learning. During this paper, the term online learning will be used in order to refer to any of those terminologies.

Anderson (2008) explains (see figure 2) that there are six possible forms of interaction in an online context between the two main human actors: teachers and learners. One form of learners' interaction is directly to the content without the need for any other individual. However, learners prefer to have the assistance of a teacher by involving themselves in a formal education system. The scholar also suggests that online learning introduces challenges to educators since the tools often limit the users' view of the body language, and that "assessing student preconditions and cultural prerequisites is often more challenging in an online learning context, because teachers are less able to interact transparently with students – especially in the critical early stages of learning community formation" (p. 48).

Regarding this, a study conducted by Manoharan et al. (2022) compares the principal challenges faced by young and adult learners when transitioning from traditional learning to online learning in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of learning styles, psychological effects, and low academic performance. Most of them were fairly similar except for the fact that adult learners were responsible for themselves since they have to be self-directed and self-independent so as to cope with online learning without any other external support. In this sense, the scholars continue, teachers and parents play a fundamental role, especially when teaching young EFL learners, to maintain the level of learners' interest and motivation. The former can be supported by Marchlik et al. (2021) who adds that older learners can even take advantage of online distance education since their levels of autonomous work are more developed and they are able to control their own pace while working by themselves. However, asynchronous education is not a simple option for younger learners. They require constant assistance which, in such cases, needs to be provided by their parents or guardians. In addition, continue the scholars, young learners need "need a lot of fun, play and movement. Frequent change in activities and forms of work is a necessity, as they have a short attention span. Language teachers should provide children with a variety of interactions" (p. 7109).

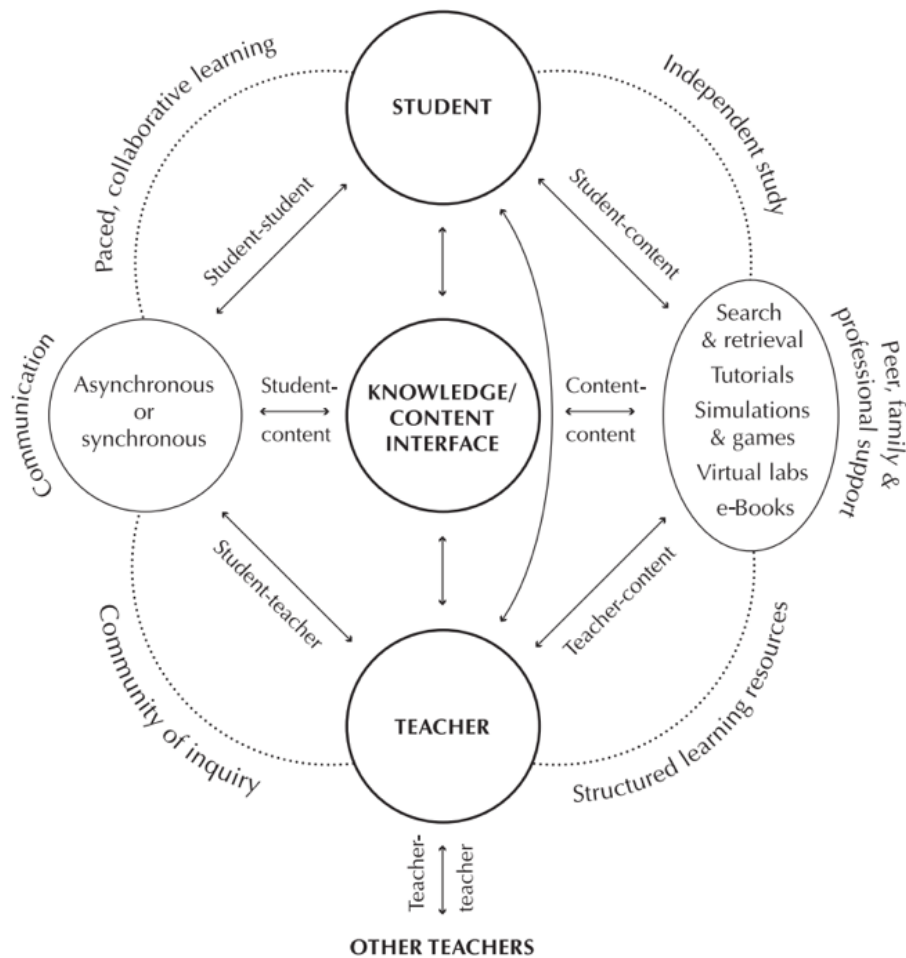


Figure 2: Model of online learning (Anderson, 2008 p. 61)

The key to maintaining students engaged in online learning is the effective use of ICT tools. Regarding this, Marchlik et al. (2021) asked a sample of young EFL learners' teachers about the ICT tools they used to develop their lessons. Considering their answers, the scholars classified them based on the two criteria of functionality and use over time and they distinguished four groups of tools: (1) Asynchronous communication tools, (2) synchronous communication tools (3) synchronous teaching tools (4) asynchronous teaching tools. The use of these types of ICT tools concluded the authors, will be preserved in time since most of the teachers who were already back to their traditional classrooms kept working with them.

2.3.1 Gamified activities when teaching EFL.

The nature of gamification according to Kapp (2012) is the use of game-based mechanics such as levels, points, or badges as a means to promote learning, engage people and motivate action in a context that was not primarily developed to play games. Furthermore, Fajarina (2017) says that children will always be happy to play interesting games as they act as an invitation for them to become active participants during the interaction. The scholar also names four rules that must be considered when playing games in teaching EFL for young learners. (1) the game needs to be interesting, (2) the game should have simple rules for them

to obey easily (3) the game should be connected to the material or the content being taught, and (4) the game should include values such as discipline, honesty, and respect.

Phuong (2020) expresses that the use of gamified activities must be more applicable in a language teaching context than in any other context of education. The former is because the use of games has been a crucial part of teaching foreign languages for decades. In addition, the author indicates that the increase of ICT in language education “would be a firm premise for gamification to thrive” (p. 243). Considering previous studies, Bicen and Kocakoyun (2018) investigated the perception students had towards a gamification approach, and it disclosed that in learning contexts, this approach provokes students’ interest which leads them to be more motivated when learning the language. In addition, these findings also revealed that students were able to work more collaboratively since they needed some source of support from their peers. Students also commented that the reward system of the gamification tool helped them to be more encouraged to practice the language since they could see their own achievements anytime, they wanted to. Finally, this scholar also found out that students can learn a variety of topics while tackling different materials in a fun way to work with.

Along the same line, Redjeki and Muhajir (2021) studied gamification as a strategy to support teaching and learning in order to know the students’ responses regarding the usage of Duolingo. They found out that while using this gamification tool, students were able to be more exposed to the language while practicing the four skills and at the same time improving their grammar knowledge. One important aspect to highlight from this application is that every time a student made a mistake answering a question, the application showed them the correct alternative, and then repeated the question until the learner answered it correctly. One of the downsides that arose from the investigation is that not all students were willing to work with the application because they thought that, using the cellphone, would distract them from only practicing English.

Considering gamification in the young learners’ EFL classroom, Mufidah (2016) investigated how this strategy could impact students’ anxiety and grammar achievement and the results showed that it helps reduce their levels of anxiety and contributed as a positive reinforcement to their grammar performance as well. Furthermore, Kayimbasioglu (2016) explored the perceptions EFL teachers and learners at primary schools had regarding the use of gamified activities and the findings were mainly positive. The participants mentioned that the activities were engaging and motivating and increase students’ confidence when achieving the learning outcomes.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 *Type of research*

The present research can be classified as action research, which according to Hilary Bradbury-Huang (2010) was originally created in a social psychology environment, yet today it is possible to find all types of action research in fields such as education, social work, international development, etc. The author continues by saying that its purpose is not only understanding social behaviors but also “to effect desired change as a path to generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders” (p. 93). Burns (2009) defines action research by separating each word. First, *action* is considered to be related to the identification and exploration of a dilemma in the researcher’s context of work, which in the EFL context can be the classroom, the school, the institute, etc. Second, the *research* is connected to the systematic approach of gathering data by using particular methods that are usually associated with qualitative research.

Regarding the EFL environment, Burns (2010) indicates that the primary motive for action research is to grow solutions for conundrums that arise in one’s specific context, where its main methods are qualitative, interpretative and cases studies carried out through regular means that may be observational or non-observational. Furthermore, Burns (2005) establishes that its main outcome is to deepen the “understanding of one’s own social situation” (p. 61). Additionally, Burns (2009) indicates that teachers believe that action research provides the opportunity to acknowledge professional insights that can be instantly applicable in their classrooms, and therefore, empower teachers since they allow themselves to be agents instead of just ‘recipients’ of knowledge. This having been said, this study can be classified as a descriptive action research as it explores a particular group of individuals for the purpose of describing how they respond when using gamification strategies to produce oral language.

Considering intellectual puzzles, Mason (2002) indicates that they “can and do take a variety of forms connected to the ontological and epistemological positions encapsulated in the research and grounded within the specific context of their research problem” (p. 18). Since this action research studies how a gamified activity influences the process of producing the language orally, a developmental intellectual puzzle will be used so as to explore the construction of arguments when collecting the qualitative data.

3.2 *Research problem*

Online private lessons have become an effective resource when learners decide how to start learning a new language. Nowadays, the recommended methodologies when teaching English as a foreign language are the communicative approach and the integration of the four skills in a lesson. Based on this, the Ministerio de Educación de Chile (2021) establishes in its program for 5th grade that in order to manage the language effectively when speaking in English, students should master vocabulary, morphosyntactic structures, and pronunciation. In addition to this, English is the only suggested language to use when developing lessons for both teachers and students.

From my personal experience, I have identified that learners struggle to speak in English even though they can comprehend the language both written and orally. In this sense, I have realized that the target language is not their first option when uttering sentences, thus I need to ask them directly to use it after they already uttered sentences or expressions in Spanish. Regarding this, Harmer (2007) indicates that when teaching beginner levels, which is the case in this research, it is of vital importance to understand that they do tend to translate everything that happens in the classroom into their L1 as a natural process of learning a foreign language. However, the former can lead to a serious problem since students are not using the mother tongue as a tool, but as the main language in the classroom, hence they are not able to practice oral production as it is supposed to be practiced.

There are several strategies that can help students to use the target language in the classroom as a means to motivate them enough to complete a task. One of them is gamification, which according to Chevtchenko (2013) is defined as including elements that belong to games in a context that are not principally designed to do so for the purpose of motivating learners to impact a particular behavior. Regarding this, Azevedo (2015) indicates that these game elements are usually connected to video games and Rahman et al. (2018) add that these can also be points, rewards, leaderboards, and digital badges. In order to work on this issue, I will be applying a gamification approach through a game called “Baamboozle”.

3.3 Research question and objectives

3.3.1 Research question

What’s the effect of a gamified activity on 4th and 5th-grade EFL learners’ willingness to communicate when speaking English in an online private lesson context?

3.3.2 Research objectives

- a. General objective:
 - i. To examine the influence that Baamboozle has on 4th and 5th-grade EFL learners’ willingness to communicate when speaking English in a private lesson context.
- b. Specific objectives:
 - i. To examine 4th to 5th-grade EFL learners’ willingness to communicate in English when working with Baamboozle during the interventions.
 - ii. To analyze 4th to 5th-grade EFL learners’ perceptions regarding a gamified activity when speaking English after the intervention.

3.4 Participants

The sample for this action research consists of 4 private lesson students from 4th and 5th grade, all of whom are girls between the age of 10 and 11. After 4 years of learning English formally at school, they have an overall beginner level of English that according to the Common European Framework of Reference corresponds to A1. In addition to this, the participants

have been taking individual English lessons with the researcher once a week for an average time of 8 months in an online context. The two main goals that motivated them to take private lessons were, first, their parents who encouraged them to practice more English, and second their own interest to learn more because they found English an interesting subject at school. The participants were chosen voluntarily and their parents agreed to allow their children to participate in the research. It is also important to consider that the interventions will be developed in extra lessons in which they will all be together without knowing each other from previous instances. Since this group of EFL learners is accessible to the researcher and is both readily available and willing to participate, it can be classified as a purposive sample since the researcher had 10 students available for the research, however, only 4 of them were selected under the criteria of age and level of English. According to Maxwell (1996), in purposive samples, the participants are strategically selected since they are the particular group that can provide useful information that cannot otherwise be collected with the participation of people with different characteristics.

3.4 Stages of action research study

In order to apply the action plan, 8 sessions will be developed. The sessions will be between 40-45 minutes and the main topic is “Minibeasts”. During each of the sessions, the participants will work with Baamboozle during the “post” stage of the lesson (each activity is described in the procedure column).

Table 1
Schedule of the procedure.

Date	Objective	Procedure	R.O.
1 May 31 st	Students will be able to elicit specific information from an informative chart about minibeasts.	In the game, there are 12 upside-down cards with a number, and students will have to choose one of them each time is their team’s turn. After that, the flashcards will show statements such as “Name three minibeasts that have six legs” or “Name three minibeasts that have antennas”. Also, there will be questions like “Which insect has antennas, six legs, and two wings?”. Each card is 15 points, and they include bonuses that give them points randomly.	S.O 1
2 June 6 th	Students will be able to elicit short descriptive sentences regarding specific information about minibeasts.	Students will work with the Baamboozle activity in which they will look at the picture of an insect, say their name in English, and describe their characteristics using the information previously reviewed. They need to name at least 3 characteristics and they can discuss among them who is going to say each of them. The activity includes 15 points per card and extra bonuses which gives them points randomly.	S.O 1

3 June 7 th	Students will be able to ask and answer yes-no questions about the topic.	Students will work with bamboozle in order to ask and answer yes-no questions about the insects' characteristics. In order to do so, they will choose a number that will show two pictures of insects; therefore, they will have to ask each other questions about their characteristics (i.e. do you have wings? Yes, I do). Each card will be 20 points and there will be bonuses that give them points randomly.	S.O 1
4 June 13 th	Students will be able to elicit specific and general information from an informative text about the life cycle of a butterfly.	Students will work in pairs with the Baamboozle activity. In the game, there are 14 upside-down cards with a number, and they have to choose one of them. The cards contain all the questions they had previously answered on a live-worksheet about the life-cycle of a butterfly, and some opinion questions such as "what do you think is the most important stage in a butterfly metamorphosis?" and "why do you think this happens?". Each question is 15 points except for the opinion questions which are 20 points. There are bonuses that give them points randomly.	S.O 1
5 June 14 th	Students will play a "Guess Who?" type of game in order to ask and answer questions to each other so as to know which minibeast is their classmate thinking of.	Students will work in pairs with the Baamboozle activity in which each flashcard will show a set of minibeasts from which one of them must choose one without saying their name. The other person must ask yes-no questions in order to guess which minibeast is their classmate thinking of. They must ask at least three questions about the minibeast' characteristics. The ones who guess correctly, get the points, the ones who do not guess the minibeast, do not get the points. Each question is 20 points and there are bonuses to give them points randomly.	S.O 1
6 June 27 th	Students will be able to exchange information through a conversation based on the knowledge they have about minibeasts.	Students will work with the Baamboozle activity in which each flashcard will have two pictures of different minibeasts, and they will have to create a short conversation "role-playing" the insect. Some possible answers will be: A: Hello, I am a butterfly. B: Hello, I am a ladybug. A: do you have six legs? B: Yes, I have! Do you have wings? A: Yes, I have! Students will have two minutes per flashcard to think about what they would like to say, and they	S.O 1

		will have the possibility to ask questions to the teacher in case they have any. Each question is 20 points and they get them all if they have at least 3 interactions.	
7 June 28 th	Students will answer a Likert scale individually and participate in a focus-group interview.	The students will answer a Likert scale through a Google doc document individually. After that, they will share questions regarding their thoughts and perceptions about the Baamboozle game. In order to get a better understanding of their answers, these activities will be carried out in Spanish.	S.O. 2

Table 1: Procedure schedule.

3.6 Baamboozle activity development.

Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 show how the Baamboozle activity is developed. First, there is a screen with numbers from which students have to choose only one every time is their team's turn.



Figure 3: Baamboozle display.

On every “card”, there is one question related to the topic of the lesson. Therefore, after students choose the number, the question is shown.



Figure 4: Example of question.

After students answer the question, the teacher clicks on “Check”. Then, the teacher can either choose “Oops!” Or “Okay!” depending on the students’ answer.



Figure 5: The answer is shown.

If the answer is correct, the team wins the points. If the answer is not correct, the number of the question appears with an ‘x’ on the screen. After that finishes, it is time for the following team to play, repeating the same process.

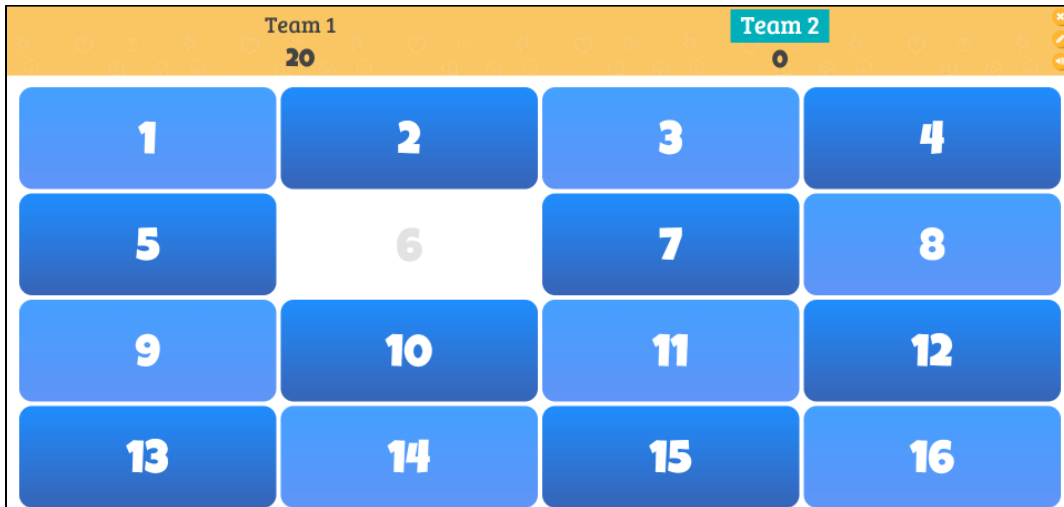


Figure 6: Available questions.

In some situations, “bonus” cards will show statements such as “give 20 points to team 1” or “take 15 points from team 2”. The picture below shows a bonus card that allows the team can choose the number of points they will give to the other team.

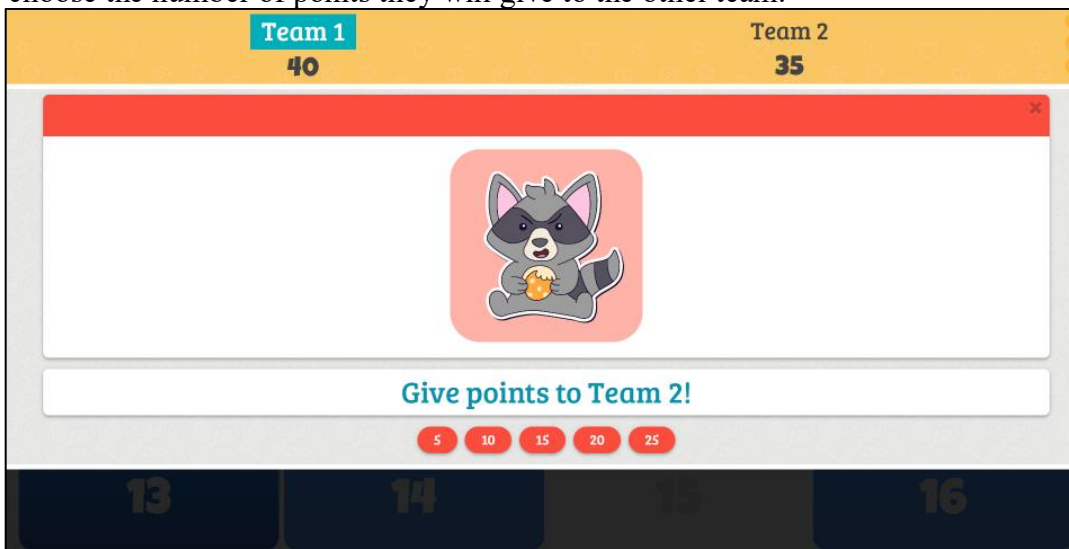


Figure 7: Baamboozle’s bonuses.

3.7 Data collection methods

The data collection methods to be used during this action research consists of both quantitative and qualitative techniques that include observation, a Likert scale, and a focus-group interview. First, considering observation, Cowie (2009) affirm that it can be defined as an intentional detailed analysis of the participant’s behavior in a particular real-life context, that, in applied linguistics is basically any environment in which the language is being studied. In addition to the former, Gold (1958) indicates that there are four roles to classifying observers depending on the purposes of their research. The first one is the complete participant, the second is the participant as an observer, the third is the observer as a participant, and the fourth is the complete observer which can also be described as a non-

participant observation. In this study, the researcher can be classified as a complete participant since the researcher will be carrying out the interventions as the teacher.

3.7.1 Observation

In order to develop a complete analysis, an observation process will be carried out through both video recording and note-taking. On one side, according to Horsley and Walker (2006), using video recording helps to deepen the analysis of materials and resources during learning situations through a well-developed theoretical observation system. On the other side, regarding note-taking, Cowie (2009) suggests that for beginner researchers who are working with observation techniques, a proper strategy to take notes is dividing the pages into three different columns. The first column is used to write about time and space, the second one for field notes themselves, and the last one for comments after finishing the observation that can be directed to the field notes previously taken. In this case, I decided to add a column for categories that I aimed to focus at during the observation process. This method previously mentioned will be used as a means to collect qualitative data related to the first specific objective (see Appendix 1).

3.7.2 Likert-type scale

Moving into the second data-collecting method, as Singh (2006) states, the original Likert-type scale consists of a set of items that aim to represent either a real or hypothetical situation and the participants have to answer their level of agreement based on a metric scale. Supporting this, Nemoto and Beglar (2014) indicate that a Likert scale is considered to be a psychometric scale that has most commonly been used in investigations concerning individual differences such as motivation, self-regulation, and anxiety. The Likert scale to be used for this action research consists of eight statements to which students need to react depending on what degree they agree with them (I agree, I am not sure, I disagree). With a view to help students to pick an answer easily, each degree of agreement is represented by an emoji. Also, this scale was created in the students' mother tongue, thus learners can understand better what they are answering. Some of the advantages of this type of scale, continue the authors, is that the data collection process can be conducted relatively quickly and, as it provides quantitative data, can be easily combined with qualitative data gathering techniques. This data-collecting instrument will be applied for the purpose of answering the second specific objective (see Appendix 2).

3.7.3 Focus-group interview

The last data-collecting method consists of a focus-group interview. According to Thomas et al. (1995), this is a technique that uses detailed group interviews in which participants are purposive of a specific population and are focused on a particular topic. The main aim of this data collecting method, continues the author, is that it provides information related to different ideas, feelings, or perspectives that individuals may have regarding particular topics, and it enlightens the differences in these ideas among a group of individuals. In addition to the former, Krueger (1994) agreed that to collect rich data, the participants should be fully prepared and willing to participate in the discussion, so for this reason, the scholar

recommends interviewing homogenous groups that share characteristics like gender, age range, ethnic and social class background. In order to collect qualitative data about the participants' perceptions of Baamboozle, a focus-group interview will be carried out (see Appendix 3).

3.8 Data analysis

Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggest that the analysis of qualitative data aims at understanding a situation rather than a fact, and they describe the analysis as the interaction between researchers and data acknowledging that there are several measures of subjective choice and interpretation of the data collected. That having been said, with the aim to analyze the qualitative data collected, the researcher will code the data by transcribing it to obtain key concepts that can be further categorized into different topics or themes (Burns, 2010). So as to support this, Braun and Clark (2006) declare five steps to follow so as to accomplish the former. The first step is familiarization, in which the researcher needs to immerse himself or herself in the context so as to be familiarized with the data. The second step includes the researcher's generation of initial codes that may be useful for the future of the study. During the third step, the researcher needs to classify the data collected into themes, so, consequently, during the fourth step, they can be defined and named after what best applies to their essence.

Secondly, with a view to analyzing the quantitative data collected, the results from the Likert scale will be classified into percentages as the instruments provide five numerical dimensions. The first one (strongly agree) will be classified using five points, the second one (agree) with 4 points, the third one (I don't know) with 3 points, the second one (disagree) with 2 points, and the last one (strongly disagree) with 1 point. After gathering the information, it will be displayed in a chart so as to identify which of the categories best described the students' perceptions regarding the criteria.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

As this action research aimed at exploring two specific objectives, this section presents the results derived from the observation process, Likert-type scale, and focus-group interview data.

4.1 SO1: To examine 4th and 5th-grade EFL learners' willingness to communicate in English when working with Baamboozle during the interventions.

In order to examine the participant's willingness to communicate both observation and notetaking processes were developed throughout the Baamboozle activity in each of the interventions and the findings were summarized through a thematic analysis. Three main themes and three sub-themes arose for each. The first one is *the use of L1* and the sub-themes are *not trying*, *using "Spanglish"* and *asking for permission to use L1*. The second one is *mistakes*, and the sub-themes are *communication over making mistakes*, *quick responses*, and *getting distracted*. Lastly, *Teamwork* was the last theme and the sub-themes are *help a partner from their team*, *help a partner from the other team*, and *motivate a partner*.

Table 2

Thematic analysis of the note-taking process throughout the interventions.

Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Examples
<i>Use of the L1</i>	Not trying English at first.	7	<p>"Participant 2 said the answer in Spanish without trying English first".</p> <p>"Participant 1 answered a question in Spanish and did not correct herself afterwards".</p> <p>"Participant 2 answered a question to her classmate in Spanish".</p>
	Using "Spanglish"	16	<p>"Participant 3 used <i>Spanglish</i> to answer a question from the activity"</p> <p>"Participant 2 asked to use <i>Spanglish</i> to answer a question from the activity".</p> <p>"Participant 3 and 4 answered the same question in <i>Spanglish</i>".</p>
	Ask for permission to use L1	5	<p>"Participant 4 asked for permission to use L1 twice during the activity".</p>

			<p>“Participant 2 said she could not answer in English because it was an opinion question and she did not know how to say what she wanted to say”.</p> <p>“Participant 1 asked for permission to answer in Spanish because she forgot the words in English”.</p>
<i>Mistakes</i>	Communication over making mistakes	4	<p>“Participant 1 did her best to formulate a sentence that was understood instead of taking much attention to the grammatical mistakes”.</p> <p>“Participant 4 answered a question without paying much attention to the pronunciation of a particular word”.</p> <p>“Participant 1 formulated a sentence using a word that did not exist because she wanted to ask a question about something we had not reviewed during the class”.</p>
	Quick responses	9	<p>“Participant 3 answered the question too fast that she realized about her mistakes seconds later”:</p> <p>“Participant 4 answered the question too fast and the teacher had to repeat the sentence for her to notice the mistake”.</p> <p>“Participant 3 answered a question too fast and her team partner help her to correct the mistake”.</p>
	Getting distracted	6	<p>“Student 2 was distracted and made a mistake answering a question a classmate asked her”.</p> <p>“Student 4 was distracted and made a mistake answering a question the teacher asked her”.</p>

			<p>“Participant 1 was distracted and made a mistake answering a question the teacher asked her”.</p>
<i>Teamwork</i>	Help a partner from their team.	8	<p>“Participant 3 helped her team partner to formulate the answer for the question”.</p> <p>“Participant 1 helped her partner to understand what the question was asking”.</p> <p>“Participant 4 suggested a possible answer to help her team partner to use it as an idea to answer a question”.</p>
	Help a partner from the other team.	4	<p>“Participant 2 helped her classmate from another team to understand what the question was asking”</p> <p>“Participant 1 helped participant 3, who was from another team, to understand what the question was asking”</p> <p>“Participant 2 suggested a possible answer to help participant 4 answer to a question”.</p>
	Motivate a partner	6	<p>“Participants 2 and 4 motivated each other during the activity several times by saying things like ‘vamos vamos tu puedes’ or ‘it is easy-peasy, lo harás bien’”.</p> <p>“Participant 3 told her team partner that the activity was ‘easy-peasy’ and they were going to win”.</p> <p>“Participant 2 told her team partner that she knew the answer, but she had to think deeper about it”.</p>

Regarding the notes taken during the interventions it is possible to say that, first, the use of L1 was a significant aspect to consider during the activity. Participants used their mother tongue without trying English first on several occasions and for a variety of reasons. In most cases, they felt the need to communicate a message in Spanish since they were not proficient

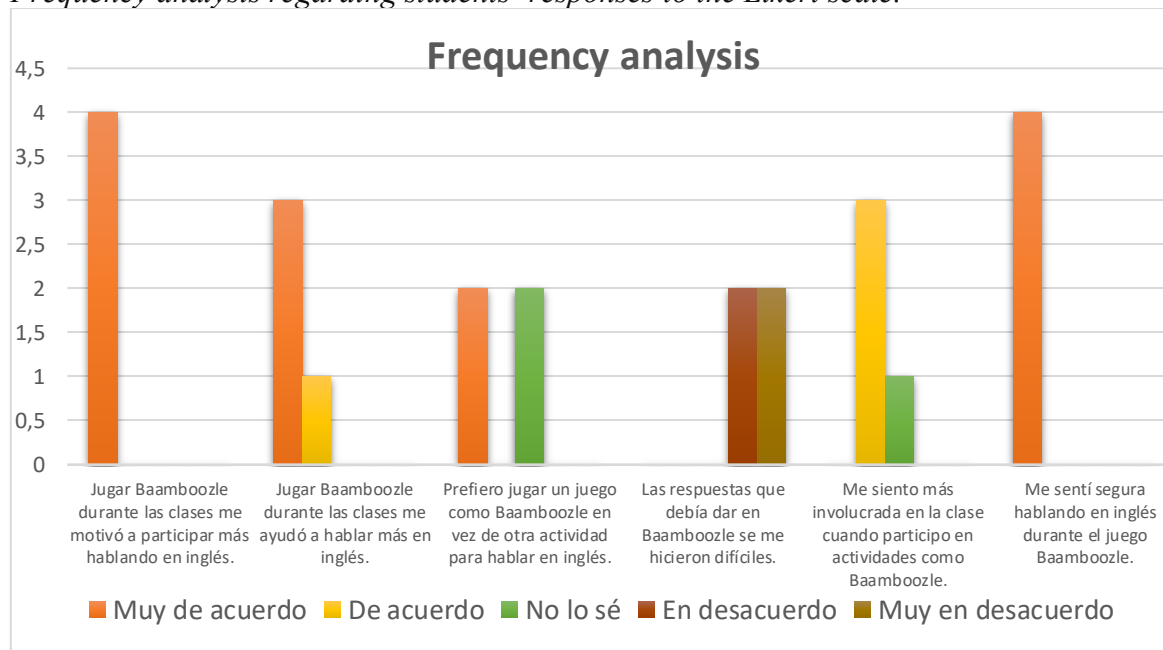
enough to express themselves as they wanted to. However, as it can be seen in table 2, participants' most frequent response regarding L1 was using "Spanglish" rather than just Spanish. For instance, two participants answered the same question in Spanglish since they did not know the exact vocabulary they wanted to use. Second, participants demonstrated that they paid more attention to the message they wanted to communicate rather than using accurate grammar and vocabulary. The former was mainly provoked due to how quickly they answered the questions. Table 2 shows that in some situations participants were not aware of their mistakes and the teacher or their partner had to help them think about what they said afterward. Finally, participants demonstrated that they enjoyed working as a team since they helped each other during every intervention, most frequently, helping a partner from the same team.

4.2 To analyze 4th and 5th-grade EFL learners' perceptions regarding Baamboozle when speaking English after the intervention.

In order to analyze the EFL learners' perceptions about Baamboozle when speaking in English, two instruments were carried out. First, the participants answered a Likert scale in their mother tongue, and their responses were analyzed based on frequency. In figure 1 is possible to see that, first, all of the participants strongly agreed that playing Baamboozle motivated them to participate in talking in English (statement 1), and they all felt safe while talking and playing the game (statement 6). Second, the majority of the participants agreed on that playing Baamboozle helped them to talk more in English (statement 2) and to feel more involved during the class. Third, all of the participants disagreed that the answers they were supposed to respond to during the game were difficult. Lastly, half of them preferred to play games like Baamboozle instead of other types of activities that involve talking in English, and the other half did not know.

Chart 1

Frequency analysis regarding students' responses to the Likert scale.



So as to deepen the data from the Likert scale, a follow-up focus-group interview in their L1 was carried out, and their comments on the topic were summarized through thematic analysis, as it is shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Thematic analysis of the participants' responses during the focus-group interview.

Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Examples
<i>Willingness to communicate</i>	Motivated to communicate something.	4	<p>“A mi igual me daban más ganas de hablar en inglés. La verdad con varias cosas porque me gustaba hablar en inglés”.</p> <p>“Si, a mí también me daban muchas ganas de responder las preguntas”.</p>
	Feeling comfortable.	3	<p>“Yo me sentía muy motivada porque como... yo vi como hablaban y eso y repasamos lo que decíamos antes de decirlo”.</p> <p>“A mí porque yo también sé que todas lo intentábamos y cada una tiene sus equivocaciones pero igual lo intentábamos”.</p>
<i>Enjoyment</i>	More enjoyable than other activities.	4	<p>“... Es como ir al colegio, solo que más divertido, porque en el juego te dan unas pistas, no te dicen dime esto en inglés solamente”.</p> <p>“El Baamboozle me gusto más que el Jamboard porque ahí no hablábamos todo en inglés”.</p>
	The dynamic of the game.	4	<p>“Yo creo que cuando.. yo estaba hablando con la ..., una conversación entre.. dos insectos en el juego”.</p> <p>“Yo me divertí más, por ejemplo cuando estábamos hablando en el juego, y yo decía tengo 10 antenas y la ...</p>

			decía que sí y después se daba cuenta que no”.
<i>Class setting</i>	Pair work	4	<p>“A mí me gustaba más jugar en parejas porque así eramos 2 teams, sino hubiésemos sido solo 1”.</p> <p>“A mí me gustaba más en pareja porque así hablabamos más”</p>
	Teamwork	2	<p>“Yo creo que en grupos sería mejor en el colegio, porque aca somos pocas”</p> <p>“Yo creo que en grupo no me gustaría... tendría que hablar menos y bueno, a mí me gusta hablar”</p>

Considering this information, it is possible to say that the participants felt motivated because of different reasons when participating in the Baamboozle activity. An important aspect to highlight is that they felt comfortable making mistakes since they knew all of them were in a learning environment, therefore making mistakes was part of trying to communicate a message in English. In addition to this, all four of them stated that they preferred the Baamboozle activity since they could talk in English while in other types of activities they were not ‘forced’ to do it. Finally, all of them also indicated that playing in pairs was the best option since they were only four people taking the class, and playing in this way allowed them to participate more.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Reflection upon the results

During this chapter, I will be interpreting the data collected and the influence that the Baamboozle implementation had on the students’ willingness to communicate in small group private lessons.

5.1.1 To examine 4th and 5th-grade EFL learners’ willingness to communicate in English when working with Baamboozle during the interventions.

To address the research objectives, a Baamboozle speaking activity was carried out in order to examine participants’ willingness to communicate in English. The first finding discovered was that the implementation of Baamboozle did not eradicate the use of students’ mother tongue in every answer they provided. However, it demonstrated that students, in most of the cases, were aware of their overuse of the L1 and asked for permission to use it or chose “Spanglish” as a strategy to communicate their ideas completely without leaving English

aside. In addition to the former, the results demonstrated that students were willing to communicate in English during the activities mainly since they were focused on the game rather than speaking accurately. They rushed into answering questions in English without paying much attention to the accuracy aspect of the language. The former finding can still be considered a positive outcome since the research is not focused on accuracy, but in communicate a message using the target language rather than their mother tongue. Moreover, an interesting finding revealed that participants felt the need to motivate their partners not only as a consequence of the impulse to win, but as knowing that it was a game and motivating each other was a major part of the process.

5.1.2 To analyze 4th and 5th grade EFL learners' perceptions regarding Baamboozle when speaking English after the intervention.

The data collected in regards of the learners' perceptions about the Baamboozle activity disclosed that, more than anything, they enjoyed practicing English during the time the activity took place. They felt both motivated and comfortable to use the target language as they saw each other making mistakes and encouraged their partners as well when they did not get the correct answer. Furthermore, participants compared activities at school with the Baamboozle game and indicated that they preferred working with the second one as it provided 'hints' instead of being directly asked to do or say something in English. Finally, participants also suggested that they liked the dynamic of the game working in pairs, but they would like to try it at school in larger groups.

5.2 Links to the literature review

As it was mentioned in the theoretical framework chapter, young learners' attitudes and perceptions toward learning English may vary depending on the task they are working with. Considering this, Asmali (2017) discovered that students were intrinsically motivated when they were having fun while learning the target language, which is the principal mean for using games during the lessons. This can be addressed considering the participants' perspectives since all of them stated they had fun during the development of the activity. Additionally, Sirisrimangkorn (2018) declares that in order to boost learners' ability to produce the language fluently, it is of fundamental importance for the teacher to include communicative and authentic aspects into their context. The former can be forgotten when planning lessons as we, as teachers, are usually focused on how to help students produce the language accurately rather than using it while having fun. In this sense, the principal focus of the Baamboozle activity was for students to find a communicative purpose to convey a message. Such purpose can be identified since each of the prompts of the activity was aimed to whether answer a question or create a short dialogue about a topic, they were all involved in. Considering the former, Weda et al. (2021) discovered that the principal factor influencing learners' willingness to communicate in English is keeping speaking activities at a group level by giving them topics to talk about. This is exactly why I decided to do it during the interventions since students were given a specific topic to talk about during each of the interactions at a group or pair level. Finally, Sari et al. (2020) describe the learning process as "a fun and relaxed environment to increase students' concentration on the materials being learned" (p.443). Yet, Ramírez-Avila and Guzman (2020) add that the strategies or methodologies applied in EFL teaching when practicing speaking are more likely to be

limited to the repetition of patterns. The former is what, as a researcher, was trying to avoid since the beginning of this study. Instead of limiting the speaking practice to repetition, provide learners the opportunities to show themselves they can use the language in spite of the amount of English knowledge they think they have.

5.3 Implications and limitations

When I decided to use a game-type platform to address my problem, I thought about how important it is not to forget that young learners are still children. They spend around eight hours inside a classroom thinking academically and for them to arrive home and continue working the same way for one extra hour is not fair. I understood that games could be an excellent option to let them have fun and enjoy the process of learning a new language. This having been said, I strongly believe this can be a useful strategy to implement in small-group private lessons within an online context, yet I cannot assure their implementation in larger groups since this sample included only four students. Considering the limitations of this study, it is of great importance to highlight that it was carried out in a private lesson context of students who were similar in age and personal preferences. In addition to this, I would like to add that including a pre and post-test could have provided deeper insights regarding participants' responses with and without the bamboozle.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of main findings

Since there were no instruments to compare different types of activities implemented to influence the English spoken during the classes, it is not possible to state a difference between them. Despite this, the data collected, and its results demonstrate that integrating games like Baamboozle into the productive part of the lesson can influence students' willingness to communicate positively. In addition to this, the usage of their L1 became a more self-controlled problem since they were aware that the game was developed in English only. Considering this, students would ask for permission to use English or would try 'Spanglish'

During the implementation of this action research, I could identify the different perspectives learners may have regarding the activities they enjoyed so as to practice the language. This can be addressed not only by considering the instruments to collect the data, but also by the simple fact of being involved in the interventions. Considering this, I could notice how excited students were before starting the activity since, in some cases, they asked when we were going to start the game because they wanted to both play and practice what they were learning. They also stated that they preferred playing games such as Baamboozle instead of games in which they had to draw and guess since in such activities they did not speak much English.

6.2 Personal reflections

There is no doubt that integrating games into the EFL lesson is nothing new, yet there is still a long path to study on how to integrate ICTs into the online private lesson world to practice speaking. As I have been fully teaching online since the pandemic started in early 2020, I had to do my own research to find strategies to engage students to produce the language. From the beginning, I knew that games could be helpful, yet finding the proper game that could promote speaking rather than any other skill was the most difficult part. There are plenty of platforms teachers can use so as to make traditional activities more attractive and engaging, except that most of those platforms are not principally focused on speaking, and this is the reason why I decided to work with Baamboozle.

I strongly believe the most important part of developing this action research is that it not only helped me to become a more skilled professional, but it also made my students feel more involved and engaged with the learning process. Finally, it is possible to say that this study may contribute to this matter, and I expect to motivate researchers to deepen their knowledge by using tools such as Baamboozle in their lessons.

6.3 Recommendations

I recommend using this platform not only to teach English, but also to teach any other subject which requires oral production. Furthermore, I would recommend implementing it in small groups, therefore, every individual in each of the teams can have the opportunity to talk and answer at least one of the questions.

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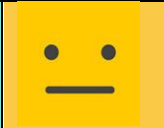


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APPENDIX 1

Observation chart

Category	Time and space	Fieldnotes	Comments
Volunteer an answer (including raising a hand).			
Give an answer to the question out loud.			
Ask a question about the activity.			
Try out a complex sentence in order to answer the questions.			
Present an opinion			
Volunteer to participate in the activity first.			
Others			

APPENDIX 2
Likert-type scale

					
	Muy de acuerdo	De acuerdo	Neutral	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuerdo
Jugar Baamboozle durante las clases me motivó a participar más hablando en inglés.					
Jugar Baamboozle durante las clases me ayudó a hablar más en inglés.					
Prefiero jugar un juego como Baamboozle en vez de otra actividad para hablar en inglés.					
Las respuestas que debía dar en Baamboozle se me hicieron difíciles.					
Me siento más involucrada en la clase cuando participo en actividades como Baamboozle.					
Me sentí segura hablando en inglés durante el juego Baamboozle.					

APPENDIX 3

Focus group-interview

1. ¿Cómo te sentiste durante el desarrollo de la actividad de Baamboozle?
2. ¿Durante qué momentos de las clases te divertiste más hablando en inglés?
3. ¿Qué tan dispuesta a comunicarte en inglés estabas mientras jugabas Baamboozle?
4. ¿Qué tan motivada te sentías a responder las preguntas mientras jugabas Baamboozle?
5. ¿Qué te pareció haber jugado en parejas y no de forma individual o grupal? ¿Cuál de estas alternativas preferirías tú personalmente?