TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY THROUGH STORYTELLING OF MYTHS AND LEGENDS TO ELDER PEOPLE FROM A RETIREMENT HOME "HOGAR DEL ABUELO DIVINO PASTOR"

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TRABAJO DE GRADO PRESENTADO COMO REQUISITO PARA OBTENER EL TÍTULO DE LICENCIADO EN BILINGÜISMO CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS

ASESOR EVALUADOR:
DOLLY RAMOS GALLEGO

UNIVERSIDAD TECNOLÓGICA DE PEREIRA
FACULTAD DE BELLAS ARTES Y HUMANIDADES
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1. ABSTRACT

This classroom project presents the implementation of storytelling of myths and legends to teach English vocabulary to elderly. In order to carry out the project, we established teaching objectives such as to expose elders to vocabulary in a foreign language by means of the previous knowledge in the native language, and learning objectives such as to express orally in English the vocabulary related to the myths and legends presented. The methodology states that this project relied on andragogy, which is the science of adult education, to teach vocabulary by using Colombian myths and legends through the technique of storytelling. The participants were seven elderly from a retirement home in Pereira, and the two facilitators who used as instruments journals, observations and students' artifacts to collect evidence and for further analysis. The results demonstrated that participants were able to recognize and recall the vocabulary studied thanks to the recycling technique and practice activities like bingos and flashcard games; also, in terms of lesson planning and material design, classes were engaging given that, according to participants, the materials implemented in order to support the explanations of the stories were clear, understandable and appealing. The conclusion revealed that the use of myths and legends for teaching English vocabulary when implemented by using participants' mother tongue (Spanish) and the target language (English) allowed participants to comprehend the language and the content, which they did by using strategies like translating and pointing; besides, the andragogical principle of adult learners' autonomy and self-direction was evidenced since participants' request for a change in methodology demonstrated that they were aware of their own learning process, having a leading role in class planning.

2. RESUMEN

El presente proyecto de aula consiste en la implementación de la narración de mitos y leyendas para enseñar vocabulario en inglés a adultos mayores. Para llevarlo a cabo, se definieron unos objetivos de enseñanza como exponer a los adultos al vocabulario de una lengua extranjera por medio del conocimiento previo de la lengua materna, y objetivos de aprendizaje como expresar oralmente en inglés el vocabulario relacionado con los mitos y leyendas presentados. La metodología se basó en la *andragogía*, ciencia de la educación de los adultos, para enseñar así vocabulario usando mitos y leyendas nacionales, a través de la técnica de la narración de historias. Los participantes fueron siete adultos mayores de un hogar de retiro de Pereira, y dos practicantes, quienes usaron como instrumentos reflexiones, observaciones y la producción de los participantes para recolectar evidencias, y posterior análisis. Los resultados de la implementación mostraron que los adultos lograron reconocer y recordar el vocabulario estudiado gracias a la técnica de reciclaje y actividades prácticas como bingos y juegos con tarjetas ilustrativas; además, en términos de planeación de clase y diseño de materiales, los participantes encontraron atractivas las sesiones, dado lo comprensibles, llamativos y claros de los recursos para apoyar las explicaciones de las historias. La conclusión reveló que cuando el uso de mitos y leyendas para la enseñanza de vocabulario en inglés se implementa usando la lengua materna (español) y la lengua de destino (inglés), esto permite comprender el idioma y el contenido, lo cual lograron los adultos mayores gracias a estrategias como traducir y señalar; además, el principio *andragógico* de la autonomía y la autodirección del aprendiz adulto fue evidenciado, puesto que al solicitar un cambio en la metodología, mostraron consciencia de su propio proceso de aprendizaje, teniendo un papel líder en la planeación de clase.

3. JUSTIFICATION

Language education has emphasized on the importance of English language teaching to children, adolescents and adults; however, recent studies have demonstrated the importance of teaching to elderly. Similarly, English language teaching has showed interest in the area of andragogy, which is one of the principal methods in teaching adults. In Colombia, national government protects this population with projects like "Colombia Mayor" that provide for elderly basic needs. In Pereira, the inclusion of such population to the educational field has been conducted through andragogy-based projects like the ones implemented by the *Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira.*

In addition to these concepts already mentioned, it is known that the term andragogy was used for the first time in 1921 by the psychologist E. Rosenstock in Germany, but his proposal as a teaching method was not widely accepted. Over time, andragogy was gradually adopted in Europe as the social pedagogy. Later, the Unesco (1969) recognized for the first time the theory of adult education as a necessity and allowed education to transcend beyond the central focus as was childhood and youth in the 60s.

As cited in "Andragogical Model" conducted by *Universidad del Valle de México* in 2009, it is important to recognize as the principles of Andragogy the following: It is necessary to formulate concepts that allow to recognize the particularities of the personality of human beings in adulthood and specific to their educational processes, to design the guidelines of an appropriate didactic methodology to establish teaching and learning processes for adults (Ludojoski, 1972).

In 1981, in Colombia, the International Institute of Andragogy (INSTIA) was created, and according to Alonso (2012), this institute expands the principles and practices of andragogy through social-educational research, offering training and postgraduate programs and the development of cooperative actions with institutions linked to the practice of this discipline.

Recently, in Colombia, a project using andragogy was carried out at *Universidad Pedagogica y Tecnológica de Tunja*, it was conducted by Morales (2016), whose purpose was to teach and train teachers of about 50 years old to develop technological competencies; this gave as a conclusion that applying the andragogical foundations in digital training seeking for the achievement of the adults' learning needs, may facilitate a better approach to the use of these resources by this population.

At the *Universidad de Antioquia,* in Medellín, in the Health and Nursing area, a project called "University Classroom of Elders" (Zea, 2009) was developed. The project focused on the use of the principles of andragogy, and this appeared in response to a need to educate older adults in Medellín in the health field in order to take care of themselves in everyday life and to take care and help others around.

In the local context, at the *Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira*, some projects have been conducted involving elderly and using andragogy as the method, these were conducted by the *Semillero de Investigación In Bloom*, for example, two of the projects developed consisted of teaching English vocabulary to elderly, one of them was conducted through arts and the other through games.

These studies mentioned above are of great importance because all of them have used andragogy as the method to teach elder people. Besides, the fact that these studies

have been conducted using andragogy as a means, give us a perspective of how andragogy is of ample relevance in the learning field, such studies serve as well as models for conducting our project. However, their purposes were different given that the first study was concerning health, the second concerning ICT (Information and Communication Technologies), the third implemented arts, and the fourth implemented games. The last two projects are similar to ours since they focus on teaching English (as a foreign language) vocabulary. Nevertheless, our project is distinctive to the previous ones since the use of the technique of storytelling of myths and legends has never been implemented to teach English vocabulary to elderly.

The purpose of developing this project is to teach English vocabulary through storytelling, which is new in our local context, following the andragogy method in order to include elder people into the learning scope in a way that this population feels autonomous during the learning and interaction process. Besides, in words of Michalos (2014), "Storytelling is used within health care to promote well-being and quality of life", in our case this will be done by involving elderly in language education and allowing them to be autonomous in their learning process. Additionally, in order to promote elderly's cognitive skills such as memorization, concentration, and creativity, we will implement storytelling as the tool to teach vocabulary, and the content to be performed will be Colombian myths and legends, which are culturally attached to elderly, and will serve as previous knowledge in their native language (Spanish) and as a hook to make the process attractive and meaningful for them.

Culture-related knowledge such as myths and legends have been removed from the cultural identity of recent generations; therefore, these topics were chosen as the main

thematic to be taught in our project given that this content has not been implemented through andragogy in our context. Moreover, myths and legends can be implemented from the perspective of elders previous knowledge; thus, they can interact and contribute with their knowledge, their memories and their anecdotes since this generation had more immersion in this subject and they were auditory witnesses of such tradition.

An advantage of implementing this approach is to discover both problems and benefits of working with this population by inquiring about the best techniques and/or strategies that can be used depending on the needs of the learners and adapting the selected information and tools in order to make their learning process successful instead of overwhelming.

Objectives

Teaching objectives

- To present English vocabulary through Colombian myths and legends.

- To expose elders to vocabulary in a foreign language by means of the previous knowledge in the native language.

- To implement storytelling as a tool to teach vocabulary and promote elderly's cognitive skills such as memorization, concentration, and creativity.

Learning objectives

- To identify English vocabulary by using myths and legends previous knowledge in the mother tongue.

- To express orally in English the vocabulary related to the myths and legends presented.

- To identify the main characters and main events of the myths or legends presented.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

It is widely known that learning is a lifelong process; therefore, learning is a concept that plays an important role in all individuals in spite of the age. Institutions such as kindergarten, schools and universities, where people have access to formal, academic or technological education, are intrinsically learning related. However, places like retirement homes work mostly towards third age population's medical care leaving aside cognitive development. Taking advantage of elders' free time inside these places, there are possibilities of implementing activities whose objective seeks to improve third age people's cognitive and kinesthetic abilities.

Elderly are closely related to their heritage, culture and folklore of oral tradition since they were witnesses of many different and important historical events. Regarding what was previously mentioned, first, Sucylaite (2014) proposes a natural literature learning environment seeking the improvement of communication and self- esteem skills in senior citizens. Second, the study of Lopez, Encabo, Moreno, and Jerez (2003) addresses the importance of including myths in the language and literature instruction.

Children, young adults and senior citizens have different learning roles in educational scenarios, since the first two have a more dynamic and active participation in society than the last one presenting variations in content and procedures, so the core of this work is to implement teaching activities which can be applied with elderly, as presented by

Sucylaite (2014), who conducted a qualitative research in his work "Elderly People Communication in Literature Learning Environment" intended to study the role and the effect of ageing in learning through a set of tests, activities and procedures to gather reliable and enough data to generalize the result into a grounded theory; which led to transformations from low self-evaluation to write or discover creativity.

Sucylaite (2014) worked with a group of eight women between 80 and 88 years old; most of them widowed in Klaipeda, Lithuania, the researcher implemented a pre-test in order to find out aspects of participants' personality and preferences. During the first part of the process, researcher performed a set of poetry reading sessions regarding discussion and creative writing activities. In addition, participants shared thoughts, feelings and social activities they used to attend in their daily lives alone or with their families, such as trips, visits to museums and other activities related to moving out of their current location. Next, facilitator asked them to imagine themselves in the situation of the main character in order to make connections with participants' past memories and situations to share with the rest of the group in the discussion session. At the end of the process, researcher realized some informal interviews with all the participants, some were made individually and others with the whole group. The technique to facilitate the data collection method was through a phenomenological observation method, which approaches the way to identify a phenomenon through observations of participants' individual perspective in a situation given. All above mentioned within the results, conducted to a grounded theory that allowed generalization of data.

Sucylaite (2014) in the first stage of results shows that it is conceivable to state that evidence of depressive indications were present in the workshop for this review group. In

the second stage, it is likely to say that participants presented symptoms of lack of spontaneity, negative emotions and low self-image. Finally, in the last part, participants experienced how authentic speaking reduced negative emotions, while improving self-evaluation and helped to create an atmosphere of cordial relations and community feelings giving better outcomes in the academic aspect inasmuch as senior participants demonstrated an improvement in terms of inspiration to think creatively, to increase the time spent in reading and to practice free writing.

Myths and legends have always been —and are still— present in society, in young, adult, and elderly. But, particularly, for elderly myths represent a great part of their lives, recalling how they were orally transmitted, their moral, and how they influenced their lives. The following study intends (through the implementation of myths) to foster communication skills and creativity, as well as to help individuals in the development of their personality, which, likewise, was the aim of the previously mentioned study; however, the ages of the participants of both studies are entirely different. The name of this study, regarding the implementation of myths in the classroom, is "How to Teach through Myths: The Teaching of Language and Literature in an Allegorical Fable." This study was conducted with school students —whose ages were not specified— in Spain by Lopez, Encabo, Moreno, and Jerez (2003) which had the purpose of retrieving the importance of the didactic use of myths as a tool in language and literature teaching as a hint to improve education.

This study aimed to work with literature in a dynamic or recreational way. Consequently, they employed strategies like: compared mythology, implemented through activities such as the design of a map in which participants included different mythologies

around the world e.g. Hindu, Australian, Celt, Viking, Greco-Roman; comparing the most important gods of each culture; Olympian gods, with activities like drawings of the possible representation of each god; searching the society's current substitutes of such gods; and changing the genre to gods and discussing in groups if such gods could still perform their functions; also, analysis of myths like "Orpheus and Eurydice" or "Prometheus" through activities like giving their own interpretations, searching for historical or current similar cases related to the myth, and searching for artistic manifestations e.g. music, painting, literature based on the given myths. The previous activities and strategies were evaluated through questionnaires, attitude scales and interviews, as well as dramatizations and group presentations.

The researchers concluded that the use of myths as a didactic tool provided students with access to both past and present relevant facts. Given the subjectivity of myths, they offer the opportunity to work on reflection and critical analysis, resulting in a hint for the development of the personality of students, and their ability to work in groups. In addition, according to the idea of validity, i.e. myths are still present and still have influence in modern society and people's daily life, they become an engaging topic for students, thus, developing together cognitive and affective factors of the students.

The previously exposed study conducted by Lopez et al. (2003) represents a great contribution to our project since they highlight the relevance and how engaging myths are when used for language teaching. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that this study was conducted with school students in their mother tongue class while our target population is elder people in their foreign language learning process. Additionally, Sucylaite (2014) in his research expresses the argument to use this study for further investigation inasmuch as

the basis to work with elderly had positive outcomes applying the spaces to develop the workshops to decrease the affective factors that can reduce senior citizens' life quality.

4.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Learning and teaching are concepts that have evolved and changed through time; the perception of the different methodologies or techniques used in this field has improved and has been seen from other perspectives. The idea of focusing on teaching adults, more precisely on elder people, has greatly changed; recently, the paradigm of how difficult it was for them to learn remained strongly, nowadays, it is known that this argument is not valid, some authors demonstrate the different points of view in their theories, which are essential to carry out this schema. Based on theories of recognized authors, as well as their projects and studies implemented, our work focuses on seeking the different techniques and methodologies appropriate to reach the community of older adults and teach them vocabulary in English. The main concepts of our project are: Andragogy, storytelling and myths and legends which, among all of the concepts, are the most relevant for the implementation as a project.

4.2.1. Andragogy

Davenport and Davenport (1985) state that andragogy is considered "as a theory of adult education, theory of adult learning, theory of technology of adult learning, method of adult education, technique of adult education, and a set of assumptions". Based on this definition, the andragogy method is relevant to the educational field regarding adult learners since it includes theories, methods, procedures, activities and learning process that are useful in order to teach elderly.

Houle (1996) states that andragogy reminds educators to engage adult learners in their learning and to create conducive learning environments that help them learn in a better way. Such definition contributes greatly to this project given that it provided facilitators an insight about how they should proceed during the teaching process as well as to motivate elderly and allow them to bring the best of themselves.

Another perspective is offered by Knowles (1970) who provides the difference between andragogy and pedagogy to indicate the purpose of teaching theories, explaining that andragogy is "the art and science of helping adults learn" and pedagogy is "the art and science of teaching children" (p. 43). In addition, Knowles (1980) argues that andragogy is assumed on four features of mature learners such as being a self-directed human being, the experience that starts an increasing resource for learning, the orientation of the social development tasks and the perception of time vary according to the application of knowledge (p. 39). This way, facilitators guide elderly learners so as to ease their learning process. Johnson (2000) contributes to Knowles assumption by explaining that andragogy is a method for engaging learners in finding out the meaning for their personal and professional lives, increasing the stimulus of the elderly learners. Supporting Knowles study, Merriam (2001) states that andragogy is one of the principal methods in teaching adults that is focused on the practice of elderly education. Additionally, Merriam (2001) highlights andragogy as a support of adult learning theory that will continue to stimulate debate, discussion, and research so as to ameliorate the understanding of adult learning. Thus, the next chapter focuses on the andragogical training model in order to enhance the learning process for the implementation of this project.

4.2.1.1 History of andragogy

The term andragogy was mentioned by Kapp (1833) a German educator who describes teaching and learning in adults' education as "the lifelong necessity to learn". He claims that in education, self-reflection is a relevant worth in human life, it means that learners require not only the educators training, but also the self–reflection and life experience together with andragogy more than only teaching elderly.

Furthermore, Henschke (2013), who joined Kapp's assumption, argues that the term andragogy was inactive for many decades; perhaps elderly education was being directed without an explicit label to designate what it was. He also highlights that studies have used andragogy as a theory and practice to develop and increase the older learners' value of lives. Additionally, there are many authors that mention the concept of andragogy as a relevant part of the adult education process that is the reason why it is mentioned in this document.

4.2.2. Storytelling

Michalos (2014) affirms that "Storytelling has an important role within human culture. People from all over the world usually tell stories in relation to their values, traditions, experiences, and actions". In this sense, storytelling is a significant means by which culture and traditions of other regions or places can be known, preserved and expanded.

Different from the previous definition, and related to personal development and communication, Storytelling Arts (2015) states that "storytelling is one of the oldest traditions of mankind and is an unique way to enhance literacy and communication skills,

build self-esteem, and so much more". Based on the previous information, it can be concluded that storytelling has a lot of advantages that must be considered when teaching a language as it is an useful tool for communication.

Michalos (2014) also explains that storytelling is a tool for communication; it is as well an activity and a process of telling a story in which the storyteller interprets and connects different periods from his or her life. In other words, the speaker makes an authentic performance. The author also stated that "storytelling is used within health care to promote well-being and quality of life. Storytelling may be performed as a spoken or written story of connected events, but also as dramas, pictures, or dances."

Taking into account the authors' insights, through storytelling, individuals tell stories regarding different occasions, which are regularly related to their lives. Telling stories to others can reinforce one's identity and accelerate problem solving, which gives prosperity and quality of life. Finally, in terms of the participants of the project, the retirement home did not provide enough information to confirm that elderly present problems of identity, but as it has already been mentioned, storytelling helps individuals to reconstruct their own identity or feel identified with their quality of life; then, it is possible to assume that at the moment they are exposed to storytelling activities, they will remember events of their life which can help them rebuild their own identity.

In order to complement the previous concepts, Phillips (2013) stated that "Storytelling is an oral art form where a teller performs a story with a live audience. In this understanding there is no book present to separate the relationship between the teller and the listener (Stories of telling, telling stories: Teachers negotiating the role of storyteller)". According to the previous information, storytelling is an art; therefore, it is important to

note that this project is significant not only because of the learning process of elderly, but also for the challenge the facilitators encounter, considering that they are newcomers with the implementation of storytelling.

Similarly, the National Council of Teachers of English (1992) proposed that

Traditional storytelling draws upon familiar and strange forms: fables, folk tales, riddles, fairy stories, myths, conundrums, and is performed, (not read aloud). Told well, stories immerse younger and old listeners in rich social, cultural, historical and anthropological content, shaped to engross and encourage wonderment in their listeners. Children, as storytellers, 'become aware of how an audience affects a telling, and they carry that awareness into their writing" (p. 2)

That is to say that storytelling is one of the most useful teaching activities and that this can be implemented for common benefits in view of the fact that it has many advantages for learners as the ones mentioned above.

Regarding language education, Özhan, Ahmet, Erdem, Aflkin and Osman (n.d.) argued that

"Storytelling provides students with a sense of history, experiences of listening and turn-taking, a sense of community, the ability to imagine, listening, an understanding of characters and how to give them shape and shading, a knowledge of sequencing and story structure".

In that sense, storytelling contributes greatly to the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language (EFL) since it enables learners to develop social abilities and language skills.

4.2.3. Myths and Legends

Myths and legends have been part of the folklore of all the cultures around the world. Each culture has adopted them differently and they have a variety of origins and conceptions, but it is summarized to popular narratives and beliefs that transcend from one generation to another and that have been perpetuated in time giving sample of the origin and development of every civilization. Approaching then to more precise concepts of these two terms, some authors defined that:

Myths and legends usually address relevant issues such as the origin of humanity and its survival; they also help with the continuity and stability of a culture. They promote values, customs, rituals and retell history (Clark, 2004). The author also presents a definition of each concept: Myth is a fable; a fictional or imaginary person or thing, and an old story about imaginary people; a commonly believed but false idea, an ideology. Legend is a traditional story of the past that is based on real events, people, places, historical but not verifiable. A story that has been passed down for generations, especially one that is presented as history (Clark, 2004).

Taking the concepts to a definition less subjective and more etymological, Albalat (2006) defines mythology as the ideal explanation of things (myth), in contrast to this, the rational explanation (logos) clarified it. We observe that our beliefs and traditions have been largely inherited and/or taken and extended to other lands and cultures from the cradle of civilizations like Greece. In contrast, there are other theories that focus on the reason of myths and legends, their origins from the social and from the conception in the thoughts of men, and their relationship with nature.

Vitaliano (2007) brings this idea: some myths are the result of man's attempts to explain remarkable features of his environment, such as striking relief or unusual smaller features, while others try to explain striking natural processes like earthquakes, volcanic phenomena and floods. Local myths have been useful for solving geological problems, and even geological nomenclature is due to mythology.

As it can be noticed, from these concepts different authors have their own theory and definition, which provides diverse points of view and helps us in the realization of this project. As it has been stated by most of the authors, myths and legends are defined as part of a cultural tradition, as the reflection of a civilization. We, in our project, observe the same conception reflected, and through it we want to include this tradition in the learning process of elderly since in this way they can evoke perspectives of their lives in previous situations. This is a cooperative work in which both learners and teachers have an exchange of knowledge where elderly return to those cultural and traditional concepts that may have been part of their childhood. Besides, it is relevant to use myths and legends as previous knowledge for the acquisition of vocabulary in English, it is motivating to explore this perspective in which adults can have better reception of new information as they probably activate memories that help them identify and relate concepts, activities, events and elements that contribute to their learning process.

5. METHODOLOGY

The implementation of this classroom project took place at *Hogar del Abuelo Divino Pastor* in Pereira. The population was 7 elderly between 56 and 92 years old and the facilitators in charge were two students of *Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés*, from the *Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira*, under the supervision of the professor Dolly Ramos Gallego in charge of the research area of the program and the macro-project from the *Semillero de Investigación In Bloom* concerning elderly teaching and learning. In this specific project, the facilitators' work relied on the andragogy method to approach vocabulary teaching associated to national and well-known myths and legends through the technique of storytelling, making in the implementation an affable contact with elderly in pursuance of elders' cognitive development as well as serving as complementary activities and programs whom elderly have relation with inside the retirement home.

5.1 Context

The term teaching itself means a challenge, through history it has developed techniques that facilitate teaching and learning, generally focused on children, adolescents, and young adults, but rarely focused on teaching to older adults or the third aged. The last century has been much more inclusive with this generation of people who through their knowledge and experience of life can still be very productive and contribute to the community. An example of the inclusion of such community in the local context is the process started by the *Semillero de Investigación In Bloom* where facilitators conducted English classes in different retirement homes in order to teach elderly vocabulary through

diverse techniques, such as games and arts.

The World Health Organization considered the third age as the last stage in the human life which begins around of 65 years old. In countries such as Colombia, elderly stage is considered to start about the 60s (Ley 1276 de 2008). Even though the care of elderly in Colombia has been a topic that has not showed results, the Colombian government started a program in 2013 called "Colombia Mayor"; the purpose of the program was to increase the protection of elderly in Colombia, and it consists on a bimonthly subsidization in order to pay their basic needs. In Pereira, there are almost 46 "Centros de Bienestar del Anciano"; most of them are sponsored by the local government even though there are some that are paid by the citizens. One of these "centros de bienestar" is *Hogar del Abuelo Divino Pastor* where this classroom project took place by the implementation of English class sessions where two students from the *Licenciatura en Bilingüismo* and some adults from the previously mentioned retirement home were involved.

5.2 Setting

The implementation of this project took place in *Hogar del Abuelo Divino Pastor* located in Pereira. It is a retirement home supported by private donations, public contributions made by the town hall of the city and the families who pay to this place for taking care of their relatives. 46 elder people live in this place together with the staff in charge of the place, who are nurses taking care of elders' medicines and treatments, a monthly visit done by a doctor and a person in charge of the administrative area. It has room for 45 people maximum. Inside the retirement home the exposure that elderly have

had to English input had just been provided one semester ago by a former group of practitioners from the *Licenciatura en Bilingüismo* under the direction of the professor Dolly Ramos Gallego in charge of the research area of the program and the macro-project concerning elderly teaching and learning. It consisted of two hours of English a week through the implementation of arts. Although project's formal aspects in terms of linguistic outcomes, procedures, instruments differs from the one that new practitioners implemented about storytelling, both of them follow the same conceptual relation towards andragogy and adult education performing the role of observers, developers and implementers.

5.3 Participants.

A diagnostic visit was carried out at the retirement home and it was possible to observe the target population, the place, and the environment. On the other hand, the population involved in this project was: An adult population from the retirement home *Hogar del Abuelo Divino Pastor* who were as students and also two practitioners who were implementers, designers and observers.

5.3.1 Elderly learners

The implementations of this classroom project were carried out with a sample of 7 adult participants from a total population of 46 elderly, with an average age of 56 to 92 years old. According to the information provided by the retirement home, most of elderly tend to be sedentary mainly because of kinesthetic limitations, they present as well visual and aural limitations, and their periods of attention are short. Additionally, the assumption of elderly low level of proficiency in English at *Hogar del Abuelo Divino Pastor* gave an opportunity to implement with them the andragogy method to teach English classes. Based on elderly`s

behavior and participation observed in the first session, the sample of this population was selected in order to collect information for data analysis and reflection.

5.3.2 Practitioners

The facilitators in charge of the implementation of this project were two students of ninth semester of the *Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés*, from the *Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira*. These students developed the roles of designers, implementers, and observers. The role of each facilitator varied according to the development of each session, i.e. in a given session, one student assumed the role of implementer, but next session this student assumed the role of observer. Based on the first observation and the questionnaire implemented in the first session, the facilitators decided the methodologies for conducting their following classes.

5.4 Design

To conduct this project, practitioners focused on the method and practice of andragogy inasmuch as it is "the art and science of helping adults to learn" (Knowles, 1970). Since elderly were already familiarized and engaged with myths and legends in their mother tongue, practitioners implemented the technique of storytelling in order to teach English vocabulary to elderly. Such technique was selected given that first, storytelling has always had an important role in culture due to its relation to values, traditions, and experiences (Michalos, 2014); second, it is a well-known communication tool which enhances literacy and communication skills, and which performance may vary from a spoken or written story to dramas, pictures, or dances; finally, according to Michalos (2014) storytelling reinforces people's identity and enhances problem solving abilities

which provides prosperity, wellbeing, and quality of life.

5.5 Development and implementation

The objective of this project was to teach English vocabulary through the exposure to Colombian myths and legends to a group of elderly from the retirement home *Hagar del Abuelo Divino Pastor*. In order to create a comfortable and an entertaining environment, the classes were implemented using the most common myths and legends of the region by using materials such as flashcards and posters; thus, they were encouraged to learn and participate.

Taking into account the previous statement, the main purposes of implementing storytelling to elderly were: First, to acquire English vocabulary about what they already know in Spanish regarding Colombian myths and legends. Second, based on the information previously mentioned, some elderly tend to be sedentary; therefore, another objective of this project was to work on strategies to increase elders' imagination and to practice their cognitive abilities. Finally, the project had ten sessions divided into two sessions per week of one and a half hour, in which we were active monitors and observers of their learning process.

5.6 Resources and materials

In order to work with elderly learners, it was necessary to have enough reading input to carry out the storytelling sessions. Also, facilitators used flashcards of landscapes, places and different scenarios related to the stories, drawings representing the characters, color markers and cardboards for posters, some other materials such as glue, scissors, tapes and

color papers were provided for participants to do the activities, to practice and also to share with their partners. As resources, practitioners had folders to store and keep elders' artifacts, journals and observations.

5.7 Assessment

Taking into consideration elders' characteristics, conditions and limitations, the most appropriate way to assess their work and performance was first, through observation of participants' performance in terms of in-class activities development and class participation; second, through collection of participants' artifacts and monitoring their work in order to verify the accomplishment of the activity aim; third, recycling vocabulary to check their capacity to use the vocabulary studied in the sessions. This type of assessment aimed at determining their strengths as well as their aspects to improve in order to make classes and their learning process more meaningful. It also aimed at observing and evaluating their ability to identify the vocabulary in different contexts or input provided as well as the correct pronunciation of the content words.

5.8 Instruments and reflection

5.8.1 Reflection

Since reflection is an essential component of teaching, and it enhances the development of a class, this project took into consideration the work of Schön (1983) in relation to the methods implemented in the reflective process which were reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action addresses the reflection that is carried out during the session, that is to say: reacting and reflecting on the situation in the moment

it is occurring in order to immediately benefit that given situation, instead of reflecting on how to proceed differently in a similar situation in the future (Schön, 1983). Differently, reflection-on-action addresses the changes that can be developed in the practice after the situation occurred. This refers to recalling what was done during the session in order to determine what could have been done differently and what changes can be made in future sessions and similar situations (Schön, 1983).

5.8.2 Instruments

With the objective to collect and analyze students' linguistic outcomes, students' responses and teachers' professional growth, the facilitators implemented ten classes in which they used instruments as observations, journals and artifacts in order to obtain specific and valid information about the participants' learning process.

5.8.2.1 Observations

At the moment to put into action the classroom project, the roles of the facilitators changed throughout the process, from the one who presented and explained the activities, checked and monitored participants work and gave feedback, to the one who observed participants' behavior towards the lessons as well as their outcomes, emotional responses and performance. Such observations were written during the implementation, which is reflection in-action. Taking into consideration Donelly (2007), peer observation of teaching makes a relation between redesign and change aspects of personal meaning and professionalism, so the implementation was beneficial for both; participants and facilitators in charge due to the sense of cooperation and reliable analysis of each other's performance.

5.8.2.2 Journals

The second instrument used was journals. Journals were essential to this project because it gave more detailed information about learning and teaching process as well as ideas to improve teaching performance. It also served to make reflection on-action. After each class the facilitators wrote on the journal all the facts and information for further analysis such as learners' behavior, motivation, participation and linguistic performance, also, facilitators' performance and development of the class along the implementations.

5.8.2.3 Artifacts

The artifacts were other instruments that were used to activate elderly cognitive skills. These served as reflection-in-action during the implementation of the class. These were matching worksheets, drawings, word search puzzles, among others. In addition, it served as reflection-on-action at the moment to write the journals since it was necessary to take into account the learners outcomes.

6. RESULTS

The following section shows the results of this classroom project divided into the categories of linguistic outcomes, students' responses, and professional growth; each one of them presents its strengths and aspects to improve. The information presented and analyzed in these results was collected through instruments such as artifacts, journals, and observations.

6.1 Linguistic Outcomes

As previously mentioned, the participants of this classroom project are elderly from a retirement home who present, as proposed by Cross (1981), deterioration of certain sensory-motor abilities e.g., eyesight, hearing, reaction time; such deteriorations may hinder the process of learning a foreign language due to the fact that it requires more effort from the learner to understand the aural and visual input. Despite such conditions, some projects involving teaching English vocabulary have been conducted with this population applying topics and approaches different from ours. Regardless the work previously conducted,they did not recall the vocabulary taught given that in the following four months after these classes, neither they received further input in English nor they kept practicing it. Additionally, only one of the participants had had contact with the target language since he lived in the United States, for this reason, it was easier for him to understand all the topics, instructions and vocabulary; regarding participation, he made more contributions using the target language than the rest, he also helped the other participants when performing the activities by explaining the instructions, translating the vocabulary or indicating them the correct answer. Unfortunately, he only attended about three sessions. Because of the

reasons previously mentioned, the results obtained from participants' performance were more receptive than productive.

6.1.1 Strengths

In the development of the eight sessions, each session of one hour and a half, it was observed that participants were able to produce chunks of language like words that were presented in different myths and legends such as *river, forest, jungle, woman, man, big, children, hat, shoes* by using strategies like imitating the target vocabulary after hearing it from the facilitators several times during the different sessions that the same words were used, also we pasted flashcards both with the image and the written word of the vocabulary taught in class, so that they had the opportunity to review the vocabulary and be exposed to the language; this way participants managed to pronounce and use such words. For instance: the words *woman* and *man* were used in all of the eight sessions since they were necessary for describing the main characters as they were man or woman; the word *children* for presenting secondary characters in myths like *weeping woman, one foot* and *goblins*. The words *river, forest* and *jungle* were the common location for most of the myths, although the word *river* was not included in the vocabulary of sessions like *witches, goblins* since these two sessions were focused on the description of the character rather than a general presentation of the story. The word *big* was used in three sessions which focused in the description of the character like *mother water, witches* and *goblins;* in these last two myths the words*hat* and *shoes* were used as part of characters' description and participants could recall it easily.Therefore, along the process, participants were able to use these words naturally, both for completing tasks and for participating during the sessions.

When recycling vocabulary, as the examples mentioned above, participants were

able to identify the words already taught, this way they were also able to pronounce them in English by themselves as stated in the reflections. Besides, when we showed the images representing the vocabulary (e.g.*river, forest, jungle, woman, man, big, children, hat, shoes)* they managed to answer and pronounce them correctly. In our classroom project, we observed that it was easier for participants to recall and use the vocabulary during the sessions sincethey considered myths as an attractive subject which motivated them to learn the new vocabulary. We evidenced participants' interest towards the topic of myths and legends which resulted in an increase of motivation towards learning a foreign language,thisfostered their comprehension and production of vocabulary like the words previously mentioned, similar to what was evidenced in the study ofLopez et al. (2003), which says that myths are an engaging topic for studentswhich help to develop their cognitive and affective factors.

Besides, evidences of attempting to use the target language are addressed in the reflections in which participants were able to recognize the target vocabulary, which was goblins, and theydemonstrated it by pointing to the correct pictures or to the clothes representing the target wordsthat facilitators asked in English during the sessions *(hat, belt, shoes, beard, sweater, pants)*, rather than doing oral production of such words. Also, the observations explain that "when implementer asked them the word in English: "hat, belt, and sweater…"participants' reaction was either to translate the word to Spanish or to point to the drawing."

In conclusion, participants had the capacity to recognize and recall the vocabulary taught after reviewing it several times which they demonstrated by following instructions like pointing to images, painting with specific colors, raising the flashcard according to the

word they heard, pasting the image in a specific square, saying the word according to the image showed. These results were evidenced given the fact that participants were constantly exposed to the same vocabulary, in other words, we recycled vocabulary along the sessions. Besides,during the sessions, participants were requested to repeat and use the vocabulary both for participating in class and completing activities, they also had the images of the vocabulary pasted in the walls which helped them to recall and review by themselves the vocabulary used in class.

6.1.2 Aspects to improve

Throughout the implementations, it was evidenced that participants had difficulties in following instructions and producing orally the vocabulary in English due to low-self image. It was observed that participants repeated the vocabulary after listening to the facilitator pronouncing it, but at the moment of participating in the activities they textually expressed theirlack of confidence and discomfort when producing orally vocabulary in the target language.

As presented in the reflections, participants were asked to paint the image of the goblin representing the vocabulary (hat, belt, shoes, beard, sweater, pants) with specific colors for each one of the words as part of the instruction gave by implementer. However, one of the participants painted the images without following the instruction, when we observed his work and asked him the reason why he had not followed the instruction, he answered that he had not understood what the implementer had said because he was not paying attention to the explanations. Accordingly, implementers provided him a second explanationof the activity in Spanish emphasizing the target vocabulary in English; still he was not able to understand neither the activity nor the instructions. We consider this

happened because he was more interested only in the painting activity rather than the content of the session.

Along the first implementations we observed a lack of spontaneity and low self-confidence in participants regarding the use of the foreign language. This rejection regarding the use of English may not be related to a lack of understanding of the language (since in the previous section of the chapter, it was evidenced that they recalled and identified the vocabulary) but to their lack of confidence respecting their performance in a foreign language; as an example of this, some of their comments when talking among them were "how weird do I sound in English?" or "at this age I am not capable of pronouncing this well". Given participants' previously exposed reasons, their discomfort, and low self-confidence towards producing the vocabulary in English, they preferred to use Spanish instead of English in order to complete the activities because this way they did not have the pressure of making mistakes or mispronouncing words despite having the constant encouragement and supervision by the implementers. The results obtained in our classroom project were similar to the results of the study conducted by Sucylate (2014) inasmuch as participants in our classroom project demonstrated lack of confidence regarding their performance during the first sessions and in Sucylate´s (2014) study participants, in the first stages of results, which consisted of group conversations, demonstrated symptoms of lack of spontaneity, negative emotions and low self-image. Yet these results and ours differ since our project deals with teaching a foreign language through storytelling while Sucylate (2014) focused on teaching literature in participants' mother tongue.

6.2 Students' Responses

Since the beginning of the classes, even though many participants expressed their lack of interest towards learning a new language taking into account their current age, they were curious and attentive given that they found the topic of myths and legends engaging.In this section we will present the benefits of collaborative work, the attentiveness of participants, encouraging the rest of the population to participate and how group participation developed. We will also include aspects that need analysis and further improvement such as the use of certain visual aids like technological devices and the selected versions of the stories.

6.2.1 Strengths

During the implementation participants showed relevant positive responses such as their attention and curiosity towards the stories and the classes, another positive aspect was the inclusion of the population who was not part of the initial group of participants in the sessions; besides, along the development of the sessions, group relationships and collaborative work improved since participants paid attention to their partners when sharing stories and they shared material when working in groups; also, participation improved since participants shared background knowledge of the stories like the origin, different versions, anecdotes, songs and jokes in Spanish, and attempts to reproduce the vocabulary they heard.

In the observations we noticed that from all the population in the retirement home, 16 of them agreed to participate in the project, still only a sub-group of approximately 7 people actively participated in almost all the implementations by performing the activities proposed and sharing insights and thoughts. Part of the population who did not initially agree to participate in the project decided to stay in some sessions just to listen to the

stories; still some of them asked us to give them the worksheets and materials for the activities in order to complete them. Although they were not participating in the project, we decided to give them worksheets and materials since they were quite interested in what the activities consisted of. The reason for nonparticipants to ask for worksheets and materials was because such activities were interesting and entertaining for them, mostly when these activities involved crafts like painting, drawing, connection of dots, cutting and pasting. The purpose of sharing the worksheets with nonparticipants was not to teach them the language and the content but to include this population to the group, not denying them the opportunity to be part of the class and as found in Sucylate (2014) to decrease elders' sense of loneliness.

As it can be evidenced in the observations, participants shared, in Spanish, anecdotes or events they had heard in their home towns about well-known myths and legends. For example, many participants said that they had had encounters with witches, according to them, some of these encounters consisted of attacks, injuries, scratches and bites; others said that goblins stole objects from them, such as keys, tools and jewelry from their houses, they also said that goblins often scared them. In the same way, participants listened carefully to implementers whenever they said words in English regarding any element of the story they were addressing, and few of them attempted to repeat the words. In another case, mentioned in the reflections, one participant sang the song "*duende alegre*" since the topic discussed that class was goblins; others said that goblins were responsible of causing marriage problems and scaring disobedient children. This active participation and their will to share their experiences and knowledge about the subject can be interpreted as a motivation towards the topics to be presented (i.e. myths and legends)

and the implementations in general, also curiosity about listening to the stories they already knew in Spanish but now in English.

Regarding group relationships and collaborative work, Sucylaite (2014) mentions that in the last part of his project participants showed improvements in terms of cordial relations and community feelings as well. In our case, participants also improved their abilities to work in groups since many of the materials used for the activities such as colors, glue, paper, among others, were not enough for each one of them. Thus, as stated in the observations, participants managed to share the materials for the development of the activity as well as they helped each other at the moment of identifying the vocabulary requested in the activity proposed, for example, in the evidence video of the class whose topic was the myth *"Big Teeth",* it is observed that participants were helping each other when completing the bingo activity in which they had a set of cards and a board where they had to paste the images in a given order, when a participant hesitated or did not know the answer, the others next to him repeated the instruction or gave him the answer so that he could complete the bingo. In conclusion, as mentioned above, participants succeeded at working collaboratively and community enhanced since they shared both materials and personal stories with others.

In the reflections, it was evidenced that some participants complained about the veracity of the version of the story of *The Weeping Woman* presented inasmuch as they had heard other versions with different details, such as the reasons the main character had for killing her children, the number of children the character had and the places where the character's ghost was seen. Besides, another participant did not agree whether it was possible to have a real picture of a ghost because he considered that images of spirits do not

exist given that they cannot be seen. The fact that participants complained about the veracity of the story is an evidence of the andragogical assumptions proposed by Knowles (1980) which say that adults already have a vast reservoir of experience that represents a rich resource for learning. As participants, in our case, already knew a different version of the same story, they considered that their versions were also valid and must be taken into account in class since, for them, facilitator was not the only person with the knowledge of the topic. Therefore, we evidenced participants' involvement in class development in terms of the content provided.

The initial idea of the project was to present the readings in English so that participants were exposed as much as possible to the language. There was an attempt to execute this procedure, but participants rejected it as mentioned in the observations which say that participants emphasized and insisted on their need or preference to listen to the story first in Spanish and then in English in order to have a clear idea of what the story was about, because when conducted in the opposite way they were not capable of grasping the information, they also got distracted (talking among them, walking around the place or paying attention to what nonparticipants were doing) since they did not understand what facilitators were reading. Given the complains and suggestions proposed by participants and because we concluded that it was appropriate to modify the methodology, we decided to change the procedure of the presentation of the stories by first doing a riddle in Spanish like the one used in the topic of goblins: "*¿Qué criatura es pequeña, usa sombrero, zapatos puntiagudos y hace que la gente se pierda en el camino?"*. Also, we read the story first in Spanish and then in English so they could have a clear idea of the story and the content of the class. As a result of this change, they showed more interest in the explanations and

presentation of the vocabulary as stated in the reflections. Finally, it is important to consider participants' suggestions regarding class procedures because, as mentioned by Ross-Gordon(2003) in the andragogical assumption of the adult learner concerning self-direction, adults prefer to have a leading role regarding their own learning process and determining the goals and outcomes of such process. Besides, as stated by Knowles (1984), it is essential to involve learners in planning since participants' motivation towards the class and for their learning progress increases.

6.2.2Aspects to improve

During the implementation, participants showed negative reactions such as disagreement towards the procedure and towards the activities and visual material presented.

Another negative reaction was concerning the use of specific visual material, in this case the use of a computer for presenting a video. In the observations it was stated that participants did not show much interest in having a technological device nor a video presented; because of this lack of interest, some kept playing board games, some kept talking to others, and some did not look at the video. Almost all of them just looked at the screen for few seconds in the middle of their conversations or the other activities they were doing, only two of them watched the video almost entirely (still they got distracted for few moments).When the projection of the video finished, participants were asked about whether they liked it or not and their opinions; many of them did not give an answer and others gave vague answers like *"mmm bien"* or *"no se ve bien"*. This discontent regarding the implementation of a video and a technological device happened probably because the video was played without sound or the images showed on it were not that attractive for them;

another possible reason for participants' discontent was the size of the laptop screen given that most of them had visual limitations and the size of the screen was not appropriate for the amount of participants watching the video.

To summarize, participants' general attitudes towards the implementations were positive, for instance group work improved when they were asked to share materials and to complete group-tasks, attentiveness was constant when implementers were reading the different stories, active participation was evidenced in every session by answering implementers' questions and sharing their stories, willingness was observed as well when they were asked to be part of the sessions and the activities. Nonetheless, there were negative reactions towards the procedure of the explanations, the selected versions of some myths and the use of technological devices as a visual aid.

6.3 Professional Growth

The development of this project represented a challenge for us given the particular characteristics of this population such as their age, physical and emotional conditions and their decreasing interest towards learning a new language, also the fact that the approach used in this case (andragogy) is different from the one we have normally worked with (pedagogy). Besides, the implementation of this classroom project allowed us to improve aspects like lesson planning and material design, as well as implementing different approaches and strategies in order to elicit elderly's participation. On the other hand, there were aspects that could have been managed in a better way such as time management regarding how long we allowed participants to intervene and regarding classroom arrangement before session.

6.3.1 Strengths

Along the eight sessions, we improved skills like the design of appropriate activities according to participants' age, materials and lesson planning, classroom management and aspects like elicitation strategies, monitoring, voice projection, intonation and body language.

One of the aspects we, as teachers, improved thanks to the development of the project was lesson planning, including the design of activities and materials, selection and adaptation of the stories and vocabulary according to the population. We consider that in terms of material design regarding the presentation of the stories, we managed to engage participants and to present both the topic and the vocabulary clearly enough for them despite their visual limitations. Thus, the materials used were engaging and allowed us to give clear explanations because they had colorful images which called their attention, and they were printed in big size so that it was visible for them, also the images were self explanatory since they were selected accordingly to the story and what was shown in them addressed the specific aspect we wanted to focus on; for example, and according the reflections, the complete image for presenting the topic of goblins was edited by dividing it into several parts, each part showing the representation of a specific word like *hat, pants, shoes,* among others. Regarding activities, materials were designed in order to avoid lack of clarity of the material itself, misunderstanding of what the activity consisted of, given participants´ visual limitations. When the activities consisted of images for painting, connecting dots or pasting, they were printed full size so that participants had enough space and felt comfortable to paint or to fill in given their decreasing fine motor skills. Another example regarding material design was font selection in terms of size, color and type; for

example, when we implemented the topic of *one foot* with the activity of a word search, first it was printed full size, also, the color used was black, the font size was augmented, and we only used capital letters in order that participants did not confuse letters and were able to identify words easily and solve the word search without any extra help from facilitators; besides, the images representing the words they had to search were printed full size and pasted on a place that every participant could see instead of printing small images in a single page for each one, this way participants did not have problems when looking at the images and understanding what they represented and they succeeded in the development of the activity.

Another relevant feature at the time to approach classes with this specific type of population is the classroom management regarding facilitators' performance features like elicitation of participation, corrections, and monitoring participants' work. As evidenced in the observations, classes started by telling participants a riddle related to the topic of the session, this way we elicited participation since the beginning of the class and additionally, participants were encouraged to share related stories and experiences, for example with the topic of witches, the riddle was "*¿Qué brinca en los techos, vuela en escoba y usa sombrero?"* to which they answered correctly by saying " *la bruja*" even though they said it in Spanish, immediately after giving the answer, they started telling their own anecdotes and experiences, this is to say that elicitation worked because facilitators did not request participants explicitly to share their stories but thanks to the elicitation technique of the riddle we achieved participants involvement and that they shared their stories without requesting it; this involvement was achieved thanks to the use of participants' previous knowledge in order to present new content or as stated by Darn (2009), students already

have knowledge of the language and the real world and such knowledge needs to be activated and used constructively, also, since students acquire the information through self-discovery, it makes the information more memorable. A second aspect mentioned in the reflections was monitoring participants while they were working in the activities, for example, we passed around their tables in order first, to check if they were solving the activity; second, to check that they had understood the instruction correctly; third, to review the vocabulary with each participant while they were solving the activity and specifically when they committed a mistake so that they could understand and solve the activity correctly; for instance, as seen in the reflections, in the class whose topic was B*ig teeth*, we approached participants by asking them to put cards in a specific given order on a card board divided in squares, we pronounced the words corresponding to the images they had to put on their card board e.g. *number one: money, number two: bones, number three: cards*. When participants committed a mistake by putting an image which did not correspond the square or the given order, or when they simply did not understand the word, we showed the image to the rest of the group and asked them what the image was, in order to elicit collaborative work so that the group helped the participant to understand, we also repeated the word and we explained it with body language or doing mimic e.g. when participants did not understand the word "cards" we repeated the word while simulating the action of holding poker cards and putting them on the table so they could select the correct one and continue with the activity. By implementing this strategy in different sessions, we achieved group involvement and that every participant understood the vocabulary and the activities we were performing. A third aspect we improved regarding classroom management was the sum of skills like voice projection, intonation and body

language. Given that participants presented aural limitations and it was their second time, after four months, that they were exposed to the English language, it was necessary to articulate, speak louder and slower in order that the content in English was comprehensible for them; therefore, along the development of the project we achieved that participants understood the vocabulary and the content of each story and activity given that we improved our voice projection and intonation when explaining, giving examples and emphasizing on the target vocabulary. It is also important to mention the relevance of using body language when explaining the target vocabulary and the content of the stories as well; it was a successful way to provide clear explanations by representing with actions or mimics what we were trying to say. For example, as mentioned in the reflections, in the session of the *Alligator Man*, we represented the word *fisherman* by simulating to have in our hands a fishing rod and the action of fishing; the word *alligator* was represented by putting our arms and hands together and simulating an alligator's teeth with our fingers while opening and closing our hands repeatedly. Mimics and body language were implemented in all the eight sessions; consequently, participants understood and gave correct answers (putting images in the corresponding square, painting images with a specific color, pronouncing the correct word given the image shown) and repeated and used by themselves the vocabulary taught in class. In conclusion, we consider that, as teachers,it is necessary to adjust our class performance in terms of body language, lesson planning, material design, monitoring, among others; since, for example in our case, participants did not have much exposure and practice of the English language, so it was difficult for them to understand and learn new content in the foreign language, for this reason we needed to use additional elements that resulted in participants comprehension

and production of the language.

6.3.2 Aspects to improve

During the implementations we identified aspects in terms of teaching performance that need improvement such as time management regarding group and setting arrangement before the beginning of the session and distribution of the time of participants' intervention, also selecting other kind of material that was more durable and resistant for flashcards given that they manipulated them constantly.

In the reflections, it is stated that in some sessions the setting arrangement took longer than expected since first, there were only three tables available and it was necessary to move and organize chairs and help participants to take a seat because of participants' difficulties for moving, we also faced problems when helping participants to take their places since four of them had personal issues with other participants and refused to sit beside them, other participant always looked for the same place to sit and if other participant occupied his place, he preferred to wait standing instead of taking another seat, consequently, we had to intervene and reorganize the participants so we could start the class. Regarding the time provided to participants' interventions, we did not establish a limit of time for them to share anecdotes or opinions because we did not take into account that they would use this space for expressing themselves and share personal experiences and details that were not precisely related to the content of the sessions, for instance, participants begun with a whole description of their life, such as their age at that moment, location, occupation, relatives or friends accompanying him and the facts surrounding the experiences whether they happened before or after it, rather than giving a concrete or short answer. As stated by McKenzie (2006), "allowing the class to digress too far, or for too

long, may sacrifice more critical discussion or activities". Still we preferred not to interrupt them because we noticed that regardless how polite we were when interrupting them, they felt excluded and they showed a decrease in their interest or motivation for participating later on. This situation led to another problem that was the lost of interest from the rest of participants inasmuch as they could not hear the participant who was talking because of his low voice tone and their aural limitations. We attempted to solve these two situations by repeating key information of the participant's story, so that the rest of the group get involved and interested in the story and contributed to the class development. This was a solution for one of the aspects since all participants added opinions and paid attention to what the others were saying, yet the other aspect was not solved since the time designated only to interventions was not reduced and it affected the development of the other stages of the class inasmuch as we had to reduce the time estimated for activities or to stay extra time for participants to finish the activity, or as mentioned by McKenzie (2006), we were flexible inasmuch as we reshaped our lesson plan to respond to the demands of the class.

The final aspect to reflect upon is the selection of materials for printing the flashcards. We used normal printing paper for the flashcard we implemented in the sessions, but the quality of this paper was not practical for us given that participants manipulated these flashcards constantly, and when we pasted them on the wall for participants to check them along the week, we faced the problem of the weather conditions such as rain and because of the quality of the material, they did not last long and we had to print more flashcards. A possible solution for this problem was looking for a durable or resistant material such as cardboard or wrapping it in plastic, but due to money as well as

time constraints, and the fact that we had the images printed in advanced, we did not

implement this change regarding the materials

7. CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this project was to teach English vocabulary through storytelling of myths and legends to elderly from a retirement home and that participants were able to identify and express orally vocabulary in English by using their previous knowledge (in their mother tongue) of myths and legends. In this chapter we will present a set of conclusions based on the methodology implemented and the results obtained to determine if the objectives proposed were achieved and how.

During all the implementations, as stated in our objectives, we used common Colombian myths and legends in order to present the vocabulary and to expose participants to the English language. Most of these myths and legends were already known by participants in their native language; besides, such myths and legends were adapted so that the vocabulary was more comprehensible. Despite these adaptations, we used Spanish to reinforce the presentation and explanation of the content because first, it was participants' request, and second, we concluded that in this way input was more comprehensible and classes were more appealing. Finally, the fact that participants requested a change in methodology, as previously mentioned, demonstrates that participants were aware of their own learning process; this is to say that the andragogical principle of adult learners' autonomy and self-direction was evidenced.

Another objective was to reinforce participants' memorization, concentration and creativity through storytelling and we concluded that participants' responses were an evidence of concentration inasmuch as they did not require a second explanation of the instruction before giving the answer and they gave accurate answers most of the time;

besides, it was an evidence of memorization and identification of the vocabulary taught since they were able to point to the image which corresponded the given word; and finally, their productions such as drawings demonstrated that they were able to use their creativity for expressing their understanding and perception of the topic taught.

Along the sessions, participants used strategies like translating, pointing, selecting and painting, for both participating and completing activities. We concluded that thanks to these strategies, participants achieved the objective of identifying the vocabulary presented in English as well as the main characters and events of the stories. However, in terms of oral production, participants had difficulties with the pronunciation and use of the vocabulary they had previously identified. To summarize, to show their understanding and to participate in the activities, they preferred to translate to Spanish or to point to the object instead of using the vocabulary in English. In terms of language acquisition, this is to say that although participants made advances in the early production stage, they remained in the receptive stage.

8. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

After finishing the implementation of the project, we identified a set of situations that we consider as relevant aspects for being taken into account in future projects related to a similar population or methodology like the place and the resources available, participants' physical and cognitive conditions and background knowledge, participants' preferences and opinions, as well as material design according to the population. Such aspects can also serve as recommendations which will be exposed in this chapter.

First of all, it is important to know where the project will be conducted. For instance, in this case the place was a retirement home and not a school or an educational institute, for this reason, the resources available were limited, so facilitators must bring their own materials and to adapt the class to the building conditions and to the limited resources, for example, since the retirement home was not provided with a space similar to a classroom, facilitators must know in advance first, how to arrange the setting i.e. number of tables and chairs, size and distribution of the room in relation to the number and health conditions of participants; and second, how to use materials appropriately i.e. ask about the amount of resources available like televisions, computers, color pencils, paper, among others; buy the necessary materials, look for strategies to use materials wisely and to reduce materials costs, adequate the place to a learning environment like designing a board out of a surface in which you can write, paste flashcards in a visible place and where the material does not get damaged by the weather or people.

The second most important aspect is to know, before implementing the project, participants' characteristics like physical limitations (aural, visual and kinesthetic) and

cognitive and mental conditions which can hinder the normal development of the project, since participants with such conditions may interrupt the class and need extra monitoring; so it is mandatory to know this in advance in order to have a clear idea of the population and their particular characteristics and to find strategies to manage the situation. Besides, it is worth asking if participants have previous knowledge of the subject or the language and to know their perceptions towards learning in general, the language or the content in order to plan the classes and design the materials accordingly.

A third aspect that is necessary to take into account is participants´ opinions towards the procedure of the class. For instance, in case participants realize they do not understand the content given the methodology implemented (presenting the content only in English) and they suggest a different way to present or explain the content like explaining it in both their mother tongue (Spanish) and in the target language (English) because they consider they understand better the target vocabulary and the stories by following this procedure. As previously mentioned, it is important to take into consideration participants' suggestions regarding class procedures, but also to analyze if such suggestions are applicable in the context and that they do not affect class development. These suggestions are important because, as stated in the andragogical assumption of the adult learner concerning self-direction, "adults are assumed to prefer self-direction indetermining the goals and outcomes of their learning" (Ross-Gordon, 2003). Besides, as stated by Knowles (1984), involving learners in planning is essential for class development, participants' motivation towards the class and for their learning progress.

The final aspect to take into consideration is material design. It is necessary to have a variety of options and not to rely on a restricted set of materials for presenting the content

and activities; for instance, not only using technological devices but also flashcards, animated books or drawings (if possible). And regarding activities, proposing not only basic ones like word searches but also drawings, filling an image by pasting color paper and board games like bingo. This variety of materials is essential given that participants may not find certain materials or activities appealing, which may result in participants' lost of motivation, loss of attention and rejection of activities, representing an obstacle for the development of the class and the project. Thus, having limited options can affect class development and the achievement of the project objectives, for this reason, it is mandatory to propose different activities and materials in case the ones implemented do not show positive results in terms of participants' acceptance and performance.

9. LIMITATIONS

During the implementation of the project, we encountered situations related to participants' health issues, the retirement home staff,conditions and distribution of the building,and the methodology implemented which represented an obstacle for the development of the project. Despite such limitations, the project could continue its course and was concluded successfully. These limitations will be presented below.

- During class time there were different interruptions such as health assistance by retirement home nurses, elderly's grooming time, snacks and lunch time. These situations interrupted normal class development since health assistance, grooming and snacks were conducted in the same room the class was conducted. Additionally, for health assistance participants were called one by one for medical evaluation and for lunch time some participants had to help staff to serve lunch to their partners. For these reasons active participation decreased and the remaining participants got distracted.

- Some participants' physical conditions impeded class interaction mainly because many of them had aural limitations, so when one of them was talking the rest could not hear him well and got distracted. Also, one of the participants had psychiatric problems and interrupted the class by saying anything that came to his mind.

- The room where the class was conducted did not have any windows. For this reason, permanent outside noise hindered the development of the classes since neither we nor participants could hear each other.

- Since implementations were conducted in a retirement home and not in a school or institute, we did not have appropriate spaces for conducting a class, for this reason, classes took place in a common area which served also as dining room, games room and living room; besides, the retirement home did not provide elderly with the materials necessary for completing the activities; consequently, we had to bring or buy materials for participants to work in class.

- Regarding the methodology implemented, we exposed participants to the English language by presenting all of the content in this language; such methodology was rejected by participants from the first implementation where they stated that they did not understand the content or explanations following this methodology.

In conclusion, despite limitations like participants' health issues, activities carried out at the retirement home during class time, layout of the place, factors like outside noise as well as the methodology implemented (in terms of the use of English for presenting the content) that hindered class development, we created rapport with participants which resulted in a good learning environment, which allowed participants to understand the vocabulary and content of the lessons and to participate actively in class.

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