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TÍTULO COMPLETO DEL TRABAJO: Promotion of Differentiated Instruction through an EFL Virtual Learning Environment

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2. Ambientes Virtuales de Aprendizaje
3. Inglés como Lengua Extranjera
4. Aprendizaje de Idiomas
5. _____

Inglés

- Differentiated Instruction
- Virtual Learning Environments
- English Foreign Language
- Language Learning

RESUMEN DEL CONTENIDO: (Máximo 250 palabras)

A medida que la enseñanza tradicional se ha equipado con maestros que enseñan a la mediana medida o usan un solo enfoque de enseñanza para todos, esta investigación acción cualitativa trata de tener una visión completa de los efectos de la instrucción diferenciada (ID) a través de un idioma extranjero Inglés (EFL) en un ambiente virtual de aprendizaje (AVA). La enseñanza diferenciada es entendida como un enfoque que pretende estimular el potencial de cada estudiante, tomando en cuenta su nivel de preparación, estilos de aprendizaje, inteligencias múltiples e intereses. Un grupo de 29 estudiantes de una institución privada participó en este estudio de investigación. Los datos fueron recogidos a través de encuestas, pruebas, notas de campo, entrevistas grupales y los diarios de los maestros. Hallazgos muestran que la instrucción diferenciada a través de un ambiente virtual de aprendizaje tuvo un impacto positivo en el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, para satisfacer sus necesidades y aumentar su motivación. Este



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estudio sugiere que los profesores e investigadores en Colombia experimenten la instrucción diferenciada en sus propias prácticas pedagógicas para ganar la comprensión de los aspectos negativos y positivos de este enfoque. Es el momento de hacer la instrucción diferenciada visible en el campo inglés como lengua extranjera en Colombia, como una alternativa en la práctica de la enseñanza y una forma diferente para proporcionar más oportunidades de éxito en el aprendizaje para todos los estudiantes.

ABSTRACT: (Máximo 250 palabras)

As traditional instruction has been equated with teachers who teach to the middle or use the one-size-fits-all approach, this qualitative action research tries to have a complete view of the effects of differentiated instruction (DI) through an English foreign language (EFL) virtual learning environment (VLE). Differentiated instruction is understood as an approach that aims to foster every student's potential by taking into account their level of readiness, learning styles, multiple intelligences and interests. A group of 29 students from a private school participated in this research study. Data were gathered through surveys, tests, field notes, group interviews and teacher's journals. Findings avowed DI through a VLE had a positive impact on students' learning process, meeting their needs and increasing their motivation. This study suggests that teachers and researchers in Colombia experience DI in their own practices to gain understanding of the negative and positive aspects of this approach. It is time to make DI conspicuous in the EFL field in Colombia, as an alternative on the teaching practice and a different way to provide more opportunities of learning success for all students.



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Table of Contents

		Page
Introduction.....		9
Chapter I. Research Problem.....		11
	Problem Statement	11
	Needs Analysis	11
	Related Studies	13
	Setting and Rationale.....	17
	Research Question.....	19
	Research Objectives.....	20
Chapter II. Literature Review.....		21
	Construct (Differentiated Instruction)	21
	Construct (Virtual Learning Environment)	24
Chapter III. Methodological Design.....		26
	Research Approach and Type of Study.....	26
	Participants	26
	Research Instruments	27
	Instructional Design	29
	Instructional Stages	30
	Theory of Language and Language Learning	32
Chapter IV. Data Analysis and Findings.....		33
	Teachers' role	34
	Learning Environment	38
	Language Learning	46

	Learning Tasks	55
Chapter V. Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications		62
References.....		67
Appendixes.....		71

List of Graphs

Graph 1. Question N°1 ¿Uso sitios web para hacer las mismas actividades que hago en las clases regularmente?	11
Graph 2. Question N°2 ¿soy evaluado en la misma forma que mis compañeros?	12

List of Figures

Figure 1. Use of electronic devices during break time.....	18
Figure 2. English computer laboratory.....	18
Figure 3. Atlas.ti. Main categories	34

Abstract

As traditional instruction has been equated with teachers who teach to the middle or use the one-size-fits-all approach, this qualitative action research tries to have a complete view of the effects of differentiated instruction (DI) through an English foreign language (EFL) virtual learning environment (VLE). Differentiated instruction is understood as an approach that aims to foster every student's potential by taking into account their level of readiness, learning styles, multiple intelligences and interests. A group of 29 students from a private school participated in this research study. Data were gathered through surveys, tests, field notes, group interviews and teacher's journals. Findings showed DI through a VLE had a positive impact on students' learning process, meeting their needs and increasing their motivation. This study suggests that teachers and researchers in Colombia experience DI in their own practices to gain understanding of the negative and positive aspects of this approach. It is time to make DI conspicuous in the EFL field in Colombia, as an alternative on the teaching practice and a different way to provide more opportunities of learning success for all students.

Keywords: Differentiated Instruction (DI), Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), EFL, Language Learning.

Introduction

In this thesis document, there is a clear description of the actual learning issues students are facing at a private institution which is well-known for being the biggest in the department of Huila, and also in the south-Colombian area. Despite the amount of physical and technological resources this school has, there still exists prevalence for a traditional instruction approach in English classes, which may somehow affect students' learning, motivation and academic results.

Bearing this in mind, a survey was applied to students based on the literature related to Differentiated instruction (DI) and Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs). The results confirmed students are evaluated in the same way as their partners, and the classes in the laboratory do not seem to be quite innovative. For that reason, this research study aims to explore the effects that the implementation of differentiated instruction through English foreign language (EFL) virtual learning environments have in the learning process.

There are many research studies that evidence the positive results differentiated instruction has on learning. However, there is a lack of research in the area of learning English as a foreign language. Despite the fact that VLEs provide opportunities for a learner-centered approach, there are no research studies related to DI through VLEs in the EFL context.

Chapter 1 presents an explanation of the research problem, showing the different foreign language learning problems presented with the participants describing the setting where the study takes place. Moreover, the present related studies and the way they contributed to shape our research are highlighted and finally objectives that led our research study are shown. Chapter 2 introduces the main concepts of Differentiated Instruction and Virtual Learning Environments as the main constructs supporting them with the authors selected for the investigation. Chapter 3 explains the methodology used in the research

project. First the type of research approach and the type of study selected is defined; second the participants and the criteria for selecting them for this research study, third the different instruments applied during the development of the project and the data collection techniques. At the end of this chapter, there is a detailed description of the pedagogical intervention process. Chapter 4 characterizes the analysis procedures with all the steps followed to analyze the data. Additionally, the categories that emerged from this analysis all of them supported theoretically. Finally chapter 5 states the main conclusions of this analysis and the complete project, showing the pedagogical implications as well as the recommendations for future studies.

Chapter 1

Research Problem**Statement of the Problem****Needs Analysis**

Bearing in mind the present situation students are facing at this private school, it was probable that these students had constraints for learning the foreign language. In order to gather more information a Likert scale was designed based on the literature related to differentiated instruction and virtual learning environments. Students answered a survey created from the Likert scale and later it was analyzed.

In the survey, one of the questions inquired participants on whether they used websites in their English laboratory classes to develop the same activities they do in the regular class. Graph 1 shows a high percentage of students (37%) who confirmed they use web sites to do the same activities as in the regular classes. Another key aspect is that 39% of the participants are neutral, which means they do not have a clear answer in regards to the query.

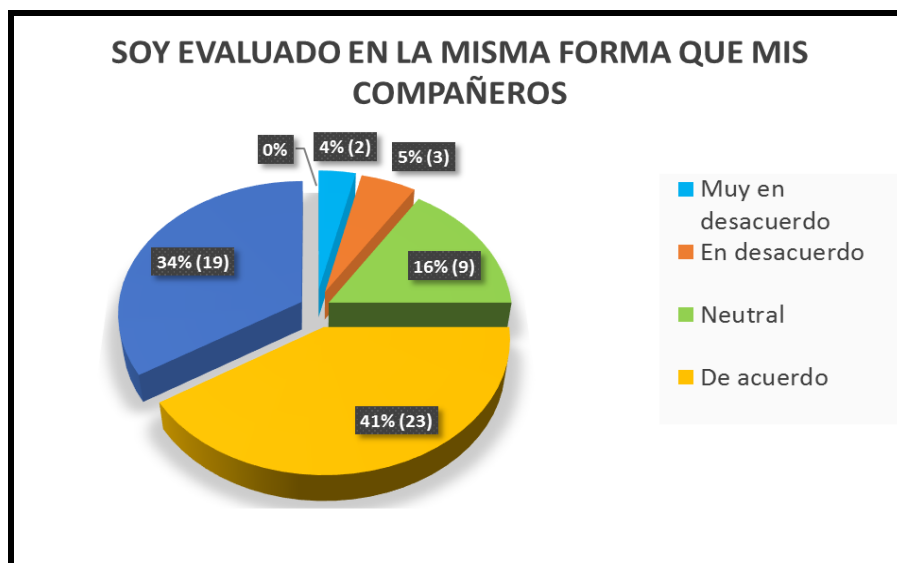


Graph 1. Question N°1 ¿Uso sitios web para hacer las mismas actividades que hago en las clases regularmente?.

As can be seen in Graph 1, there is some evidence of a tendency to work the same tasks in both laboratory and regular English classes showing a lack of innovative activities for fostering learning despite the multiple resources the school and the teacher have. It is almost

certain that there is still a traditional instruction approach in the English classes. For instance, the classroom is full of teacher-centered activities where the teacher gives a speech and students have to answer a series of questions. Alternatively, students are guided based on a textbook because the knowledge is only transferred from books and students' functions are limited to take notes or recall lessons. In this case, the situation occurs in a regular classroom and in the English lab, the activities done in the classroom are regularly the same activities practiced in the laboratory.

Another statement answered by the participants in the survey was "I am evaluated in the same way than my classmates". In Graph 2, there is strong evidence that shows the participants are all evaluated in the same manner: 34 strongly agree and 41% agree. Only a small percentage is neutral (16%), 5% disagree and 4% strongly disagree.



Graph 2. Question N°2 ¿soy evaluado en la misma forma que mis compañeros?

It is clear from the above that the participants are evaluated based on the one-size-fits-all approach. This means a test can be taken by all the students without taking into account their individual characteristics as a learner.

In order to confirm the results of the survey, an interview was conducted to the participants. According to their answers, the students affirmed that the same kinds of

activities were done in the English lab and in their regular classes. Also, they are being evaluated in the same way as their partners. Consequently, after analyzing the outcomes from the survey and the interviews, it may be concluded that students' learning is being affected by the traditional pedagogy approach followed in their English classes. By traditional we mean classes based on teacher's explanation, where the only possibility for knowledge comes from the teacher because students cannot experience learning by themselves. In addition, the same methodology is used for all students since teachers do not see their students as individuals with particular interests, skills and needs.

Related Studies

Differentiated instruction is an interesting approach that provides individualized learning opportunities for all students in a classroom. Although DI is considered as a new approach in Colombia, many research studies in this field have been developed in recent years.

Aliakbari and Khales (2014) explored the efficiency of DI and traditional pedagogy in reading comprehension in separate gender educational system. Forty seven elementary students of a language institute in Iran were chosen and divided into experimental and control groups, including one male one female classroom in each category. The students of the experimental group were taught through the strategies of differentiated instruction and the students of the control group also received traditional instruction strategies. The outcomes of the study reported female learners receiving DI had better results than male learners receiving the same strategies of instruction. In addition, the outcomes proved DI implementation is effective in promoting the students' reading comprehension.

Talbure (2011) investigated the effect of DI according to pre-service teachers' learning styles on their academic performance. This was an experimental study designed to answer if differentiated instruction led to higher academic achievement than the whole-class teaching-

learning approach. A pre-test and post-test were applied and also an experimental and a control group were implemented with 94 participants. The results showed students who learned through DI achieved higher academic scores when they are compared to those who received the traditional whole-class instruction. These previous studies prove the efficacy of DI in the learning process of students showing an improvement in the academic results and gaining more relevance than the traditional approach.

Chen (2007) analyzed Taiwanese college students' perspectives on tiered performance tasks and educational implications of the perspectives with regard to EFL learning and teaching at the tertiary level. The data analysis had three step-procedures: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The total of 12 participants of the study demonstrated generally positive responses to tiered performance tasks offered in a final examination for a freshmen English listening and speaking class. Findings showed that participants experienced a stronger motivation, self-confidence and English skills improvement in tiered performance tasks as assessment.

Additional research studies have focused on the effects of differentiated instructional strategies on students (positive effects on motivation, a great level of engagement in task solving, an increased level of creativity or collaboration among learners); while some others were preoccupied to identify ways in which differentiated teaching strategies are used in the classroom (Blamire, 2009; Johannessen, 2009; Pedersen et al, 2006; Comber et al, 2002, as cited on Nicolae, 2014, p. 427). Furthermore, Nicolae, (2014) suggested some studies which highlighted some implications of applying DI in the classroom. For instance, teachers encounter difficulties in accommodating students' individual differences by applying differentiation strategies in practice, and particularly in sustaining their use over time (e.g. Read, 1998; Schumm & Vaughn, 1991; Simpson & Ure, 1994; Ysseldyke, Thurlow, Wotruba & Nania, 1990; Westwood, 2001). The major challenges of differentiation include limited

preparation time, large class size, teachers' heavy workload, lack of resources, teachers' lack of skills in differentiation, and teachers' lack of motivation to differentiate (Chan, Chang, Westwood & Yuen, 2002; Scott, Vitale & Masten, 1998; Westwood, 2002).

Regarding technology, El-Hmoudova (2015) identified that a group of 223 bachelor students of Tourism Management do vary in their preference for particular learning styles with a great variety of learning style preferences. In the attempt to reflect the new revolutionary changes in educational processes, the researcher decided to convert the traditional paper –based preparation and study materials into the computer - based modules containing exercises and assessment tests of second language proficiency in Professional English language courses at the Department of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Informatics and Management, University of Hradec Kralove. The findings proved that students highly appreciate and prioritize the innovated study materials in Blackboard.

Ching Yang and Chen (2007) focused on the perceptions of different students regarding the integration of internet tools in English Language Learning. The subjects were 44 10th-grade male students and their teacher who together joined a technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) project in Taiwan. The study required both qualitative and quantitative analyses. It was done using interviews, questionnaires, self-evaluation, etc. The students liked and approved of learning English using the Internet, but had differing opinions about its benefits. The results of this case study could help EFL teachers create better learning environments regarding classroom management, assessment and curriculum design. Moreover, the authors argue that it is important to make students aware that learning English through multimedia technology demands new learning strategies and that self-directed learning may also be a useful first step.

Xu, et al. (2011) examined the effects of writing for digital storytelling on writing self-efficacy and on flow in the virtual world of Second Life. In this study, one of the groups

created their digital stories in Second Life, and the other group created their digital stories off-line with Windows Movie Maker. The participants were sixty-four undergraduate university students in South Korea. Through statistical analysis, they concluded that digital storytelling in Second Life is more effective than digital storytelling off-line. Writing self-efficacy and flow can be improved through actively engaging in writing for digital storytelling in a virtual-reality learning environment similar to Second Life.

Yi-Cheng et al. (2013) examined the factors that influence students' satisfaction with the use of web-based language learning systems (WBLL), and the causes and effects of such a virtual learning environment. This study used a cross-sectional survey of 306 college students. The empirical data collected were analyzed using the partial least squares (PLS) method. The findings demonstrated that college students show positive incline towards the use of the web-based language learning system for EFL courses and signify a possible benefit. Besides, the integration of internet technology and language learning curriculum has changed the focus from teacher-centered classrooms to student-centered environments.

Songkram (2015) studied an e-learning system in VLE to develop creative thinking for learners in higher education. This qualitative research study explored an e-learning system built up from theories, principals and research in educational background and then it was tested with thirty undergraduate students in Social Sciences and Humanities disciplines. For the qualitative data they were collected by attitude questionnaire. A t-test comparison of posttest and pretest of the sample group showed statistically significant difference at .05 level in creative thinking and the sample group revealed that they were satisfied with the e-learning system in VLE to develop creative thinking for learners in higher education.

Al-jafar (2004) investigated whether there were significant differences between EFL freshman students exposed to traditional in-class writing instruction depending on the textbook only, and those exposed to a combination of traditional in-class writing instruction

and web-based instruction in their writing achievement. A total of 113 EFL female freshman students in two intact groups participated in the study. Both studied the same writing textbook for 12 weeks. In addition, experimental students received online instruction in which they posted their own threads, short paragraphs, stories or poems on the discussion board. The results demonstrated that the use of web based instruction as a supplement to traditional in-class writing instruction was significantly more effective than writing instruction depending on the textbook alone. Web-based instruction proved to be an important factor in enhancing the writing quality of unskilled, low ability EFL students and resulted in a significant improvement in their post-test (achievement test) scores.

Although some studies have indicated that Virtual Learning Environments and web based instruction are beneficial for learning English as a foreign language, little attention has been given to the effect they have in the promotion of DI and there is no research related to DI in EFL learners in Colombia so far. Databases and journals such as Sciencedirect, Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, Google Scholar, Ikalá, Profile, Matices, EBSCOhost and Bookfi.org were consulted to come to this conclusion.

Setting and Rationale

This research study was conducted in a private school located in the outskirts of the city of Neiva, Huila. The total number of students enrolled during 2015 school year was 1050. This institution is well-known for being the biggest in the department of Huila, and also in the south-Colombian area. The school has a big campus for students to share and do different activities. The use of electronic devices to share with partners during break time is common among students (figure 1). Also they use them in class for different purposes. The school offers a significant amount of physical and technological resources for both teachers and students to use for academic purposes. For instance, there are two computer laboratories (Figure 2) equipped with 31 computers each for only secondary English classes.

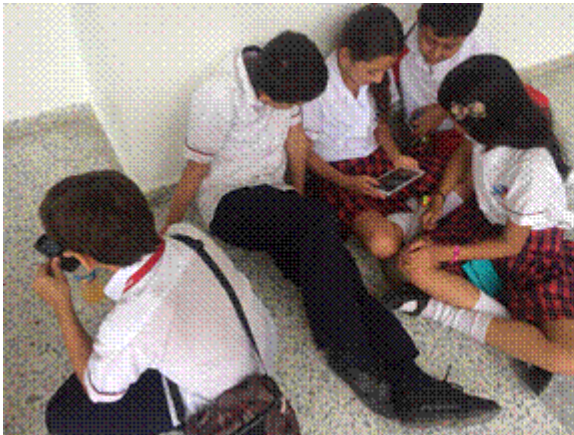


Figure1. Use of electronic devices during break time

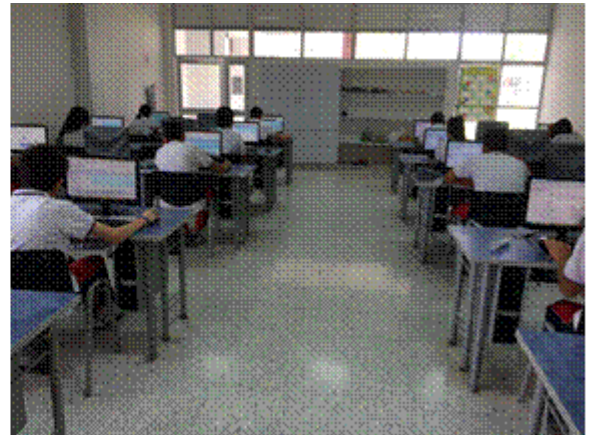


Figure 2. English computer

laboratory

Despite the fact that the school has two English language labs for secondary students with all the necessary resources for the classes, the instruction in English classes still bears some elements of traditional pedagogy. The data collected from surveys and interviews revealed that students are evaluated in the same way as their classmates; in addition, in their laboratory classes, there is a lack of innovative activities to foster their learning. There are large-size groups and textbook-based lessons which may affect the individual learning process. Thus, students learn in a decontextualized way. Since the target language is not used in daily communication in Colombia, there are few possibilities for practicing the language outside the school.

This research seeks to contribute to have a better understanding of the teaching-learning process in the Colombian context. In this case, we rely on exploring the effects that the implementation of Differentiated Instruction through an EFL Virtual Learning Environment have in the learning process. As researchers, we expect to provide evidence of an improvement in the instruction of English as a foreign language in different contexts. Teachers tend to be unaware of the difference in learning styles and pace despite the similarity in age. In this regard, Tomlinson (2001) affirms “Kids of the same age aren’t all alike when it

comes to learning, any more than they are alike in terms of size, hobbies, personality, or likes and dislikes. Kids do have many things in common because they are human beings and because they are all children, but they also have important differences” (p.1).

In addition, we hope to gain insights on the effectiveness of the DI through a VLE in the EFL community. In other words, we will try to identify a variety of features related to the teacher’s role and learning environment in the development of DI. It is essential to start changing the traditional instruction at schools if we want to give the same opportunities for all the students. The first step is to make teachers feel interested in applying DI in their teaching practices. At the local level, our research study attempts to be the first effort to differentiate the content, the process and the products according to the needs of the learners.

Research Question

Traditional instruction has been equated with teachers who teach to the middle or use the one-size-fits-all approach (Rock, Gregg, Ellis, & Gable, 2008). Therefore, "the traditional instruction makes our students develop low motivation and poor academic results. These results emerge because there is a lack of opportunities to practice the target language in real contexts" (Shu Ching Yang, Yi-Ju Chen, 2007). Moreover, limited practical activities that personalize learning for DI are common in our context (Hwang, Chu, Lin, & Tsai, 2011). This is because most of the classes are teacher centered and there is a decontextualized teaching methodology. In addition, web based learning seems not to be implemented properly in the English classes. Although this school has two English language labs, most lessons do not meet the needs of individual learners (Shu Ching Yang, Yi-Ju Chen (2007). On the other hand, despite the fact that there are many research studies demonstrating the effectiveness of DI approach on students’ achievement, many teachers in Colombia and especially in Huila do not take into account these results to provide a differentiated environment. Also, there are not enough studies that integrate DI and technology to support good teaching, innovative

activities and motivation through VLEs. In brief, this study aims at implementing DI through an EFL VLE. Hence, this study will answer the following research question: What are the effects of differentiated instruction through an EFL virtual learning environment on the learning process of tenth graders from a private school in Neiva?

Research Objectives

A primary aim of this research study is to explore the effects that the implementation of Differentiated Instruction through an EFL Virtual Learning Environment have in the learning process. Additionally, as specific objectives of this study are:

- To identify the teacher's role in the development of DI in an EFL VLE.
- To characterize the learning environment in the lessons where DI is implemented through a VLE.
- To gain insights on the EFL learning process of the students in Differentiated lessons through a VLE.
- To inquire on students' attitudes and opinions about VLE-based DI approach.

This means the research will clarify the features of DI that are involved when VLEs are used in language learning process of tenth graders in a private school in Neiva. This next section defines two main concepts in this research: differentiated instruction and EFL virtual learning environments, which will be introduced in chapter 2.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Chapter two presents a revision of the significant concepts in the implementation of DI through EFL VLEs.

After reviewing existing research studies and its implications in the educational context, it is necessary to understand what Differentiation and Virtual Learning Environments are. First, DI is an approach which focuses on addressing individual differences, learning styles, intelligences, etc. Bearne, (1996) and Tomlinson, (1999) stated that “differentiation shapes an approach to teaching in which teachers proactively modify curricula, teaching methods, resources, learning activities, and student products to address the diverse needs of individual students and small groups of students to maximize the learning opportunity for each student in a classroom” (as cited in Nicolae, 2014). Second, VLEs are part of Web-based learning. It provides a great amount of authentic materials, interaction, collaboration and it is very close to the real context where the target language is spoken. In this chapter, the constructs are broadly defined.

Differentiated Instruction

This model constitutes a different way to provide our students opportunities to learn according to their needs. Nowadays, some classroom sessions in Colombia follow a one-size-fits-all system, where students learn the same thing at the same time without knowing what they need, want or feel (Tomlinson 2000, p. 1). DI is a model where teachers have to take into account that all the students have differences. In this regard, Tomlinson (1999) affirms, “Teachers must be ready to engage students in instruction through different learning modalities, by appealing to differing interests, and by using varied rates of instruction along with varied degrees of complexity” (p.2).

Bearing this in mind, this concept allows teachers to adapt the content, process and products of lessons according to each student's readiness, skills, learning style, and interests. This means that this approach is flexible in four classroom elements that create DI. The first element is the content, which Tomlinson (1999) defines as "what she wants students to learn and the materials or mechanisms through which that is accomplished." (p. 11). To Tomlinson and Allan (2000), differentiating the content is to provide multiple ways to get the "facts, concepts, generalizations or principles, attitudes, and skills related to the subject, as well as materials that represent those elements" (p. 7).

The second element is the process; Tomlinson affirms that this is the way that students acquire information or knowledge. Teachers use different activities to help students to understand the main ideas and information taking into account students' skills. Teaching the process means "how" the students get the information. "To differentiate the process of learning, choices should be provided in expressing the concepts and facts" (Benjamin, 2006; Knowles, 2009; Levy, 2008; and Tomlinson, 2001, cited in Aliakbari & KhalesHaghighi, 2014).

The third element is the product. Products are vehicles through which students demonstrate and extend what they have learned (Tomlinson 1999, p.9). Students have options to express what they have learnt through different activities and in different ways for example individual or small group projects, instructional journals, open-ended tasks, tiered assignments, visual presentations, and written assessments.

The fourth element is the learning environment, where teachers can modify the environment to help students. Here, the teacher incorporates elements into the classroom to influence students' learning and expand their abilities to learn. Tomlinson, (2010) stated that the learning environment is of significant importance in promoting students' achievement (as cited in Aliakbari & KhalesHaghighi, 2014).

Some authors (Mulroy and Eddinger, (2003); Tomlinson, (2001a); Tomlinson and Kalbfleisch, (1998); Tuttle, (2000)) have also suggested that in this environment, “each student is valued for his or her unique strengths, while being offered opportunities to demonstrate skills through a variety of assessment techniques” (cited in Subban, 2006).

Students vary in readiness, interests and learning profile. According to Tomlinson, readiness is a student’s entry point relative to a particular understanding or skill (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 11). While some students are typically at their grade level, others may be performing at below the level of their peers, while still others are a year or so ahead (Tomlinson, 2001a). Tomlinson (2001a, 2003) argues that teachers should be able to discern the evolving readiness levels of students in their care and accommodate these by providing tasks that are neither too easy, nor too challenging (as cited in Subban, 2006).

Interests refer to a child’s affinity, curiosity, or passion for a particular topic or skill (Tomlinson, 1999, p 11.). Tomlinson (2001a) sees student interests as a powerful motivator, which wise teachers could take advantage of within the differentiated classroom. MacGillivray and Rueda (2001) proposed that teachers should find ways to engage students, by tapping into what interests students, and by involving students in the daily running of the classroom (as cited in Subban, 2006).

Learning profile has to do with how we learn. It may be shaped by intelligence preferences, gender, culture, or learning style (Tomlinson, 1999, p 11). Based on Tomlinson’s ideas, there are four categories of learning-profile factors, and teachers can use them to plan curriculum and instruction that fit learners. A student’s learning style, intelligence preference, gender, and culture can influence learning profile. (Tomlinson, 1995). The goals of learning-profile differentiation are to help individual learners understand modes of learning that work best for them, and to offer those options so that each learner finds a good learning fit in the classroom (Tomlinson, 1995).

Virtual Learning Environment

As part of web-based instruction, there are important components that have been used in the ground of education. One of them is called Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Pimentel (1999) defines a "virtual learning environment" as follows:

. . . “We define a *virtual learning environment* as one that allows learners to perceive the environment, assess situations and performance, perform actions and proceed through experiences and lessons that will allow them to perform better with more experience on repetition on the same task in similar circumstances” (p. 75).

This definition of a VLE emphasizes the importance of *learning*. Learners in a virtual environment are expected to make use of and include examples, observations, experiences, situations, rules, concepts and techniques in a continuous (e.g., day by day or week by week), permanent (i.e., committing knowledge into memory) fashion to improve the performance of the execution of tasks. (pp. 75-76 [print]; section IV, ¶ 3 [electronic]). In other words, a VLE is a useful tool that allows learners to experience the learning by themselves. A VLE is an opportunity to “normalize” technology in a classroom. It is “the office” of the class.

The VLE used in the present research study is Moodle. Moodle (*Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment*) is a free open-source learning management system or e-Learning platform that serves educators and learners across the globe. This platform has different tools and applications to use such as chats, forums, discussions, tests, assignments, lessons, wikies and quizzes, among others, which do not require specific computer skills. Moodle has numerous benefits. For instance, it fosters student learning and facilitates interactions between learners and between learners and teachers (Kavaliauskienė, 2011).

Through the use of VLEs, there is a change from teacher-centered to learner-centered classes. Fotos and Browne (2004) claim that the integration of internet technology and language learning curriculum has changed the focus from teacher-centered classrooms to student-centered environments giving the learner the power to have control over the lesson content and the learning process. The role of the teacher becomes a mediator instead of a tutor. The teacher is a facilitator of the resources and guidance of the learner through the discovery of new knowledge.

Hence, the previous research studies provide confirmatory evidence that VLEs promote autonomous learning by inciting learners to explore the world by themselves gaining mastery in the ICTs and choosing the content, the task and the best way to learn according to their learning styles, strategies and skills.

Teachers who invest time and effort to integrate technology into their differentiation practice can have many benefits in the classroom especially in content, process, products and learning environment. In this way, differentiation could become more interesting for teachers and appealing for students. In addition, DI with technology allows for the use all the strategies available on the web to create effective practices and improve students' learning.

Chapter 3

Methodological Design

Research Approach and Type of Study

This study is a qualitative action research that attempts to have a complete view of the effects of a particular approach in a natural setting. This research study focuses on obtaining information about the effects of DI through a VLE in a private school in the city of Neiva, Huila. It is important to say that this investigation follows the main features of an action research (AR). According to Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2010) “AR focuses on getting information that will enable teachers to change conditions in a particular situation in which they are personally involved” (p.14). In addition, O'Brien (2001) defines action research as a “learning by doing where a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if not satisfied, try again” (p. 1). This kind of research helps to have a better understanding of a particular situation through the implementation of a plan. And this plan allows to develop clear insights about the process of this implementation. Moreover, AR is suitable to apply when teachers want to improve their teaching practice and overcome common problems in their particular situations.

Participants

Tenth grade enrollment for the 2015 school year was 58 students who were divided in two groups 1001 and 1002. Only the students enrolled and present for the five sessions of the research study were included in the population. The participants in this sample were 29 students from grade 1001, 58.6% females (17 students) and 41.4 % males (12 students) with an average age between 14 – 17 years old. All the participants' differences are taken into account when the differentiated instruction is used. Differences are the basic elements in teaching and learning in differentiated classrooms because every student has particular learning styles, interests, skills, levels of readiness and experiences. There was an initial

meeting where discretion of the study was discussed, and participants received a confidentiality agreement. Also, parents received informed consent (see appendix A) paperwork and they were given the possibility to accept or decline the invitation for participation.

Research Instruments

A qualitative action research (AR) design was conducted over a five-session period. Several qualitative instruments were designed to collect the data in this research study. It is important to clarify that instruments have been grouped into two sets. The first set included surveys and tests because DI provides opportunities to meet the students' needs but it is necessary to have a complete profile of each student prior to the pedagogical intervention. Hence, in the first-week session a survey inquiring on students' interests was applied (see appendix B). The purposes of this survey were to learn more about students' interests and collect significant information that helps to differentiate the instruction in the lessons. Then, a multiple intelligences test was conducted (see appendix C) and two English diagnostic tests were used, one at the initial stage and another at the end (see appendix D and E). In addition, a digital competences survey was applied at the beginning of the research (see appendix F). This survey was necessary because each session in the pedagogical intervention was carried out using a virtual learning environment (Moodle). During these sessions participants had to perform different tasks where they had to employ their digital competences. For that reason, the digital competences test was needed to have a clear overview of participants' abilities using digital technologies, such as ICTs skills, technology skills and information technology skills.

The second set included three instruments that were used during the pedagogical intervention: field notes, interviews and the teacher's journals that were used while and after the four sessions of the pedagogical intervention during this study. The first instrument used

during the intervention was field notes (see appendix G); according to Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2010), “these are the detailed notes researchers take in the educational setting (classroom or school) as they observe what is going on or as they interview their informants. They are the researchers’ written account of what they hear, see, experience, and think in the course of collecting and reflecting on their data” (p.512). During the field notes process an assistant researcher was used to provide more reliability of the researcher’s observations. The field note format used in this study consisted of two sections, a descriptive and reflective part. In the descriptive section, the researcher characterizes the setting, participants, and the students’ behaviors according to what the researcher observes. In the reflective section, the researcher commented or interpreted what he or she observes. These aspects were taken into account in the field notes during the sessions: students’ attitude in class, student’s behaviors, student’s use of VLE, teacher’s role, quality of materials used in class and computer’s effects on students.

The second instrument was group interviews (see appendix H), Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2010) affirm that “interviewing the participants in a study can be a valid and productive way to assess the accuracy of observations” (p, 594). A semi-structured interview was applied at the end of each session (small group of participants, six people), participants answered a group of questions related to their opinion and experiences in the classroom. All Participants had the opportunity to take part in the interviews because they were selected randomly in each session without repeating turns. The questions were intended to identify the effects of the lessons on students according to their opinions.

The third instrument was a teacher’s journal (see appendix I), as the nature of the research question is related to the effects of DI through a VLE, the use of the teacher’s journal was required. Richards (1991) defined the goals of journal writing as “to provide a record of the significant learning experiences that have taken place, to help the participant come into

touch and keep in touch with the self-development process, to provide the participants with an opportunity to express, in a personal and dynamic way” (p. 5). This instrument is a personal diary where we write our significant or dissatisfactory experiences about teaching and learning. However, it is not just a writing exercise; it is a critical reflection where we reflect on events that happened in our classes. All of these instruments were developed and adjusted for the context, record behaviors, attitudes, perceptions, activities and situations related to relevant aspects during each session (methodology, group work, VLE, materials, teacher’s role).

Instructional Design

The pedagogical design emerged as a response to the possible traditional instruction approach in the English classroom, despite the amount of physical and technological resources available in private schools. The research design was comprised of two cycles, each one composed of two sessions, where a new approach “differentiated instruction” was implemented through a VLE to meet the needs of all students in a particular classroom. According to Valiande, Kyriakides & Koutselini (2011) “The theory of differentiated instruction is based mainly on the theory of social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) and emphasizes the active participation of students in the learning process where the construction of knowledge emerges due to the interactions of students with their environment (other students, teachers, knowledge, educational material etc)” (p.3). In addition, Bearne (1996) affirmed, “differentiation can be defined as the instructive approach by which teachers modify the curriculum, their teaching methods, the educational sources used, the learning activities and the evaluation methods according to and in correspondence with students’ differentiated needs, in order to maximize the learning opportunities for every student” (as cited in Valiande, Kyriakides & Koutselini 2011) (p.3). Therefore, the pedagogical intervention applied a groundbreaking, nonstop reflective procedure of teaching and learning that cannot

be met by traditional lesson plans. In this case, Valiande (2010) assures “The planning and the instructional choices of a lesson plan based on differentiation can only be used effectively when chosen by the teacher, according to students’ needs, learning style, interests, talents and skills” (as cited in Valiande, Kyriakides & Koutselini 2011) (p.3).

Our main Instructional objective during the intervention was to provide equal opportunities for all students to have access to the curriculum. This means all themes used in class will be adapted according to the students’ level, abilities and learning styles to provide many ways of learning to each student. Moreover, our specific objectives were to create a comfortable learning environment for students, and to motivate the learning of English as students increase the power of action. This power is the autonomy that students will gain because they would decide what and how learn the different lessons, and they will choose how can be evaluated.

Instructional Stages

Before the two cycles of this action research began, there was a session where several surveys (students’ interest, learning styles and digital competences) and tests (English proficiency, multiple intelligences) were applied. These instruments were designed to obtain an integral profile of each participant based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile. On the first hand, the information gathered through the instruments listed above contributed to differentiate four classroom elements: content, process, products and learning environment. Every element provides opportunities for the teacher to reach out students individually, because the teaching process can vary according to students’ needs and create more opportunities to acquire new knowledge. On the other hand, these tests were used to create a group classification based on students’ proficiency and learning styles. As a result, the group of participants was divided in three subgroups: advanced, intermediate and basic students, who had similarities in their English level and multiple intelligences. However, subgroups

were named by colors to avoid rivalry and discrepancies among students, for instance, yellow (advanced students), orange (intermediate students) and green (basic students). The participants were divided in groups to create an environment of collaboration and support where all of them felt equal and useful because they were in the same English proficiency level. Then, the first cycle of the action research started. In this cycle two class sessions were used to implement the differentiated methodology. During these sessions, lesson plans were used and designed based on students' readiness, interest, learning profile as well as the three important elements in the DI approach, content, process and product (see appendix D).

According to Tomlinson (2001), differentiating content refers to "what you teach and what students learn" (p, 51). This means that teachers vary content according to students' needs and readiness; also teachers provide different channels to gain access to the content.

Differentiating process according to Tomlinson (2001) is related to "how students think about or make sense of ideas and information" (p, 51). In this case teachers plan the activities that students can do to understand the appropriate content. In addition, teachers support flexible grouping to allow dynamic classroom and a range of whole-class, small-group and individualized activities. Differentiating products according to Tomlinson (2001) refers to "how students show what they know" (p, 51). Final projects were used to experiment, apply and extend what students have learned in a lesson. It is paramount to say that the whole pedagogical intervention was carried out through a VLE (Moodle platform) trying to motivate and encourage students to participate and learn while enjoying the English class, During the first cycle, data was collected using three sources, field notes, group interviews, teacher's journal which are the primary documents in the hermeneutic units. After the first cycle, there was a continuous and systematic reflection on the data in order to obtain findings related to the research problem. Then an action plan was designed to select a line of action for the next

cycle (two more sessions). Finally, new data about the effects of DI through a VLE were gathered to analyze and interpret and elaborate a second plan of action.

Theory of language and language learning. During this research study, the theory that informs the vision of the nature of language in the whole study and the pedagogical intervention applying the DI approach through an EFL VLE is the self-expression perspective. According to Tudor (2001), this theory highlights the role of language as an instrument to accomplish not only the practical goals achieved in the functional perspective. He clarifies language acts “as a means by which individuals build personal relationships, express feelings, desires, preferences, interests, and so on” (p. 69). This means that learners discover a sense of personal significance in their language study, Tudor (2001) affirms that learners “use the language for both a specific transactional goal or pragmatic purpose and for self-expression” (p. 69). During this perspective of language, learners have the chance to compile their own personal list of things to do for their language learning. The vision of language learning in this theory has many similarities with the DI approach, because there is not a predetermined content, process or assessment but alternately learners can acquire or be involved in the language knowledge around ideas or subjects related to their own needs or interest.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Findings

The process of data analysis was carried out following the content analysis techniques. According to Krippendorff (1969), content analysis is “the use of replicable and valid method for making specific inferences from text to other properties of the source” (p. 103). This means that common characteristics have been identified in the data collected through the instruments. On the other hand, Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun (2012) affirm, “Content analysis is a technique that enables researchers to study human behavior in an indirect way. A researcher needs to organize a large amount of material by developing appropriate categories, ratings, or scores that can be used for subsequent comparison in order to illuminate what he or she is investigating” (p. 478). In this study, the data was generated from different sources or instruments such as field notes, interviews and teacher journals in order to determine the effects of the implementation of Differentiated Instruction through an EFL Virtual Learning Environment. Then the transcripts of the three instruments were analyzed using the software Atlas.ti. The researchers proceeded to make inferences in a systematic and objective process to obtain coding units from the instruments. This process is called triangulation and is used to validate the data. In this research study, the triangulation process was supported by the software Atals.ti (version 6.9). After deciding the coding units, it was necessary to analyze and process these codes to infer the main categories and sub-categories that would help to answer the research question. Taking into account this content analysis approach, four main categories were inferred, as shown in figure 1.

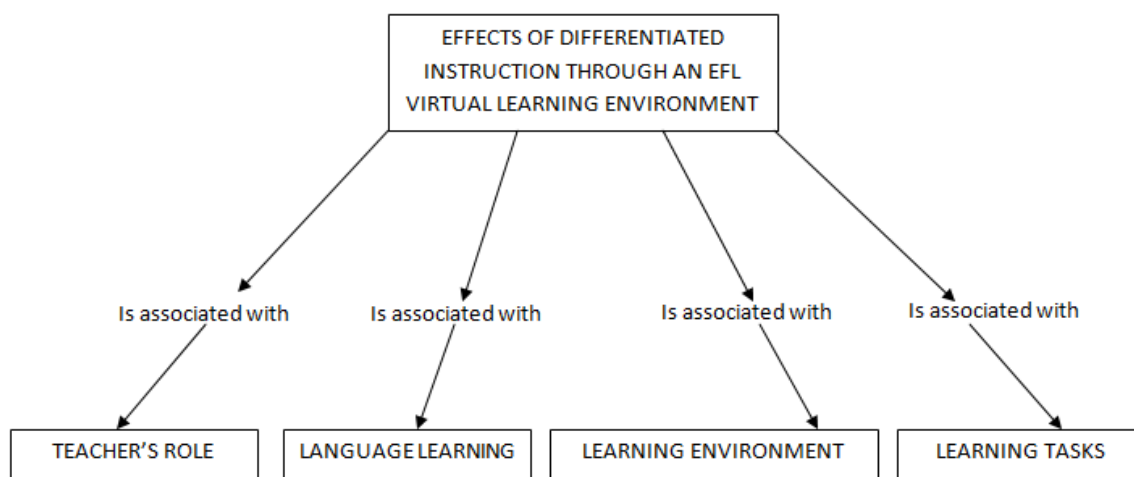


Figure 3: Atlas.ti. Main categories

The results determined that the implementation of a DI through an EFL virtual learning environment (VLE) has effects on certain aspects of the teaching-learning process. These aspects are the four main categories in our research study: language learning, teacher's role, learning tasks and learning environment.

Teacher's role

The teacher had a fundamental function during this process. As stated in the theoretical framework, Tomlinson (1999) claimed that “differentiation shapes an approach to teaching in which teachers proactively modify curricula, teaching methods, resources, learning activities, and student products to address the diverse needs of individual students and small groups of students to maximize the learning opportunity for each student in a classroom” (as cited in Nicolae, 2014).

The teacher performed the following actions during the pedagogical intervention:

- The teacher as the provider of strategies. The teacher is regarded as that person who cares about the students' attitudes and concerns in order to provide feedback

or take actions in case difficulties arise. She had a positive attitude towards the learning process of the students. The instructions given at the beginning of the class influenced a lot the achievement of the main objectives of the lesson. When the teacher provides clear and precise directions before each task students can perform the activities with more accuracy and easiness. In the following excerpt, we can evidence how fundamental was this role for the students:

Excerpt: *“During the development of the class, the teacher's role was essential and relevant, as she encouraged the students building their confidence and friendship to feel more comfortable. Moreover, it should be emphasized how important it was for students the explanation given by the teacher for the development of each activity, besides doing it in a great way, the teacher was very attentive of each student, attending to their concerns and clarifying ideas”.* (Field notes).

Enunciado: *“Durante el desarrollo de la clase, el papel del profesor fue esencial y relevante, ya que alentó a los estudiantes que construyen su confianza y amistad para que se sintieran más cómodos. Por otra parte, hay que destacar la importancia que tuvo para los estudiantes la explicación dada por el maestro para el desarrollo de cada actividad, además de hacerlo en una gran forma, la profesora estuvo muy atenta de cada alumno, atendiendo a sus preocupaciones y aclarando ideas”* (Notas de campo).

As can be seen in the excerpt, there are some characteristics that a teacher should have in the differentiated lessons. Having a positive attitude, providing clear directions and having a positive attitude are important factors that help students build their self confidence in the class.

-The teacher as a problem anticipator. The teacher is always anticipating the needs of the students by thinking of a back-up plan in case something would not work. This is very important when working with technology due to the common breakdowns that occur whether

related to the power service or the quality of the internet. In the following excerpt the teacher shows preparation and planning for possible future constraints with the lesson:

Excerpt: *“Some extra activities were posted in case some of them finished before the time expected but it did not happen”*. (Teacher’s journal).

Enunciado: *“Algunas actividades adicionales fueron publicadas en el caso de que algunos de ellos terminado antes de la hora prevista, pero no fue así”* (Diario del profesor).

Thinking of a "plan B" is a crucial aspect in the implementation of differentiated lessons due to the number of difficulties that may emerge during the lessons. The teacher needs to be prepared to fix any problem regarding technology, materials or students.

Since the teacher is one of the active participants of this process, it is necessary that she/he has a positive attitude, availability, resourcefulness, and creativity to work with this methodology. That is because DI requires time and effort to motivate students and create lessons that fit their learning needs. Tomlinson (1999) affirms, “Teachers must be ready to engage students in instruction through different learning modalities, by appealing to differing interests, and by using varied rates of instruction along with varied degrees of complexity” (p.2). In this case, the teacher always showed a positive attitude to explain the different activities to the students.

Excerpt: *“In each activity developed in the classroom, she helped the students all the time with some instructions, explained them some unknown words and gave them ideas about the topic”*. (Field notes).

Enunciado: *“En cada actividad desarrollada en el aula, la profesora ayudó a los estudiantes todo el tiempo con algunas instrucciones, les explicó algunas palabras desconocidas y les dio ideas sobre el tema”* (Notas de campo).

-The teacher as a facilitator: the DI methodology is student-centered rather than teacher-centered. The teacher was in charge of guiding and helping the students during the

development of the activities. The students were in charge of their own learning process, they decided what activities to do according to their learning styles, interests and levels of readiness. Bearing the above in mind, the discipline of the class was good because each participant was in charge of doing the assigned task (which was interesting for them) and they did not have time to misbehave. It is evidenced in the following excerpt:

Excerpt: *“These were activities to practice vocabulary, grammar, listening and writing. In this part, each student was able to choose the activities that he/she wanted to do according to their learning needs and interests” (Teacher’s journal).*

Enunciado: “Estas fueron las actividades para practicar el vocabulario, la gramática, la escucha y la escritura. En esta parte, cada estudiante fue capaz de elegir las actividades que él / ella quería hacer de acuerdo a sus necesidades e intereses de aprendizaje” (Diario del profesor).

When the students have the opportunity to choose what they want to learn, they grow in their autonomy and their ability to lead their own learning process. Furthermore, they feel more comfortable with the material they choose which is important to strengthen their motivation to learn.

-The reflective teacher: An important effect that the implementation of DI through an EFL VLE on the teacher’s role is the reflection. DI brings the teacher to be in constant reflection in how to solve the different constraints presented during the lessons. This was necessary to make changes from one cycle to the next in the action research study during the pedagogical intervention. Through reflection, the different lessons were adapted to fix previous constraints that arose in the class. Also, it helped the teacher to analyze important aspects in the learning process of each student.

Excerpt: *“I cannot expect all my students to learn the grammar structures of the past simple and the vocabulary of soccer in a single class. I know they need more time to practice,*

real life situations, and a context in which they can practice what they have learnt.

Consequently, I'll plan one more class to continue practicing until I see my students have a more clear idea of the content" (Teacher's journal).

Enunciado: *"No puedo esperar que todos mis estudiantes aprendan las estructuras gramaticales del pasado simple y el vocabulario de fútbol en una sola clase. Yo sé que necesitan más tiempo para practicar, situaciones de la vida real, y un contexto en el que se pueda practicar lo que han aprendido. En consecuencia, voy a planear una clase más para seguir practicando hasta que vea mis alumnos tengan una idea más clara de los contenidos" (Diario del profesor).*

Based on the previous ideas, the data obtained indicated that the different roles of the teacher play a crucial function in the implementation of DI in the lessons. Actions like providing strategies, anticipating to the problems, facilitating the learning process and reflecting upon every single element of the classes help students develop motivation, self confidence and autonomous learning. These are positive aspects for achieving meaningful learning in the EFL lessons.

Learning environment

In the DI classroom, the environment is a feature that influences the learning process in every single student that inhabits it. When we refer to a differentiated classroom, this aspect seems to have an even more preponderant effect in learning. According to Tomlinson (2001), "Classroom environment in a setting that strives for differentiation is, if anything, even more of a factor in shaping success. A differentiated classroom should support, and is supported by, an evolving community of learners" (p. 21). This means that a differentiated classroom environment encourages students to improve their abilities and learning practices; likewise, students contribute to the learning success of their classmates when they assist each other. According to the participants' statements, the use of a VLE with DI allows for an

environment that is suitable for learning. When we use a VLE with a differentiated instruction the atmosphere is more collaborative and dynamic. The students recognized that their learning and interactions with their classmates are reinforced while they are acquiring knowledge.

Enunciado: ” (S 23) *fue una experiencia muy buena, pudimos tener un ambiente diferente al de todas las clases. Compartir más con los diferentes compañeros y... y expresarnos y dar nuestros puntos de vista y nuestros gustos*” (Entrevista 1)

Excerpt: “(S 23) *It was a very good experience; we could have a different atmosphere from all classes. We share more with different colleagues and ... and express ourselves and give our views and our tastes*” (interview 1)

Enunciado: “(S 28) *nos pareció muy divertida porque cada uno podía aportar ideas diferentes, ayudarnos, apoyarnos, compartir ideas y nos gusta a todos trabajar en grupo*” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: “(S:28) *we found it very funny because everyone could bring different ideas, help, support, we share ideas and we all like working in groups*” (Group interview).

It is important to clarify that the learning environment during the four sessions of the study was somehow different from the environment of a traditional classroom with just chairs and a whiteboard. An English laboratory was used because students were going to work with a VLE. And therefore some special arrangements were to be implemented. First, participants were divided into three groups according to their English level: beginner, intermediate and advanced but we decided to name each group using colors (green, yellow and orange) to avoid rivalry. Second, participants could sit wherever they wanted, a pattern that is not quite common in regular classes, but which may render great benefits. As Tomlinson (1999) claims, “Flexible and comfortable seating options provide a kind of welcome as well” (p.21).

Excerpt: “the class took place in the laboratory, where students were pleased to arrive because the place was clean and very organized” (Field notes 2)

Enunciado: *“La clase se llevó a cabo en el laboratorio, donde los estudiantes se mostraron complacidos de llegar porque el lugar estaba limpio y muy bien organizado”* (notas de campo 2)

Excerpt: *“after that we went to the computer laboratory. A virtual learning environment (VLE) was set for them using the Moodle platform. The computers were classified by the 3 colors previously assigned, so students had the chance to sit at the computer they wanted according to their color and also to work in pairs or individual”* (Field notes 1).

Enunciado: *“Después de eso fuimos al laboratorio. Un entorno virtual de aprendizaje (EVA) se estableció para ellos utilizando la plataforma Moodle. Los computadores fueron clasificados en 3 colores asignados previamente, por lo que los estudiantes tuvieron la oportunidad de sentarse en el computador que querían en función de su color y también para trabajar en parejas o individualmente”* (Notas de campo 1)

Third, the learning environment was enjoyable and interesting for students because contents and topics used in the platform were related to participants' interests and they were given the opportunity to choose the content and the learning process. This kind of flexibility provided by the use of a VLE contributes to shape the participants' autonomy and interest for learning. In this case, the platform offered choices of content, for example the teacher organized the lessons at multiple points of choice so that participants could choose the resource of materials and the channel to retrieve the information (audio, video or text); they could also choose how to present the final product.

Enunciado: *“(S5) me gustó mucho la de la variedad de temas que digamos hay unas personas que a las mujeres les gusta mandarle cartas a los famosos y es una motivación, me gusta esto y lo que me gusta hacer es eso...es una motivación para aprender el inglés y*

también lo de los comics como que a uno le gusta cómo hacer películas y así y esas cosas como que lo motivan a uno” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S4) I liked the variety of topics, there are some people, women like to send letters to celebrities and it is a motivation, I like this and what I like to do is that ... it is a motivation to learn English and I like making films, comics and stuff like that motivates me” (Group interview).*

Enunciado: *“(S7) eh... la experiencia me pareció como entretenida, siii jaja entretenida y me pareció pues diferente... variar las diferentes actividades que se ponen” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S7) ah... I found the experience as fun, entertaining haha and I found it different ... vary the different activities that are used” (Group interview).*

Undoubtedly, we can affirm that the place where lessons took place (English lab) contributed significantly to enhance the participants' motivation because the students were highly interested in using technology in the English classes.

Enunciado: *“(S1) a mí me gusta mucho trabajar así virtualmente porque es que la verdad me da mucha pereza escribir, entonces cuando estoy en el computador es algo chévere, pues o sea, el espacio todo se integran y es como más cómodo trabajar y pues por ejemplo yo trabajo mejor estando cómoda y entonces como que... el lugar de trabajo me gustó” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S1) I like a lot to work virtually because the truth I'm too lazy to write, so when I'm on the computer it is something cool, so the space and everything is integrated and it is comfortable because I work better... I liked the workplace” (Group interview).*

When participants showed an interest to participate they did not feel scared of asking, instead they felt safe. For instance, participants asked for help every time they needed because they were in a group where all the students had the same language proficiency level and

supported each other when necessary. In this regard, Tomlinson (1999) assures, “Safety means that when I try a new skill, expend effort, or take a risk with a creative idea, I won’t be thought of as foolish or stupid. Safety happens when you feel accepted as you are, and valued enough so that people want to help you become even better” (p. 22). In the following excerpt, we can evidence how students’ participation was influenced in the classroom:

Excerpt: “the academic environment was very energetic, as students arrived happy and very anxious to receive the class. They settled into their places quickly and put all their focus on their learning process. And thanks to the students interest in the development of the class, it was possible to obtain a constant participation from them” (Field notes).

Enunciado: “el entorno académico fue muy energético, ya que los estudiantes llegaron felices y muy ansiosos por recibir la clase. Se acomodaron en sus lugares de forma rápida y pusieron toda su atención en su proceso de aprendizaje. Y gracias al interés los estudiantes en el desarrollo de la clase, fue posible obtener una constante participación de ellos” (Notas de campo)

As the learning environment is one of the four classroom elements that create differentiated instruction taking into account Tomlinson’s concept (1999), we could recognize that how the classroom looks and how it is perceived impacted participants’ performance. During the four sessions when differentiated instruction was applied through a VLE, the lessons were developed in an English lab where computers were well organized; at the same time, there was an attempt to always decorate the classroom according to the topic of the lesson in each session.

Excerpt: “This time, the topic was Halloween. I wanted my students to feel in a contextualized environment, so I decorated the computer laboratory with items related to this celebration. When my students entered, they saw the decoration and were surprised to see this in their class” (Teacher’s journal).

Enunciado: *“En esta ocasión, el tema fue Halloween. Yo quería que mis estudiantes se sientan en un entorno contextualizado, por lo que decoré el laboratorio con elementos relacionados a esta celebración. Cuando mis estudiantes entraron, vieron la decoración y se sorprendieron al ver esto en su clase” (Diario del profesor).*

Further, in a differentiated learning environment, participants worked with more enthusiasm when they used computers; moreover, they felt more confident and useful because the platform provided clear instructions, so participants knew what to do, how to do it and what was expected of everyone in the classroom. On the basis of Tomlinson’s (1999) statement that “a meaningful contribution from every group member, it is not likely to occur when some members of the group have all the answers and skills and others clearly have a comparative deficit in knowledge and skills” (p. 26). It seems fair to suggest that there is a more meaningful and comfortable environment in the classroom as a result of participants working with a partner with a similar readiness level, where everybody can contribute to the group using the skills they have.

Excerpt: “during the activities the environment was peaceful, everyone worked at their own pace, ones faster than others, but all of them were focused on the activity” (Teacher’s journal).

Enunciado: *“durante las actividad, el ambiente fue pacífico, todos trabajaban a su propio ritmo, unos más rápidos que otros, pero todos ellos se han centrado en la actividad” (Diario del profesor).*

On the other hand, a closer look at the data indicates that when the differentiated instruction is used through a VLE, it is important to set the context before the lessons take place. As researchers, we consider that a satisfactory learning environment could be possible if the teacher prepares equipment, materials and activities well in advance. It is necessary that all the activities that are going to be used in the platform be ready to be developed by each

participant. In addition, good physical conditions of the classroom and tools influence the student's behavior and performance as we can illustrate in the following extracts.

Excerpt: *“the laboratory was very comfortable for the students to work. This place is in good conditions. The majority of the computers are working and there are enough for each student” (Teacher's journal).*

Enunciado: *“el laboratorio era muy cómodo para los estudiantes a trabajar. Este lugar está en buenas condiciones. La mayoría de los equipos están trabajando y hay suficiente para cada estudiante” (Diario del profesor).*

Excerpt: *“The class took place in the laboratory, where students were pleased to arrive because the place was clean and very organized” (Field notes).*

Enunciado: *“la clase se llevó a cabo en el laboratorio, donde los estudiantes se mostraron complacidos de llegar porque el lugar estaba limpio y muy bien organizado” (Notas de campo).*

However, as the differentiated instruction approach changes many features in the way that lessons are taught, there are participants that felt uncomfortable or insecure in this learning environment. The traditional teaching-learning process changed in each session, so some participants responded negatively because they were used to such classroom practices (whole class, written workshops, direct questions to the teacher without listening classmates' suggestions). This kind of reactions may emerge in a classroom where a non-traditional teaching approach is implemented, which was the case in the present study of a DI through a VLE.

Enunciado: *“(S3) yo creo que estoy de acuerdo con mi compañera porque la verdad estar en un computador, así sea en la plataforma nos vamos a meter al traductor entonces no vamos a estar, o sea, vamos ya a saber cosas que no, entonces es mejor como la fotocopia...”*

o sea, es como muy diferente, o sea a mí la verdad la plataforma, es un ambiente diferente pero la verdad casi no me gusta” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S3) I think I agree with my colleague because the truth being on a computer, whether on the platform, we are going to use the translator. We already know things that are not, then you better use a photocopy ... I mean, it's very different, for me the truth, the platform is a different atmosphere but I almost do not like” (Group interview).*

Enunciado: *“(S2) si, yo he visto, no pues, digamos yo trato de manejar más esa forma y todo porque estamos en tecnología y nos tratamos de meter en YouTube a ver cosas y todo, entonces nos desconcentramos... entonces es como que, para mí yo no, no, pues es como un repaso, pero no aprendo tanto como que usted nos explique en clase a todos, porque queda muy difícil que usted se ponga a explicar a uno por uno lo que uno no entiende, entonces yo pienso que aprendemos más en clase con todos y que cada uno da su opinión y la expresa delante de cada uno” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S2) I try to handle more that way because we are in technology and we try to use youtube to see things and everything, but we are not focused on... then it's not for me no, no. It is like a review, but I do not learn as much as you explain to us in class at all, because it is very difficult for you to explain one by one what we do not understand, then I think we learn more in class when everyone gives his opinion and express it in front of others” (Group interview).*

In brief, the learning environment becomes an essential component when teachers apply the DI approach through an EFL VLE in their classrooms. When DI is implemented in the English classroom we can notice positive changes during the learning process. First, the partnership is strengthened because students can work with partners with a similar readiness level. In addition, students feel more comfortable because they can participate in different activities, where they consider themselves as useful participants because there is an

atmosphere where they show their skills. Second, the DI through a VLE creates an environment where autonomy, interest, enthusiasm and confidence are features implied in each student. This is possible because a satisfactory learning environment emerge when students' particularities are taken into account in the classroom.

Language learning

According to Smith and Throne (2009), "differentiated instruction plays a significant role in classrooms. Due to its focus on modification of instruction for student diversity, student accountability for learning, and constructivist (student-centered) learning, differentiated instruction provides the flexibility teachers and students need" (p. 29).

In this case, when DI is applied through a VLE in a classroom, there are two distinct attitudes when students try to learn the language. On the first hand, some students value working with different classmates. This means that some students totally agree with the idea of sharing with their peers what they know about the topic, because they feel more comfortable and curious to know what the other understand. Thus, we can affirm that language learning possibly has changed from a teacher-centered perspective to a student-centered perspective. Where there is a new relationship in the classroom because it is not just the relationship between teacher and students, now it is possible to evidence an interchange of knowledge among students.

Enunciado: "(S23) *Pues me pareció interesante, porque podía aprender nuevas cosas de los compañeros, también podría saber cómo que cosas más les gusta, también podía comunicarme más en inglés, y ayudarnos y yo también aprender*" (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: "(S23) *Well I found it interesting, because I could learn new things from peers, you might also know how things like that, it could also communicate more in English, and help and I also learn*" (Group interview).

Enunciado: *“(S1) pues a mí realmente me gusta trabajar mucho en parejas porque aparte que uno por ejemplo piensa por uno mismo, escucha la opinión de la otra persona y entre los dos complementan para tener una mejor respuesta, a mí personalmente me gusta mucho la verdad, me gustan actividades de este tipo ya que los dos pudimos aportar, cosas que yo no sabía, ella como que complementaba y entre las dos hacíamos la actividad”* (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S1) I really like to work hard in pairs because I can think by myself, listen to the opinion of the other person and the group complement each other to have a better answer. I personally really like, I like activities such as these, the two could bring things I did not know, my partner complemented and between the two did the activity”* (Group interview).

The interchange of knowledge among students makes possible the interaction in English where language is the vehicle to know other people. When students share their knowledge, feelings and interests it is possible that the language learning could be performed in a natural and enjoyable way because students express their opinions to contribute in the development of their classmates.

In addition, collaborative work has a noteworthy effect in language learning through differentiated instruction in VLE. The analysis of the data showed that participants recognized that classmates' help was an important factor to have better results, because everyone could contribute with their ideas. When participants were developing the activities in the platform, a feeling of comfort and engagement could be noticed due perhaps to the fact that each one of the activities was designed according to their English proficiency. This environment was suitable to have negotiation of meaning where everybody felt valuable having an important role in the different projects assigned in the platform. Consequently, this is a great advantage in a differentiated classroom because most of the students can be involved in the activities.

Enunciado: *“nos pareció muy divertido porque cada uno podía aportar ideas diferentes, ayudarnos, apoyarnos, compartir ideas y nos gusta a todos trabajar en grupo”* (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“We found it very funny because everyone could bring different ideas, help, support, share ideas and we all like working in groups”* (Group interview).

On the second hand, some students reject peers. This means that some learners do not like to work in groups; they feel more comfortable when they work alone because they do not feel the need to share ideas to clarify what they do not understand. Moreover, when students work alone they focus easily on the different activities in class and sometimes they have a better performance because they work faster individually than in group.

Enunciado: *“(S6) acá es muy chévere porque cuando tiene una palabra ahí y no entiende entonces uno puede preguntarle a una persona, entonces toca interrumpirle la clase a otra persona, ¿no? En el salón, entonces cojo un computador entro a internet y busco la palabra, entonces ahí no interrumpo a nadie, trabajo yo y trabajan los compañeros”* (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S6) Here, it is very cool because when you have a doubt about a word then you can ask a person so I have to interrupt the class to another person, right? In the classroom, so I use a computer to search on internet the word. Then I do not interrupt anyone, I can work and my partners work”* (Group interview).

Enunciado: (S13) *“yo también trabajé individual y pues la parte del ejercicio de los compañeros yo también le preguntaba a cualquiera de mi grupo...y pues me gusta trabajar individual porque más rápido o sea más de pensar”* (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S13) I also worked individually and as part of the exercise with my partners, I would also ask any of my group ... because I like to work individually, it is faster and I can think deeper”* (Group interview)

Enunciado: “(S3) pues a mí me gusta trabajar en parejas pero pues haciéndolo sola como que me concentro más y como que así avanzo muy poquito” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: “(S3) because I like to work in pairs but, when I work alone, I concentrate more and I advance a little”(Group interview)

Taking into account these two attitudes in a DI classroom, it is advisable to provide students with free options to choose in our classes. Since, the main concern in the DI approach is to encourage significant growth in all students through an adaptability in content, process and product. In this sense, Tomlinson (2001) assure that:

The pattern of instruction in a differentiated classroom could be represented by mirror images of a wavy line, with students coming together as a whole group to begin a study, moving out to pursue learning in small groups or individually, coming back together to share and make plans for additional investigation, moving out again for more work, coming together again to share or review, and so on. (p. 5).

If we analyze the students’ behaviors named above, we can assure that each group of students is essentially different and DI encourages the modification of teaching to address student diversity. However, there is not just a change in the way of teaching; there is an awareness of learning differences among students and the disparate strategies they can use to learn better in the classroom. In fact, the DI approach allows students to be aware that they learn in different ways since all the activities are adapted to learning styles, interest, readiness and proficiency of each student. This can be evident in the following fragment:

Enunciado: “(S7) ehhm bueno lo de las paletas, también lo de escoger qué forma de trabajo tenías que hacer, como por lo menos yo escogí como escribir la carta y ya...pero por lo menos Arce que dibuja, puede escoger lo de hacer el comic, y pues esas son las formas de aprender para diferentes personas y también que le motiven en cierto sentido” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: “(S7) *ehhm the exercise with the sticks is good, also to choose what kind of work you had to do. I chose writing the letter and longer ... but at least Arce who draws, he can choose to do the comic, and those are ways of learning for different people that motivate you in a variety of ways*” (Group interview)

In the same way, language learning is encouraged during the DI activities through the VLE. First, students feel motivated because their differences are being taken into account in each class. Second, Participants recognize this new methodology as different and interesting because lessons and activities were varied according to students’ differences. In addition, themes were familiar for them since they were related to participants’ daily life.

Enunciado: “(S1) *...que estos temas son de más interés para nosotros como jóvenes, que se trabajó de una manera mucho más didáctica, no fue solo estar ahí escribiendo escribiendo sino también haciendo actividades diferentes*” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: “(S1) *these issues are of most interest for us as young people, we worked in a more didactic way, it was not just being there writing and writing but also we were doing different activities*” (Group interview)

Third, students are challenged in accordance with their goals and growth regarding their readiness level. In this case, Tomlinson (2001) affirms, “teachers can create a friendly environment, one in which they flexibly adapt pacing, approaches to learning, and channels for expressing learning in response to their students’ differing needs” (p. Viii), and the following extracts corroborate this finding:

Enunciado: “(S1) *lo de escoger los temas es bueno porque uno se da cuenta que si están tomando en cuenta lo de las cualidades de cada uno y yo creo que cada uno tiene una forma diferente de expresarse y aprender. Por lo menos yo voy mucho por el lado artístico entonces yo preferí hacer el comic, fue un video y habían otros a los que se les hacía más fácil escribir o hacer un letrero*” (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S1) Choosing the themes is good because you realize that the teacher is taking into account the qualities of everyone and I think everyone has a different way to express himself or herself and learn. At least I choose the artistic side then I preferred to do the comic, there was a video and for some others was easier to write or make a poster”* (Group interview).

Another important effect of Di through a VLE in language learning process focuses on students' engagement because this approach contributes to change the classroom routine where language-learning process was guided to provide easy and interesting opportunities of learning. We can assure that most of the students noticed a difference in the classroom methodology, for instance, they were aware that the traditional way of teaching changed because all the activities were quite out of the ordinary. The conventional pen and paper activities in the book were replaced for interesting, updated and meaningful activities in the computer. As it can be evident in the following fragment:

Enunciado: *“(S3) a mí también me pareció didáctico, porque pues vinimos al lab, no era siempre en el libro, el teatro estuvo muy bueno, el vocabulario que aprendimos hoy era diferente y me gustó mucho”* (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S3) I think it was didactic, because we came to the lab, it was not always in the book, the play was very good, the vocabulary learned today was different and I liked”* (Group interview).

Enunciado: *“(S6) pues novedoso porque se aprendió un poquito más del significado de la fiesta de Halloween en la clase de inglés, no tanto como la rutina de como que aah, este es el tema, que vamos a ver o copien y ya, abran la página tal, sino que como que eso fue una renovación por parte de diversión y lúdica para esta clase de inglés”* (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: *“(S6) Class was new because we learned a little more of the meaning of Halloween in English. Not as a routine, this is the theme; we will see this or copy this, open*

the page number, but this was a renewal by fun and playful for this English class” (Group interview).

Furthermore, the data suggested that participants’ learning experiences were positive. As example, one of the participants asserted the multiple activities performed in the platform helped them to have a better understanding. Also, their learning was reinforced when computers were used like the main tool in the classroom. In this case, participants were using their English because they felt free to look for information they wanted. Likewise, students seemed more interested in taking the information, understanding the concepts and communicating what they have learned, as result of activities related to their interest and classmates support during activities.

Enunciado: *“(S29)...aprendimos mucho vocabulario pues porque uno se aprende un tema ¿si?.. Entonces se apoya...igual el computador nos ayuda mucho a identificar como a entender más la palabra...” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S29) we learned vocabulary because we learned a subject, right? The computer helps us to understand and identify more the word” (Group interview)*

Furthermore, the strategies used by the teacher to differentiate the teaching learning process motivated the students. All tasks were designed to catch the students’ attention and promote active participation in class.

Enunciado: *“(S2) pues a mí me pareció muy divertido, diferente como dice mi compañero interesante, también aprendimos muchas cosas, vimos fue algo fuera de lo normal porque hicimos hasta una obra de teatro ahí medio le hicimos pues fue como una clase muy didáctica en la cual todos pudimos desenvolvernos así sea manejando un poco el inglés pero que tenemos los conocimientos que adquirimos en el día de hoy, entonces me pareció chévere” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S2) it seemed to me very funny, different and interesting as my partner says, we also learned a lot, we saw something out of the ordinary because we acted a play. It was a very didactic class in which all students could perform using a little English but we have the knowledge that was acquired in the day, then I found it cool” (Group interview).*

Enunciado: *“(S18) salimos de lo normal, todo lo contrario a las actividades pasadas, esta actividad nos pareció divertida y... didáctica, es algo complejo y muy diferente” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S18) the class was out of the ordinary, quite different to past activities, this activity ... was funny and educational, it is complex and diverse” (Group interview).*

During the DI lessons, we found out that students use a variety of learning strategies when using the VLE. Resources such as online dictionaries, translator, music, negotiation of meaning, videos and repetition were applied in DI classroom. All these strategies aimed to promote language learning and the students' metacognitive reflection.

Enunciado: *“(S6) a mí me parece como más dinámico, y no tanto como que al libro, yo entiendo mucho mejor en un computador que clavado en un libro, ahí pegado mirando, , yo no tenga mucho vocabulario, entonces yo voy uso traductor o Word reference y ahí me dice la palabra indicada, en lo otro usted se demora media hora o quince minutos buscando una palabrita que es insignificante y se demora el tiempo, uno se va al computador y se lo facilita mucho más, y cada uno tiene lo suyo por ejemplo si yo tengo mi computador y yo voy a colocar algo a escuchar en YouTube, pues ya es como mi problema si yo no desarrollo la actividad, es cosa de cada uno, e y es como un tema un campo inexplorable (inexplorado) para la clase de inglés o para las demás clases, porque siempre lo rutinario, como que... a lo antiguo diría yo” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S6) I think it was more dynamic than the book, I understand much better on a computer than stuck in a book. I do not have much vocabulary, then I use a translator or*

Word reference, where they tell me the right word. In a dictionary, you spend fifteen minutes looking for a word that is insignificant and time consuming. I use the computer and it makes it much easier because everybody has its own thing; for example if I play something to listen on YouTube, it's my problem if I do not complete my activity, it is up to each one. It is like an unexplored field for English class or for other classes because it is always the same routine, like ... to the old way I would say” (Group interview).

Enunciado: *“(S9) fue algo muy motivante y así se puede trabajar mejor porque ya ahí se salen de las estructuras normales de todas las clases” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S9) It was very motivating and so we can work better because we are out of the normal structures of classes” (Group interview).*

Under these circumstances, language learning is enhanced in our students. There are many factors implicated in a DI classroom that support the language acquisition regardless of the differences in each student. What is more, students had a great time in which everyone could perform his/her task, promoting communication and enjoying while learning at his/her own pace. Besides, DI through a VLE provides us with many channels to make our classes more interesting and meaningful while giving equal opportunities for the development of our students' skills.

Learning tasks

The planning and development of learning tasks in DI with the use of an EFL VLE have to be carried out based on the particularities of the students. “When differentiating the content, the teacher considers what students already know and adapts the curriculum content to be presented accordingly. The teacher may choose to eliminate content or introduce certain content earlier, depending on the pace of student mastery”. (Heacox, 2002 as cited in Williams-Black et al. 2010). Once data have been analyzed, it might be stated that the implementation of DI in an EFL VLE also showed a positive effect on the development of the

tasks in the different lessons. For instance, the students qualified the activities promoted in class recognizing that these tasks were more engaging and different than the regular English classes they usually have. In light of this, they showed positive attitudes towards the different activities done in class as shown in the following excerpts:

Enunciado: *(S23) ehh pues lo q escribí, lo q escribimos fue que una experiencia muy buena, pudimos tener un ambiente diferente al de todas las clases” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S23) ehh what I wrote, we wrote that it was a very good experience, we could have a different atmosphere to the other classes” (Group interview).*

Excerpt: *I could see most of the students were very concentrated developing each activity and this is a positive issue, which means that each student was motivated in the class (Teacher’s journal).*

Enunciado: *“Pude ver que la mayor parte de los estudiantes estaba muy concentrado el desarrollo de cada actividad y esto es algo positivo, lo que significa que cada estudiante estaba motivado en la clase” (Diario del profesor).*

As Smith and Throne (2009) highlight, “constructivists believe learning is most meaningful when topics are connected to students’ needs and interests, and when the students themselves are actively engaged in creating, understanding, and connecting with knowledge”. In the Differentiated lessons through a VLE the students had the chance to choose the different activities they wanted to do according to their preferences and learning styles. There is compelling evidence that students liked the way the activities were planned.

Enunciado: *“(S1) Me gusto al final, en la última actividad por que nosotros teníamos la opción de cómo queríamos trabajar. Yo escogí la parte de la caricatura, pero pues es un video animado, pero pues por falta de tiempo uno no lo completa ((Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“I liked at the end, the last activity we had the choice of how we wanted to work. I chose the part of the cartoon, but it is an animated video, but for lack of time I could not complete it” (Group interview)*

Excerpt: *As the observation showed the topic caught the attention of the students and kept them motivated all along. And it made so enjoyable the environment in the classroom. (Field notes).*

Enunciado: *“A medida que la observación mostró que el tema llamó la atención de los estudiantes y los mantuvo motivados todo el tiempo, el ambiente en el aula se hizo muy agradable. (Notas de campo)*

According to Smith and Throne (2009), “Technology facilitates modification of instruction in several areas to meet the needs of diverse students by making changes to subject matter (content), channels of throughput (process), means of output (product), and the learning environment. As a great motivator, technology has a powerful influence on our students’ affect levels”. The development of the activities in the VLE also raised the interest and caught the attention of the students which is a good aspect to foster the learning process.

Enunciado: *“(S6) a mí me parece como más dinámico, y no tanto como que al libro, yo entiendo mucho mejor en un computador que clavado en un libro, ahí pegado mirando, yo creo que encuentro una palabra que no me la sepa, que yo no tenga mucho vocabulario, entonces yo voy uso traductor o Word reference y ahí me dice la palabra indicada, en lo otro usted se demora media hora o quince minutos buscando una palabrita que es insignificante y se demora el tiempo, uno se va al computador y se lo facilita mucho más, y cada uno tiene lo suyo por ejemplo si yo tengo mi computador y yo voy a colocar algo a escuchar en youtube, pues ya es como mi problema si yo no desarrollo la actividad, es cosa de cada uno, eso ya es como responsabilidad de cada uno y es como un tema un campo inexplorable (inexplorado)*

para la clase de inglés o para las demás clases, porque siempre lo rutinario, como que... a lo antiguo diría yo (Entrevista grupal).

Excerpt: "(S6) I think it was more dynamic than the book, I understand much better on a computer than stuck in a book. I do not have much vocabulary, then I use a translator or Word reference, where they tell me the right word. In a dictionary, you spend fifteen minutes looking for a word that is insignificant and time consuming. I use the computer and it makes it much easier because everybody has its own thing; for example if I play something to listen on YouTube, it's my problem if I do not complete my activity, it is up to each one. It is like an unexplored field for English class or for other classes because it is always the same routine, like ... to the old way I would say" (Group interview).

Excerpt: The use of computers by students is a motivational and incentive-tool for knowledge. This is precisely what they showed in this class and in every session held; this technological instrument not only enabled them to carry out the development of virtual activities but also they relied on virtual tools and work in their way, at their own pace. Most of the students listened to all kinds of music without leaving behind the virtual tasks, which were done at the same time (Field notes).

Enunciado: "El uso de las computadoras por los estudiantes es una herramienta de incentivo y motivación por el conocimiento. Esto es precisamente lo que han mostrado en esta clase y en cada sesión realizada; este instrumento tecnológico no sólo les permitió llevar a cabo el desarrollo de las actividades virtuales, sino también que se basó en herramientas virtuales y el trabajo a su manera, a su propio ritmo. La mayoría de los estudiantes escucharon todo tipo de música sin dejar de lado las tareas virtuales, que las hacían al mismo tiempo" (Notas de campo).

The materials applied in a differentiated classroom in an EFL VLE play a vital role in the learning process of the students. New concepts could be acquired when the activities planned encourage the students to participate and develop their skills.

Enunciado: *“(S9) los materiales que se utilizaron como la grabadora, el computador y otras cosas como las guías, nos motivan así a aprender más inglés (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S9) the materials that were used as the recorder, the computer and other things like guides motivated us to learn more English” (Group interview)*

Enunciado: *“(S4) pues a mí me gustó mucho porque digamos yo no tenía ni tantico claro lo del pasado simple y entonces pues los videos fueron divertidos, digamos la historia del fútbol fue chévere y pues fue didáctico al final porque así se aprende mejor” (Entrevista grupal).*

Excerpt: *“(S4) Well I liked it a lot because I had no a clear idea what the simple past was and then as the videos were fun, the football history was cool and didactic, at the end we could learn better” (Group interview).*

Another effect that DI through the use of an EFL VLE has in the learning process is that there is a great promotion of autonomy in the class. As Williams-Black et al. (2010) claim, “When differentiating the process based on students’ interests, teachers give students choices of how they will interact with the information they must learn”. Students had the resources, activities, materials and time to work at their own pace. Furthermore, students had the decision to choose who to work with. Despite this, most of them preferred to work alone.

Excerpt: *“It could be noticed that the few students who worked in pairs, took more time in completing the virtual activities possibly due to their low level of English. While those who worked alone, were those who demonstrated a high level of English and quickly finished the activities” (Field notes).*

Enunciado: *“Se pudo observar que los pocos estudiantes que trabajaron en parejas, les tomó más tiempo en completar las actividades virtuales posiblemente debido a su bajo nivel de Inglés. Mientras que los que trabajaron solos, fueron los que demostraron un alto nivel de inglés y rápidamente terminaron las actividades”* (Notas de campo).

Excerpt: “The teacher provided the option of working in pairs or individually and it was observed that most students chose to work alone, a small number of them preferred to work in pairs” (Field notes).

Enunciado: *“El maestro proporciona la opción de trabajar en parejas o individualmente y se observó que la mayoría de los estudiantes optaron por trabajar solos, un pequeño número de ellos prefería trabajar en parejas”* (Notas de campo).

Bearing the above in mind, when the participants have the chance to decide to work individually or in pairs, they are showing their level of self confidence that they have at the moment of working on the different activities.

A positive effect that the implementation of DI through the use of Moodle as an EFL VLE is that students easily manage the platform and the different applications after the explanation of the activities. Once they start working on their computers, they tend to focus more and stay on task. As a learning strategy we observed that students usually listened to music while working on the different tasks uploaded in their platform.

Excerpt: Most of them showed a good manage on the platform (Field notes).

Enunciado: *“La mayoría de ellos mostraron una buena gestión en la plataforma”* (Notas de campo).

Excerpt: “In the computer laboratory it can be seen a learning environment mediated through technological equipment such as computers. Students proved to have an excellent command of these tools. There are some, who have better management than others, but

overall the course knows how to use a computer and a good thing to note is that they know how to use it for educational purposes” (Field notes).

Enunciado: *“En el laboratorio se puede observar un entorno de aprendizaje mediado a través de equipos tecnológicos tales como computadoras. Los estudiantes demostraron tener un excelente dominio de estas herramientas. Hay algunos, que tienen un mejor manejo que otros, pero en general el curso sabe cómo usar una computadora y una buena cosa a destacar es que saben cómo usarlo para fines educativos” (Notas de campo).*

During the development of the DI lessons there were some constraints that arose in the classroom. First, there were technical problems that involved the lack of internet connection, some computers broke down and sometimes the activities in the platform were blocked. In these cases, the teacher’s response is very important in how fast these difficulties are fixed without affecting the learning and concentration of the students. Fortunately, the teacher could handle the situation without any problem. On the other hand, some students at the beginning of the process presented misbehavior because they either finished the tasks before the rest of the students or got distracted by visiting other web pages in the computer.

Excerpt: *“On top of that, the advanced and intermediate students finished the task and started making noise and walking around the classroom disturbing their classmates” (Field notes).*

Enunciado: *“Además de eso, los estudiantes avanzados e intermedios terminaron la tarea y comenzó a hacer ruido y caminar por el aula molestar a sus compañeros de clase” (Notas de campo).*

Excerpt: *In some cases, they got distracted by the videos and I had to guide them to the activity again (Teacher’s journal).*

Enunciado: *“En algunos casos, se distrajeron con los vídeos y tuve que guiarlos a la actividad de nuevo” (Diario del profesor).*

The learning tasks in a differentiated lesson are fundamental in order to obtain the expected results on the students. Based on the data gathered these tasks should be planned according to the students' interests, learning styles and level of readiness. Moreover these tasks should be engaging and different than the ones developed in the regular English classes. Taking this into account, the students will be more interested in working on the different activities at their own pace, promoting meaningful and autonomous learning.

After analyzing the four categories, we can affirm that when DI is implemented in the English classroom we can notice positive changes during the learning process. The students feel more comfortable because the different tasks are planned according to their interests, learning styles and level of readiness. It was evidenced that students had a great time in which everyone could perform his/her task, promoting communication and enjoying while learning at his/her own pace. This is a very important aspect because motivation helps students acquire knowledge more easily. In light of this, the different roles of the teacher play a crucial function in the implementation of DI in the lessons. Actions like providing strategies, anticipating to the problems, facilitating the learning process and reflecting upon each element of the lessons, guarantee a comfortable learning environment promoting self confidence, autonomous learning and cooperative work.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications

It is clear from the analysis above that the promotion of Differentiated Instruction through Moodle as an EFL virtual learning environment had a positive impact on certain aspects of the teaching and learning process such as the teacher's role, learning tasks, learning environment and language learning process.

The teacher as a fundamental character during this process performed crucial roles that improved the process of teaching and learning. First, the role of provider of the strategies caring about the students' difficulties when working on the different activities in the VLE. Second, a problem anticipator always thinking of a back-up plan in case something does not work. Then, a facilitator, guiding and helping the students during the development of the activities, and finally a reflective teacher being in constant reflection in how to solve the different constraints presented during the lessons and making changes in each lesson during the pedagogical intervention. Despite the fact that there can be many difficulties in the lessons where DI through an EFL VLE is implemented, the attitude of the teacher towards these constraints is crucial to overcome such difficulties.

Since the means of this method is to know the different learning styles, levels of readiness, interests, multiple intelligences, etc; the DI methodology allows for a better knowledge of the students which is beneficial because the lessons are planned and developed taking into account the particularities of each one of the students. Although it requires time to know each one of the students, adapt the activities taking into account the students' differences and needs and also upload them in the VLE, this method of teaching and learning is really worth it.

DI promoted a suitable learning atmosphere contributing to enhance students' self-confidence and collaborative work. The students recognized that their learning is reinforced

while they are interacting with their classmates because they share their point of views and knowledge with others. Furthermore, a VLE-based language teaching methodology promotes students' engagement owing to the fact that they use a technological tool they feel comfortable and familiar with. Students feel more confident and useful if the platform provides clear instructions for them about what to do, how to do it and what is expected of everyone in the classroom.

The implementation of DI in a VLE fosters autonomous learning since students are in charge of their own learning process. When students have the opportunity to choose the content, the process and the product according to their interests and skills, it enhances their learning because it helps them to approach the new concepts or skills with a more positive attitude. In other words, this type of methodology enhances the motivation of students to do different activities, where they applied different learning strategies and tools in order to facilitate their own learning in the VLE. For instance, online dictionaries, translator, music, negotiation of meaning, videos and repetition were employed as strategies in DI classroom to learn and practice in every class. It could be proved through this research study that these strategies were beneficial to promote understanding, concentration and encouragement when students performed their task. Because these actions promote communication among students and enjoying learning at their own pace.

This study responded to the main objective of this research, which provides testimony of the effects that the implementation of Differentiated Instruction through an EFL Virtual Learning Environment have in the learning process. The data interpretation provided meaningful findings that evidenced positive effects of DI through a VLE. These effects are based on the assumption that students' differences turn into fundamental components in the teaching learning process. According to Tomlinson (2001) "What we share in common makes us human. How we differ makes us individuals. In a classroom with little or no differentiated

instruction, only student similarities seem to take center stage. In a differentiated classroom, commonalities are acknowledged and built upon” (p.1). However, these differences are not generally taken into account when teachers plan, develop and assess their classes. A traditional instruction is being applied in most of the classrooms because teachers implement a “one-size-fits-all” approach in which all students are expected to learn in the same way, like the same things and act alike. On the contrary, when the DI is applied through a VLE there are many possibilities to adapt and develop our teaching practice, based on students’ readiness, interests, and learning profile; which could enhance language learning and the students’ participation in class.

Hence, some inquiries are emerging after this research study, why do teachers keep teaching in the same way? Why do not teachers reflect on their teaching practices and try to implement changes that benefits students’ learning? What reasons are involved in the teacher’s resistance to find such alternatives?

This research study aims to highlight the effects of DI through an EFL VLE to promote its implementation in private and state schools. If teachers reflect on their daily teaching practice, they could assure that they face multiple challenges and problems in the process. However, there is an alternative to go beyond these difficulties, and DI can be an alternative response to the traditional model of teaching in Colombia. If we integrate technology with the DI approach, we are going to catch our students’ attention and find more appealing and functional paths to effective learning. Although DI may seem time consuming because teachers have to plan many activities to attend students’ differences, every single effort to differentiate our teaching-learning practices is a step closer to maximize our students’ skills and achieve their success.

A primary limitation of the research was a small sample population. There were just twenty-nine participants from a private school. If we want to promote the effectiveness of DI

in private and state schools, it is necessary to carry out more research studies with a larger participant pool in both scenarios. In addition, more empirical evidence about the effects of DI through an EFL VLE in Colombia is needed because these kinds of studies are not popular or prevalent in the EFL research field. In the same way, it is important that teachers have digital competences to make DI works in a VLE, for example, teachers need to be skillful in technology tools like computers, e-learning platforms, webpages, applications and internet.

In conclusion, this study highlights that DI approach can be a great alternative to change the traditional English classes, which regularly focus on pen and paper activities. However, this change could be more meaningful if the DI approach is applied through a VLE in the different lessons that are used in the classroom. As researchers, we tried to find out the effects of DI through an EFL VLE on the learning process, because it is necessary to shift the teacher-centered approach for an instruction where students are the center of the lessons. According to the findings during this research, there were four learning areas in which great effects were observed, language learning, teacher's role, learning tasks and learning environment. Mainly, the flexibility in content, process and product allowed more autonomy and interest for learning. This was possible because students felt encouraged to study using technology and at the same time, they could choose the best option to learn according to their needs, learning styles and preferences. The DI approach through a VLE provided a dynamic and collaborative atmosphere in the classroom since students shared their knowledge with others. A better learning environment was possible because students recognized that their interactions with classmates were strengthening while they were working with different students. Also, this environment is feasible if teachers develop and implement three roles in the DI classroom, as facilitators, strategies providers and problem anticipators.

Although, DI focuses on all learners and individual features rather than mid-level instruction where all students are taught in the same way. It is necessary that teachers and

researchers in Colombia experience DI in their practices to gain understanding of the negative and positive aspects of this approach. Furthermore, it is time to make DI conspicuous in the EFL field in our region, as an alternative on our teaching practice and a different way to provide more opportunities of learning success for all our students.

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Appendix A: Consent form



AUTORIZACION
Investigación: Promoción De La Instrucción Diferenciada A
Través De Ambientes Virtuales De Aprendizaje
Maestría en ELT
Universidad Surcolombiana

Nosotros, los docentes de inglés Marolly Vargas y Javier Rodríguez, queremos informarle sobre el desarrollo del proyecto de investigación “Promoción de la instrucción diferenciada a través de ambientes virtuales de aprendizaje”, dirigido a los estudiantes de décimo grado (1002) del Colegio Comfamiliar Los Lagos de la ciudad de Neiva. Esta investigación se desarrollará durante 4 sesiones de clase desde septiembre 9 hasta octubre 30 de 2015. Por consiguiente, presentamos a su consideración el presente documento como constancia de su consentimiento para que su hijo(a) participe en este proyecto de investigación.

Lea este formulario en su totalidad y realice cualquier pregunta que usted pueda tener antes de acceder a dar su autorización.

Propósitos

- Desarrollar la investigación “Promoción de la instrucción diferenciada a través de ambientes virtuales de aprendizaje” como requisito de tesis de grado en la maestría en didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad Surcolombiana.
- Determinar la efectividad de una metodología de enseñanza de inglés basada en una plataforma virtual que pueda dar retroalimentar el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de inglés en el colegio Comfamiliar Los Lagos.

Autores

Marolly Vargas. y Javier Rodriguez, docentes de inglés y estudiantes de la maestría en didáctica del Inglés de la Universidad Surcolombiana.

Procedimientos

La participación de su hijo implicará las siguientes acciones:

- Completar encuestas relacionadas con el estilo preferido de aprendizaje en el aula, inteligencias múltiples, intereses, competencia digital y competencia en el idioma extranjero inglés. En algunos de los instrumentos anteriormente nombrados no tendrá que proporcionar el nombre; por lo tanto será totalmente anónimo. El propósito de estas encuestas es determinar los tipos de estilos de aprendizaje presentes en el aula antes de iniciar la investigación. Los resultados se utilizarán para fines de tesis, publicación y presentación. No se proporcionará información de identificación. Sólo se publicarán los resultados generales.
- Desarrollar talleres y hojas de trabajo proporcionadas por los investigadores. Estas sesiones se realizaran durante 11 semanas de instrucción. Las lecciones estarán basadas en la instrucción diferenciada y todas las copias, hojas de trabajo y los materiales serán proporcionados al principio de cada sesión de la investigación.

- Participar en grabaciones de audio y video como mínimo seis veces durante el período de investigación. Las observaciones y grabaciones son un componente necesario de la investigación con el fin de validar que los planes de clase estén siendo implementados apropiadamente. Las observaciones serán realizadas por un equipo de dos personas. Una entrevista de seguimiento de aproximadamente 15 minutos se llevará a cabo después de cada observación de forma aleatoria y pueden ser individual o grupal según se considere pertinente para la investigación. Todas las observaciones son confidenciales y no tendrán ningún impacto en las notas de su desempeño académico.

Beneficios

La participación en este estudio puede proporcionar una visión más profunda de los métodos de enseñanza actuales; además el aprendizaje de los estudiantes se podría ver beneficiado ya que este estudio buscará promover una práctica de enseñanza en el aula más centrada en el desarrollo individual del estudiante.

Confidencialidad

Todos los registros de este estudio serán confidenciales. Los resultados de las encuestas y entrevistas no serán compartidos con agentes externos. Las observaciones y grabaciones en el aula serán confidenciales entre el equipo de observadores y no serán compartidos con ningún personal administrativo. Algunas de las respuestas obtenidas de los participantes se tomarán de las observaciones, grabaciones en el aula y las entrevistas anónimas para la conclusión de la investigación.

Participación Voluntaria

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria y su hijo(a) puede retirarse en cualquier momento. Si decide que no permitirá su participación, su decisión no afectará de ninguna manera la relación actual con el mediador del área de inglés y el estudiante.

AUTORIZACIÓN

He leído y comprendido la información anterior. El(la) investigador(a) me ha explicado el estudio y ha contestado mis preguntas. Voluntariamente doy mi consentimiento para que mi hijo(a) _____ participe en el proyecto de investigación “Promoción de la instrucción diferenciada a través de ambientes virtuales de aprendizaje”

Firma padre de familia: _____ Fecha: _____

Firma del Investigador: _____ Fecha: _____

Appendix B: Students' interests and learning styles survey

ENCUESTA DE INTERESES Y ESTILOS DE APRENDIZAJE DEL ESTUDIANTE

1. El propósito de esta encuesta es conocer sus intereses y estilos de aprendizaje en relación con el área de inglés. Recuerde responder cada una de las preguntas con total sinceridad.
2. Nombre * _____

Responda cada una de las siguientes preguntas con información precisa y veraz.

1. ¿Cuáles son sus aficiones?
2. ¿Qué es lo que más disfruta de la clase de inglés?
3. ¿Qué es lo que menos disfruta de la clase de inglés?
4. ¿Qué tipo de juegos le gusta jugar en la clase?
5. ¿Qué temas de la clase le aburren?
6. ¿Para usted, cuál es la razón número uno para aprender Inglés?
7. Nombre una cosa que usted desea poder hacer en inglés (por ejemplo: escribir una hoja de vida / correo electrónico, ver la televisión, crear podcasts, blogs, entablar conversaciones, etc).
8. Nombre una cosa que haría de manera diferente si usted fuera el maestro de la clase de inglés.
9. ¿Qué habilidad es la que más desea practicar en clase?
Listening/Escucha
Speaking/Habla
Reading/Lectura
Writing/Escritura
Grammar/Gramática
Vocabulary/Vocabulario

Estilos de aprendizaje en la clase de inglés *

10. ¿Que tipo de trabajo le gusta hacer en clase?
Individual
En parejas
En pequeños grupos Con todo el grupo

Seleccione las opciones que considere necesarias. *

11. ¿Cómo cree que obtiene mejores resultados en el inglés?

Haciendo ejercicios que ponen en práctica la teoría dada por el profesor.
Extrayendo la teoría después de haber analizado ejemplos
Escuchando, tomando apuntes y memorizando
Realizando tareas y resolviendo ejercicios
Buscando la información por mi mismo
Siguiendo las pautas dadas por el profesor
Leyendo, escribiendo, hablando y escuchando cuanto más mejor sin detenerme demasiado
Leyendo, escribiendo, hablando y escuchando y reflexionando sobre ello

Repitiendo después del profesor Practicando en un laboratorio Otro:

Seleccione las opciones que considere necesarias. *

12. ¿Cuáles de las siguientes actividades le parecen útiles para ganar fluidez en la expresión oral?

Memorizar conversaciones o diálogos
 Participar en juegos de roles que simulen situaciones reales
 Investigar sobre un tema y participar en un debate
 Dar una charla preparada durante la clase
 Realizar tareas de resolución de tareas en parejas/grupos
 Realizar tareas de intercambio de información en parejas/grupos
 Aprender listas de frases hechas y vocabulario
 Aprender canciones Practicar pronunciación
 Otro:

13. ¿Cómo le gusta hacer las composiciones o escritos en inglés? *

Teniendo varios modelos delante que me sirvan como ejemplo
 Siendo guiado por el profesor a través del proceso de escritura (desde la generación de ideas hasta el producto final)

14. ¿Cómo le gusta que le corrijan las composiciones escritas? *

Dándome el profesor la corrección por escrito
 Comentándomelas el profesor en una tutoría
 Siendo guiado por el profesor para corregirlas yo mismo
 Corrigiéndomelas un compañero

15. ¿Cómo le gusta estudiar la asignatura de inglés? *

Estudiando semanalmente
 Estudiando unas semanas antes del examen
 Estudiando justo antes del examen
 Otro:

16. ¿Cuántas horas utiliza a la semana para el trabajo de la asignatura de inglés (excluyendo las horas de clase y laboratorio) *

17. ¿Cómo organiza su tiempo en la asignatura de inglés? *

Preparando el trabajo diario para la clase
 Revisando lo visto en las clases anteriores
 Realizando los trabajos obligatorios de la asignatura
 Otro:

18. ¿Cómo le gustan que se corrijan los ejercicios mandados para hacer en casa? *

Saliendo de voluntario cuando el profesor pregunta
 Siendo el profesor quien pregunte directamente

Contrastando primero las respuestas con algún compañero y que luego pregunte el profesor
Dando las respuestas el profesor sin que pregunte a nadie.

19. ¿Cómo le gusta que le corrijan los errores cuando participa en una actividad oral en clase?

Que me corrija el profesor en el mismo momento

Que me corrija el profesor al final de la actividad para no interrumpirme
Que me corrija el profesor al final de la actividad en privado

Que me corrija un compañero

20. ¿Cómo le gusta usar el laboratorio? *

Por mi cuenta, pero con un seguimiento e instrucciones precisas por parte del profesor

En una sesión totalmente dirigida por el profesor para todo el grupo

Por mi cuenta, para hacer actividades complementarias

Otro:

21. ¿Cómo le gusta ser evaluado? *

A través de pruebas orales

A través de pruebas escritas

Mediante evaluación continua

Mediante exámenes parciales

Mediante un examen final

Mediante trabajos escritos

Otro:

22. ¿Cómo le gusta realizar las pruebas de evaluación final? *

Pruebas orales

Solo

Con un compañero

En grupo

23. ¿Cómo le gusta realizar las pruebas de evaluación final? *

Pruebas escritas

De opción múltiple

De respuesta abierta breve

De respuesta a desarrollar

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU TIEMPO!!

Encuesta adaptada de:

<https://edition.englishclub.com/tefl-articles/survey/>

http://esl.about.com/od/esleflteachingtechnique/a/fun_survey.htm

<http://www.publicacions.ub.edu/revistes/bells12/PDF/art10.pdf>

<http://kau.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:24525/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

http://cvc.cervantes.es/ensenanza/biblioteca_ele/ciefe/pdf/03/cvc_ciefe_03_0014.pdf

Appendix C: Multiple intelligences test

Test de Inteligencias múltiples, de Howard Gardner

INSTRUCCIONES: Lee cada una de las afirmaciones. Si expresan características fuertes en tu persona y te parece que la afirmación es veraz entonces coloca una V y si no lo es, coloca una F.

1. Prefiero hacer un mapa que explicarle a alguien como tiene que llegar.
V F
2. Si estoy enojado(a) o contento (a) generalmente sé exactamente por qué.
V F
3. Sé tocar (o antes sabía tocar) un instrumento musical.
V F
4. Asocio la música con mis estados de ánimo.
V F
5. Puedo sumar o multiplicar mentalmente con mucha rapidez.
V F
6. Puedo ayudar a un amigo a manejar sus sentimientos porque yo lo pude hacer antes en relación a sentimientos parecidos.
V F
7. Me gusta trabajar con calculadoras y computadores.
V F
8. Aprendo rápido a bailar un ritmo nuevo.
V F
9. No me es difícil decir lo que pienso en el curso de una discusión o debate.
V F
10. Disfruto de una buena charla, discurso o sermón.
V F
11. Siempre distingo el norte del sur, esté donde esté.
V F
12. Me gusta reunir grupos de personas en una fiesta o en un evento especial.
V F
13. La vida me parece vacía sin música.
V F
14. Siempre entiendo los gráficos que vienen en las instrucciones de equipos o instrumentos.

- V F
15. Me gusta hacer rompecabezas y entretenerme con juegos electrónicos.
V F
16. Me fue fácil aprender a andar en bicicleta. (o patines)
V F
17. Me enoja cuando oigo una discusión o una afirmación que parece ilógica.
V F
18. Soy capaz de convencer a otros que sigan mis planes.
V F
19. Tengo buen sentido de equilibrio y coordinación.
V F
20. Con frecuencia veo configuraciones y relaciones entre números con más rapidez y facilidad que otros.
21. Me gusta construir modelos (o hacer esculturas)
V F
22. Tengo agudeza para encontrar el significado de las palabras.
V F
23. Puedo mirar un objeto de una manera y con la misma facilidad verlo.
V F
24. Con frecuencia hago la conexión entre una pieza de música y algún evento de mi vida.
V F
25. Me gusta trabajar con números y figuras
V F
26. Me gusta sentarme silenciosamente y reflexionar sobre mis sentimientos íntimos.
V F
27. Con sólo mirar la forma de construcciones y estructuras me siento a gusto.
V F
28. Me gusta tararear, silbar y cantar en la ducha o cuando estoy sola.
V F
29. Soy bueno(a) para el atletismo.
V F
30. Me gusta escribir cartas detalladas a mis amigos.
V F

31. Generalmente me doy cuenta de la expresión que tengo en la cara.

V F

32. Me doy cuenta de las expresiones en la cara de otras personas.

V F

33. Me mantengo "en contacto" con mis estados de ánimo. No me cuesta identificarlos.

V F

34. Me doy cuenta de los estados de ánimo de otros.

V F

35. Me doy cuenta de los estados de ánimo de otros.

V F

Appendix D: First diagnostic test

FIRST DIAGNOSTIC TEST

KET EXAM

Instructions

You are given some statements on the left, and some images on the right. Decide which image (A to H) means what is said in the statements (1 to 5). Click on the correct letter A, B, C, D, E, F, G or H to choose your answer.

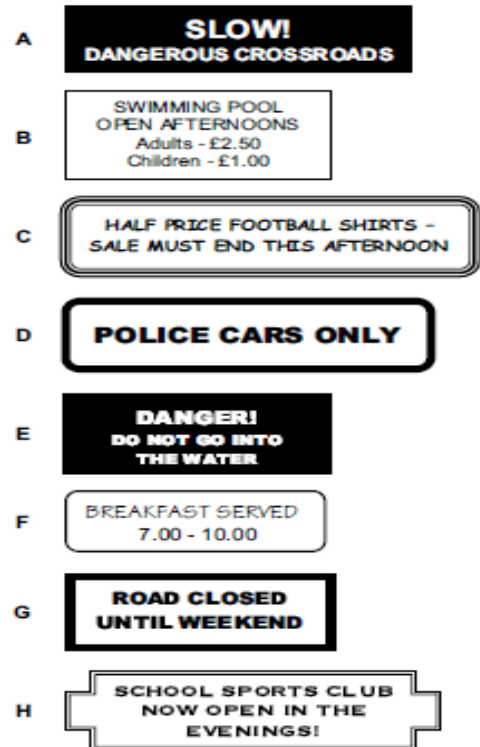
PART 1

- 1 You should not swim here.
- 2 You must not drive fast here.
- 3 You can play football here after lessons.
- 4 It is cheaper to buy things today than tomorrow.
- 5 You can drive here next week.

PART 2

Choose the correct answer:

6. The men _____ very busy.
 - a. Are
 - b. Am
 - c. Is
 - d. be
7. My brother is going to be _____ engineer.
 - a. An
 - b. A
 - c. –
 - d. the
8. Where _____ you live when you were a child?
 - a. Did
 - b. Have



- c. Do
- d. were

9. Would you like to go _____ with me this afternoon?

- a. Swimming
- b. Swim
- c. a swim
- d. to swim

10. Mount Everest is the _____ mountain in the world.

- a. Higher
- b. Highest
- c. high
- d. least high

PART 3



There are 5 questions in this quiz. Complete the conversations. Choose the correct answer.

11. I'm sorry we don't have your size.

- a. What a pity
- b. I hope so.
- c. I'll take it.

12. How long are you going to stay in Bangkok?

- a. For another three weeks.
- b. For the last three weeks.
- c. It took three weeks.

13. See you tomorrow.

- a. that's all right.
- b. I can't see.
- c. don't be late.

14. I don't like this programme.

- a. I'll turn it on.
- b. let's turn it off then.
- c. you didn't take it off.

15. Can I leave early?

- a. Before 4.30.
- b. Yes, that's fine.
- c. Not at all.

PET

PART 4

In this part you have to look at very short texts, such as signs and messages, postcards, notes, emails, labels etc.

Look at the signs and answer the questions

16. Where would you NOT see this sign?

- In a field.
- In a building
- In a playground.



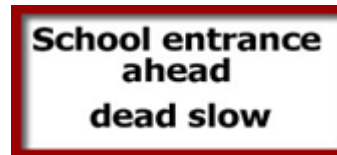
17. The library ...

- closes later on Saturday.
- is open 5 days a week.
- is not open on Sunday



18. Who is this sign meant for?

- children
- teachers
- drivers



19. Which sentence is true?

- you must keep walking on the grass.
- you must walk on the grass
- you can't walk on the grass



20. Which of the sentences is true?

- you must get a license to fish here.
- you are not allowed to fish here.
- you can only catch certain types of fish.



PART 5

Questions 21-25

Read the text and questions below.

For each question, mark the correct letter A, B, C or D.

Ainsley Harriott

I've always been a bit of an entertainer and played the funny man. I was a part-time comedian for years, so I learned how to stand in front of audiences. It made me sure of myself. I like being liked and I love making everyone smile.

I've lived in London all my life and have just moved to a larger house with my wife Clare and our two children, Jimmy and Madeleine. We spend a lot of time just singing and dancing around the house. I grew up with music because my dad is the pianist, Chester Harriott – who's still playing, by the way. My working day is divided between television and writing cook books, though TV

takes most of my time. I spend about five days a fortnight working on the cooking programmes I appear in. I eat all sorts of things at home but I only buy quality food. When I'm cooking, I experiment with whatever is in the fridge – it's good practice for my TV series. I'm a football fan and enjoy going to matches, but I'm a home-loving person really. I don't like going to the pub but we do go out to eat about twice a month. There's nothing better than a night at home playing with the children. I rarely go to bed before midnight. Late evening is when fresh thoughts on cooking usually come to me, so I often write or plan my programmes then. When I eventually get to bed, I have no trouble sleeping!

21 What is the writer's main purpose in writing the text?

- a. to describe how he lives
- b. to say what makes him laugh
- c. to talk about his cooking ideas
- d. to explain how he started in TV

22 What would a reader learn about Ainsley from the text?

- a. He is a very good musician.
- b. He likes to plan the family meals.
- c. He is nervous about performing on stage.
- d. He enjoys spending time with his family.

23 What does the writer say about himself?

- a. He loves going out and meeting people.
- b. He is very similar to his father.
- c. He enjoys being popular.
- d. He should go to bed earlier.

24 What does he say about his working life?

- a. He would like to appear less on TV.
- b. He gets his best ideas at certain times.
- c. He prefers being a comedian.
- d. He should practice cooking more.

25 Which of the following is the best description of the writer?

- a. The popular TV comedian who enjoys cooking, watching football, and having a busy social life.
- b. The TV cook who loves making people laugh, watching football and, above all, having a happy family life.
- c. The singing TV cook who likes making jokes, playing with his children, and having an early night.
- d. The cook and comedian who takes great care about the way he cooks his food and enjoys listening to music more than anything.

PART 6

Choose the correct answer.

26. My new bicycle is much _____ than my old one.

- a. Good
- b. more good

- c. better
27. _____ he ever been to France?
- Have
 - Has
 - Did
28. I'm on holiday at the moment but I _____ in an hotel.
- Work
 - I'm working
 - working
29. I _____ a salad for lunch.
- always have
 - have always
 - always have to
30. _____ is really difficult in New York.
- to commute
 - commuting
 - commute
 -

PART 7

Choose the best word to fill the spaces.

A first time for everybody

Joe stepped onto the aeroplane and was met by one of the cabin crew who showed him to his seat. This was his first flight and he was feeling quite nervous. His hands were _____ slightly and he was breathing deeply. He walked along the _____ of the plane and found his seat. Joe had spent a lot of time on planning his holiday, given this was the first time he had been abroad. Sitting next to him was an 8 year-old-boy who also _____ to be quite nervous. Joe knew he was quite good with children, so he decided to try to calm the boy. After _____ with the boy for a few minutes, Joe produced some chocolate and gave it to him. The _____ then became quite cheerful as he explained that he loved chocolate so much.

The man and the boy found that they _____ well together as they chatted for the whole flight. Joe discovered that they were on the same return flight the following week, which pleased them both. When they _____ at the terminal, Joe commented about what a very good flight he'd had. The young boy agreed, saying that he was looking forward to _____ Joe again on the return flight.

Trembling
Aisle
Appeared
Conversing
Youngster

Got on
Disembarked
Catching up with

PART 8

Choose the correct answer.

39. She woke with a bad stomach ache. It _____ something she'd eaten.
- must've been
 - would've been
 - should've been
40. We are going to the theatre tomorrow _____ it is too late to book tickets.
- When
 - Unless
 - if
41. I wish I could go camping with you next weekend, it sounds fun. _____ though I have to work.
- basically
 - unfortunately
 - hopefully.
42. He wouldn't be very happy if he _____ his daughter had been in trouble again.
- 'd heard
 - Hear
 - heard
43. If he _____ a second time, he wouldn't have succeeded.
- wouldn't have tried
 - wasn't tried
 - hadn't tried
44. A: Do you want to go to the cinema tonight? B: I'm afraid I can't. I think I _____ Julia this evening.
- 'll see
 - 'm seeing
 - 'm going to see
45. We've been colleagues for ages. I _____ him since I first moved to London.
- am knowing
 - have known
 - know

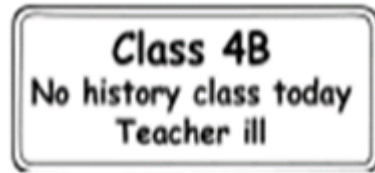
Appendix E: Final diagnostic test**FINAL DIAGNOSTIC TEST**

Choose the correct answer

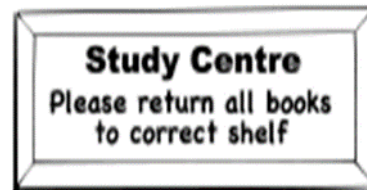
Where can you see these advertisements?

PART 1

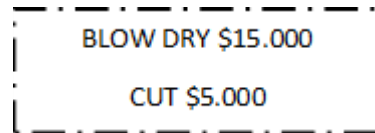
- a. In a bank
- b. In a school
- c. In a university



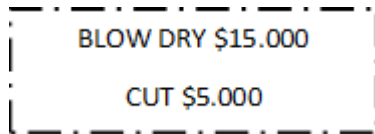
- a. in a book store
- b. In a library
- c. In a book case



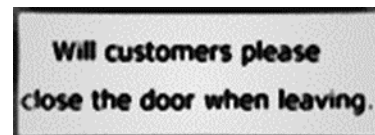
- a. in a church
- b. In a station
- c. In a hair salon



- a. in a neighborhood
- b. in a school cafeteria
- c. In a shopping center



- a. In a school
- b. In a club
- c. In a restaurant

**PART 2****CHOOSE THE CORRECT ANSWER**

6. How often do you go to the gym?

- a. It's nice
- b. Not really
- c. Twice a week

7. When will you do your homework?

- a. Yesterday
- b. Soon
- c. Often

8. I went to London last Monday.

- a. Me too.
- b. Also and I
- c. I did

9. It's not very warm in here.

- a. No, it isn't.
- b. Yes, please
- c. I have a cold

10. I've got a headache.

- a. Why?
- b. Take some medicine.
- c. I'm sorry. I can't

PART 3 (A2)

You are given some statements on the left, and some images on the right. Decide which image (A to H) means what is said in the statements (1 to 5). Click on the correct letter A, B, C, D, E, F, G or H to choose your answer.

All members of the same team wear this.	A. ball
You need this if you want to play tennis.	B. bike
At the end of this there is usually one winner.	C. competition
This is a place outdoors where you can play sports.	D. field
If you travel on it, you will do exercise and save time.	E. player
	F. prize
	G. stadium
	H. uniform

PART 4 (A2)

16. John Your dinner is already in the oven. _____ for ten minutes. Don't leave it in the oven too long. Love. Cathy.

- a. Open it up
- b. Warm it up
- c. Turn it on

17. Green Manor Hospital

14:00 – 16:00 and 18:00 -20:00. If you cannot come at these times, please speak to the nurse in charge.

- a. Business hours
- b. Visiting hours
- c. Meal times

18. Window cleaner.

I'm in your area on Thursdays, _____, friendly service, no job too small. Call nick on 01322 456672 to arrange a visit.

- a. Great windows
- b. Low prices
- c. Free turns

19. Enjoy the hot weather this summer but protect yourself from burning.

- keep in shade
- _____
- put on a hat
- wear long sleeves

- a. eat lots of ice cream
- b. use lots of sun screen
- c. drink lots of water

20. Fun day: Victoria park 11am – 8pm.

Saturday 8th August: singing competition, barbeque, fireworks.

One day only- don't _____ it!

- a. Book
- b. Make
- c. Miss

Part 5 (B1)

Read the article and choose the appropriate word for each space. For questions 21-28, mark the correct letter A, B, or C on your answer sheet.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK IN ISNOS



The Alto de los Ídolos Archaeological Park was declared by UNESCO a World Heritage and the Alto de las Piedras Park is located (21) _____ the left margin of the Magdalena River, Just 30 kilometers in a straight line from San Agustín, in the Department of Huila.

After San Agustín, these two parks, located in the midst of leafy flora, constitute the second most important archaeological site in the area, with the remains of a religious and cultural center, the Archaeological Park Alto de los Idolos is(22) _____ in the town of Isnos (23) _____ 5 miles. You (24) _____ see sculptures and funerary complexes with traces of paint.

This place is conformed by Meseta A and Meseta B where you can find some funerary monuments with different sizes and shapes. In the meseta A (25) _____ some tombs which were built 2000 years B.C and they are conserved yet, also you can see the (26)

_____one (27) _____is called the watcher (la vigilante) (28) _____the sculpture man (El escultor) and the offerer (La oferente) and others.

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| 21. | A. in | B. on. | C. at. |
| 22. | A. locate | B. locates | C. located |
| 23. | A. approximately | B. nearly | C. closely |
| 24. | A. can | B. must | C. may |
| 25. | A. there is | B. there are | C. there will be |
| 26. | A. highest | B. high | C. higher |
| 27. | A. who | B. where | C. which |
| 28. | A. also | B. moreover | C. therefore |

Choose the correct option from questions 29 to 36, mark A, B, C or D.

29. Where can you write the word went?

- We _____ France last month.
- We _____ to France every year.
- We _____ to France next week.

30. What time did you _____ lunch?

- Have
- Had
- Haved

31. Which sentence is correct?

- We didn't go out last night.
- Tom didn't met Anna.
- Sally didn't got my email

32. Which word or phrase CANNOT complete the sentence?

The match was cancelled _____ the rain.

- Because
- due to
- because of

33. Which word completes the sentence?

Some scientists believe that global temperatures are increasing and _____ ice is melting at the poles.

- due to
- because
- consequently

34. Which phrase completes the sentence?

In spite of _____, the team won the match.

- they were inexperienced
- their inexperience
- their experience

35. Which word completes the sentence?

The equipment ____ delivered tomorrow afternoon.

- a. Will
- b. will be
- c. will been

36. Which word completes the sentence?

The woman was bitten ____ a snake.

- a. From
- b. For
- c. by

PART 6 B2

Read the text and Answer the questions 37 to 41 according to the following text, mark A, B, C or D.

CITY LIFE



The cities we live in show how much we think of them. Look carefully at the city you live in. What does it say about how much people think of it? Cities are getting bigger and bigger and so are their problems.

In a big city you can see people who live in big houses and have a lot of money to spend. You can also find people who have no money or home at all. You can often see these people sleeping in parks or train stations because they don't have anywhere else to go.

Everybody wants to have a car. Some families have two or even three cars and sometimes each member of the family has their own car! Cars make it easy

to get from one place to another, but they can also make our lives difficult. More and more cars mean traffic problems and air pollution. In some cities the pollution is so bad that it is a danger to people's health and to plant life, too! ...

Noise pollution is another serious problem. Most noise pollution comes from cars, lorries and planes or even loud music. These annoying sounds make conversation and some kinds of work difficult and make it difficult for people to sleep. Many cities look awful because we throw a lot of rubbish in the streets. The amount of rubbish that we produce is a more serious problem. There is so much rubbish that we don't know what to do with it! Recycling is one answer to this problem but we must do a lot more if we want to make a difference. These are just some of the problems in a city; there are others. We must act now, if we want to better things in the cities we live in. We don't have time to lose. Tomorrow may be too late.

37. Where can we read this kind of text?

- a. In a newspaper
- b. In a health magazine
- c. In an encyclopedia

- d. In an environmental brochure
38. What is the main writer's intention?
- Invite people to live in big cities
 - Encourage people to take care of the cities they live in
 - Motivate people to have two or three cars
 - Describe the main problems in a city
39. One of the ideas presented in the text is that
- People do not plant enough trees
 - Citizens cannot sleep because of noise pollution
 - People prefer to live in big cities than small ones.
 - In big cities, everybody has a place to live
40. According to the writer what people can do in order to contribute is:
- to buy less cars
 - to help homeless people
 - to recycle
 - to move to towns
41. Which of the following ads reflect the writer's intention.
- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>a. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;">Big cities are wonderful places to live because you can find luxury and comfort</div></p> | <p>b. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;">If we are aware of taking care of the environment, we will have a better place to live</div></p> |
| <p>c. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;">In order to avoid many health problems the best idea is to move to a small town</div></p> | <p>d. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;">Living in big cities has more advantages than living in small ones</div></p> |

Choose the correct option from questions 42 to 45, mark A, B, C or D.

42. Alex ___ late. He's stuck in traffic.
- will be arrive
 - will arriving
 - will be arriving
43. ___ you get home, we'll be having dinner.
- by the time
 - in time
 - by
44. When I got home, the children had already ___ to bed.
- Going
 - Went
 - gone
45. When I turned on the television, my favorite program _____.
- had finished nearly.
 - has nearly finished
 - had nearly finished.

Appendix F: Digital competence survey

**CIUDADELA EDUCATIVA COMFAMILIAR LOS LAGOS
ENCUESTA COMPETENCIAS DIGITALES**

DATOS PERSONALES
Género: ____ M ____ F
Edad: _____ años
Nombre:
<i>Instrucciones para responder la encuesta:</i> Para contestar solo tiene que marcar la casilla con la que se sienta identificado/a. Antes de contestar lea con tranquilidad la pregunta ya que es muy importante que conteste con sinceridad. Seleccione solo una de las opciones en las preguntas de la 1 a la 20.

Utilización de dispositivos digitales			
Diga si es capaz de realizar las siguientes acciones	Sí, siempre	Sí, pero con ayuda	No Soy capaz
Enciendo y apago cualquier ordenador, móvil, consola, cámara de fotos o MP3.			
Distingo que es un PenDrive, una tarjeta de memoria, un disco duro interno o externo, un CD o un DVD, entre otros.			
Paso y guardo información de un ordenador o una consola a un móvil, a una cámara de fotos, a un MP3 o a otra consola.			
Identifico distintos tipos de conexiones de móviles, ordenadores o consolas (USB, miniUSB, RCA, HDMI, VGA, entre otros).			

Conocimiento y			
-----------------------	--	--	--

uso de las TIC				
Me puedo comunicar con otras personas mediante correo electrónico.				
Utilizo el Chat para relacionarme con otras personas.				
Uso la mensajería instantánea como herramienta de comunicación con otras personas.				
Puedo comunicarme con otras personas participando en redes sociales (ning, facebook, twitter, hi5, myspace, tuenti, etc).				
Soy capaz de desenvolverme en redes de ámbito profesional (linked in, xing).				
Soy capaz de participar de modo apropiado en foros.				
Me considero competente para participar en blogs.				
Sé diseñar, crear y modificar Blogs o bitácoras (por ejemplo: blogger, wordpress, etc.).				
Sé utilizar las				

Wikis (wikipedia, aulawiki21, etc).				
Soy capaz de utilizar plataformas educativas, (WebCt, campus on line, intranet, Moodle, Dokeos, etc).				

Uso de las TICs en la Plataforma Moodle				
Quando tengo una duda sobre la utilización de algún servicio o aplicación utilizada en la Plataforma Moodle ¿Cómo la soluciono?				
Enunciado	Siempre	Algunas veces	Nunca	
Consulta al docente por medio del correo institucional				
Envío mi duda a la sección de avisos.				
Expongo mi duda en el Foro de dudas, preguntas y reflexiones.				
Busco tutoriales por internet e intento solucionarlo por				

mi cuenta.				
------------	--	--	--	--

Cuánto tiempo utiliza Internet para la siguientes acciones			
Acciones	Nada	Poco (-5 horas)	Mucho (+5 horas)
Informarme sobre temas que me interesan a nivel personal			
Distribuir fotos y/o videos			
Buscar información sobre los trabajos del colegio			
Bajar o escuchar música			
Bajar o ver películas			
Bajar o jugar on-line con videojuegos			
Buscar amigos mediante el uso de redes			
Conversar con amigos en el chat			

¿Qué temas te interesan ver y/o buscar por Internet?
¿En qué temas no perderías tu tiempo para buscar en Internet?
¿Cómo considera que es su competencia digital? MUY ALTA, ALTA, MEDIA, BAJA, MUY BAJA

Appendix G: Field notes template
FIELD NOTES TEMPLATE

DATE:

TIME:

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

Write the description of the following aspects according to your own observation in the development of the lesson.

CONTEXT OF THE VISIT:

Students' attitude in class.

Students' behavior in Individual / group work.

Students' use of VLE.

Teacher's role

Quality of the materials used in class.

L2 learning skills development.

Computer's effects on students.

STATEMENTS: check

Are the class objectives achieved?	Yes	Somehow	Not at all
Is the time appropriated for the development of the activities?	Yes	Somehow	Not at all
Is the material according to the students' level of readiness?	Yes	Somehow	Not at all
Does the methodology reflect a differentiated instruction?	Yes	Somehow	Not at all

Appendix H: Group interview questionnaire

INTERVIEW #1

1. ¿Cómo fue tu experiencia en el desarrollo de la actividad de la clase de hoy?
2. ¿Cual es tu opinión del trabajo por grupos que se realizó en la clase de hoy? ¿Te gusta trabajar en grupo o prefieres individual?
3. ¿Cómo te pareció el material del taller? ¿Te pareció fácil o difícil?
4. Qué aspecto novedoso o diferente encontraste en la clase de hoy?
5. ¿Qué componentes lingüísticos (escritura, lectura, gramática, vocabulario, conversación) reforzaste hoy con las actividades programadas en la clase? ¿Sientes que el uso de los computadores y actividades te ayudaron a aprender algo nuevo en esta lección? Sustenta tu respuesta

APPENDIX I: Teacher's journal

TEACHER'S NOTES G02-09-09-2015

This lesson was an interesting one. I have been trying to implement the differentiated instruction with my students in order to let them develop their learning according to their level of readiness, learning styles, multiple intelligences, interests, etc.

The topic of the lesson was urban tribes. First I made them write a mini map of concepts in order to know how much they knew about urban tribes. I could notice some of them had specific ideas but some others didn't have enough background information. After that I made some groups according to their proficiency level, but with a particularity: they were classified by colors. Yellow, the advanced ones; orange, the intermediate ones and green, the basic students. They received a worksheet with some exercises to do with their group. In the first activity I played some song extracts and they had to number the types of music in relation to the order of the listening. I saw most of my students were engaged with this exercise.

The next activity was about answering questions related to their likes and dislikes on music. These questions were different from one group to the other, taking into account the students' proficiency level. They had to discuss with their groups their opinions and ideas. In this part I could notice most of them were using their English to talk to their partners expressing their preferences. Once they finished they had on their worksheets some pictures of urban tribes and they had to write the name of each one. It was a bit challenging for advanced students because they didn't have clues for answering, while the intermediate and basic students had some options to choose.

After that we went to the computer laboratory. A virtual learning environment (VLE) was set for them using the Moodle platform. The computers were classified by the 3 colors previously assigned, so students had the chance to sit in the computer they wanted according to their color and also to work in pairs or individually.

They were asked to develop three activities in the VLE. First, they had a chart with information about other people's preferences and they had to create affirmative and negative sentences; there were some students who didn't pay attention to the grammar chart provided, so I guided them to reach the correct answer. The second activity was about asking some questions to the person next to them and reporting their answers by writing in the platform. In this part, there were some students very committed to the activity, trying to speak all the time in English while others preferred to ask and answer in their native language (Spanish). The last activity was a project. Students had to choose one of the urban tribes and make a virtual poster writing some information in present simple.

As they were doing the activities I realized some important aspects. First, one of the most used tools for their assignments is the translator. Also, some of them use online dictionaries. Moreover, there were a big number of them who listened to music while doing the exercises.

There were also some constraints in the class. First, the computers didn't have installed the Microsoft Office program, so I guided them to use another program available in the computer. I realized some others decided to work on web pages. Additionally, at the moment of uploading the virtual poster some students couldn't do it because the file was heavier than 1mb allowed by the VLE, so I decided to ask them to send it to my e-mail. On top of that, the

advanced and intermediate students finished the task and started making noise and walking around the classroom disturbing their classmates.

Fortunately, the class was finishing and I could close the lesson properly. I am sure that this lesson would be different if I had assigned extra activities for the ones who finish the tasks early.

Appendix J: Likert scale

FROM THE LIST	New statement
There is lack of opportunities to practice the target language in real contexts. (Shu Ching Yang, Yi-Ju Chen (2007))	In our English class, I practice the language simulating real situations.
Students' personal factors (socioeconomic status, self-perception) are not identified or took into consideration from students' life outside school. (Valiande, Kyriakides, Koutselini, 2011).	In our English class, my identity, interests and culture are integrated in the different lessons.
There are Unknown factors that affect students' satisfaction with the use of web-based language learning systems (Yi-Cheng et al (2013))	I am happy to the web sites I use for learning
There are Unknown students' perceptions on the integration of Internet tools in EFL classes. (Shu Ching Yang, Yi-Ju Chen (2007))	
There are unknown behaviors and attitudes in the transition of traditional learning to technology-based learning. (Héctor Alejandro Galvis 2011)	
There has been a computer software transition from the classical behaviorist to communicative methods. (Héctor Alejandro Galvis 2011).	In our English class, I promote opportunities to communicate with others.
Effective differentiation is complex to use and thus difficult to promote in schools (Tomlinson, 1999)	In our English class, I am taught and evaluated according to my learning styles and intelligences.
There is an unknown gap between ideals and reality about the Internet tools in EFL. (Shu Ching Yang, Yi-Ju Chen (2007))	In our English laboratory class, my expectations of the activities are achieved.
Web based learning has been affected by a decontextualized teaching methodology. (Shu Ching Yang, Yi-Ju Chen (2007))	In our English laboratory class, I use web sites to do the same activities as in the typical classroom.
Classrooms need lots of options to assist student learning. (Heacox, 2002).	In our English class, I can do different activities to learn.
Limited research on differentiated instruction (Allan & Tomlinson, 2000; Anderson, 2007; Hall, 2002)	In our English classes, I am aware of what differentiated instruction/learning is.
Traditional instruction has been equated with teachers who teach to the middle or use the one-size-fits-all approach (Rock, Gregg, Ellis, & Gable, 2008).	In our English classes, I am evaluated in the same way as my classmates.

Appendix K: Student's questionnaire
COLEGIO COMFAMILIAR LOS LAGOS
CURSO: _____
Universidad Surcolombiana
Maestría en Didáctica del Inglés
PROYECTO: EFL VLs in the promotion of Differentiated Instruction

Instrucción:

Por favor, lea atentamente las oraciones y escoja solo una opción de acuerdo a su situación real marcando con una "X".

		<i>Muy en desacuerdo</i>	<i>En desacuerdo</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>De acuerdo</i>	<i>Muy de acuerdo</i>
	En nuestra clase de inglés....					
1	Practico el idioma simulando situaciones reales.					
2	Mi identidad, intereses y cultura son integradas en cada una de las lecciones.					
3	Estoy satisfecho con los sitios web que utilizamos para aprender.					
4	Busco oportunidades para comunicarme con otros usando el idioma.					
5	Me enseñan y me evalúan teniendo en cuenta mis estilos de aprendizaje e inteligencias.					
6	Mis expectativas sobre las actividades en el laboratorio son cumplidas.					
7	Uso sitios web para hacer las mismas actividades que hago en las clases regularmente.					
8	Desarrollo diferentes actividades para aprender el idioma.					
9	Soy consciente de lo que es aprendizaje diferenciado.					
10	Soy evaluado en la misma forma que mis compañeros.					

Appendix L: Lesson plans**LESSON 1****UNIT TITLE: I LOVE MUSIC****LESSON TITLE: URBAN TRIBES**

Curriculum Area (s): Language Arts- English	Author: Marolly Vargas & Javier Rodríguez
Grade Level: Tenth grade	Author Contact:
Time Required: 120 minutes	Instructional Groupings: <i>Ss will work in groups according to their level of Readiness-Then, they will work individually with the computers.</i>
Standards: <i>List the state or national standards that you are using in this unit/lesson.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilizo las imágenes e información del contexto de habla para comprender mejor lo que escucho. - Identifico los valores de otras culturas y eso me permite construir mi interpretación de su identidad. - Participo espontáneamente en conversaciones sobre temas de mi interés utilizando un lenguaje claro y sencillo. - Escribo textos expositivos sobre temas de mi interés. 	
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Worksheets - Cd player - Music -Computers 	
Overview: <i>What is the purpose of the lesson?</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To express likes and dislikes in relation to music. 2. To describe the culture of urban tribes 3. To make inferences, draw conclusions and form opinions based on information gathered from text and cite evidence to support. 	
What will I differentiate? Content <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input type="checkbox"/> Product <input type="checkbox"/>	
How will I differentiate? For readiness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interest <input type="checkbox"/> learning profile <input type="checkbox"/> affect/learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> combination <input type="checkbox"/>	
As a result of this lesson/unit students will...	
Understand ((big ideas, principles, generalizations, rules, the “point” of the discipline or topic within the discipline) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recognize the culture and lifestyle of the different urban tribes. - Discuss their preferences on music. 	

<p>Know (facts, vocabulary, how-to's, information that is memorizable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the present simple to express likes and dislikes in relation to music. - Identify the culture of urban tribes. 	<p>Do (Skills) (thinking skills, skills of the discipline—skills you will assess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Discuss about their preferences in relation to music. -Compare and contrast the differences between some urban tribes. - Design a poster individually to present the culture of an urban tribe.
<p>Pre-Assessment (How will you find out about where your students are at for this lesson? What will your pre-assessment look like?)</p>	
<p>SS will create a mini map of concepts about “Urban tribes”</p>	
<p>Steps in the Lesson: Include ideas for whole-class instructions, if any; differentiated activities; sharing, etc</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. T will divide the groups (6) and ss will sit in classroom centers according to their level of readiness 2. Each student in the group will receive a worksheet depending on their proficiency level. 3. SS will listen to some song extracts and order them. 4. SS will read with the group some useful expressions and talk about their likes and dislikes related to music. 5. SS will look at a list of urban tribes and check the ones they know. 6. SS will classify the urban tribes according to the pictures. 7. SS will read a chart with some information and write sentences about other people’s likes and dislikes. . (It will be carried out in the computer laboratory using the VLE) 8. Ss will read about 2 urban tribes and classify some information in a chart. (It will be carried out in the computer laboratory using the VLE) 	

<p>Closure Activity/Wrap up: This may be in the form of independent practice, a chance to share, or explicit restatement of the goals of the lesson.</p>
<p>Each student will read some information about other urban tribes in the VLE and they will have to choose one of the urban tribes to create a virtual poster and send it to the VLE using present simple and the vocabulary related to likes and dislikes.</p>
<p>Post-Assessment: How will you use this data to inform your next learning experience?</p>

SS will investigate about the types of music and famous artists for the next lesson.

Additional Resources: *Any websites or materials that you used?*

www.eslclass.mdl2.com (Virtual Learning Environment customized for the lesson)

<http://busyteacher.org/6253-music-youth-urban-tribes.html>

<http://busyteacher.org/15838-subcultures.html>

https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets_doc_docx/urban_tribes/present-simple-/22785

Oxford, R. Language Learning Strategies: What every teacher should know. Heinle & Heinle

LESSON 2

UNIT TITLE: I LOVE MUSIC

LESSON TITLE: A DAY WITH A FAMOUS SINGER

Curriculum Area (s): Language Arts- English	Author: Marolly Vargas & Javier Rodríguez
Grade Level: Tenth grade	Author Contact:
Time Required: 60 minutes	Instructional Groupings: <i>Ss will work in small groups or individual with the computers according to their level of Readiness.</i>
<p>Standards: <i>List the state or national standards that you are using in this unit/lesson.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifico personas, situaciones, lugares y el tema en conversaciones sencillas. - Planeo, reviso y edito mis escritos con la ayuda de mis compañeros y del profesor. - Participo espontáneamente en conversaciones sobre temas de mi interés utilizando un lenguaje claro y sencillo. - Escribo textos expositivos sobre temas de mi interés. 	
<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers - Internet connection - Colored papers - Cards - Headphones 	
<p>Overview: <i>What is the purpose of the lesson?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To express how often their classmates do activities. 2. To describe the 60life activities of different famous singers. 3. To understand information from a video and extract evidence to talk. 	
<p>What will I differentiate? Content ____ Process X Product: X</p>	
<p>How will I differentiate? For readiness X interest X learning profile X affect/learning environment combination</p>	
<p>As a result of this lesson/unit students will...</p>	
<p>Understand <i>((big ideas, principles, generalizations, rules, the “point” of the discipline or topic within the discipline)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recognize the frequency of daily life activities of different people. - Describe favorite singers’ activities. 	

<p>Know (facts, vocabulary, how-to's, information that is memorizable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the present simple and adverbs of frequency. - Identify the vocabulary related to daily life activities of famous people. 	<p>Do (Skills) (thinking skills, skills of the discipline—skills you will assess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ask, answer and write about their frequent activities in their lives. - Design a blog/wiki or short comic strip individually or in small groups to talk about famous singers' daily life.
<p>Pre-Assessment (How will you find out about where your students are at for this lesson? What will your pre-assessment look like?)</p>	
<p>Values Line-Up: SS will arrange themselves along a continuum depending on their degree of agreement or disagreement with a given statement. This activity helps students explore their initial beliefs.</p> <p>Sentences: J Balvin loves tatooes / Adele plays the guitar and the piano / Sam smith is gay / pop music is interesting / Ed Sheeran loves cats / Shakira never cooks / Taylor Swift is beautiful / Justin Bieber loves selen a Gomez / J balvin sometimes eats chicken after concerts.</p>	
<p>Steps in the Lesson: Include ideas for whole-class instructions, if any; differentiated activities; sharing, etc</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. T will divide Ss according to their level of readiness (yellow is advanced, orange is intermediate and green basic), computers' screen will have a piece of paper with one of these colors and then, they will choose if they work individually or in pairs. 2. Each student in the group will receive a set of cards with degree markers (I like it 😊, I don't like it ☹, neutral 😐 , I hate it) and students will decide what marker to use according to the statement named by the T. 3. SS will read with the group some useful expressions about using adverbs of frequency. (VLE) 4. SS will watch a video with information about famous singers' daily activities. (VLE) 5. SS will answer questions with information from the video. (Differentiated by SS' level of readiness in the VLE) 6. SS will ask and answer questions to the person sitting next and write sentences about their partner's daily life in the VLE forum. 	

Closure Activity/Wrap up: This may be in the form of independent practice, a chance to share, or explicit restatement of the goals of the lesson.

Each student will search information about their favorite singer on Internet and they will have to choose one of the singers to create a blog / wiki / short comic strip/podcast or a virtual letter to talk about their daily life activities and finally, send it to the VLE using present simple and adverbs of frequency.

Post-Assessment: *How will you use this data to inform your next learning experience?*

SS will investigate about the evolution of the music and the most important singers in each stage of the music for the next lesson.

Additional Resources: *Any websites or materials that you used?*

www.eslclass.mdl2.com (Virtual Learning Environment customized for the lesson)

<http://www.teach-this.com/images/resources/my-partners-daily-life.pdf>

<http://www.englishexercises.org/hangman/game.asp?id=10672&ads=no>

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=7336&ads=no>

http://www.peopleenespanol.com/gallery/10-cosas-que-no-sabias-de-j-balvin-fotos-1?slide=780876#780871_780916

<http://peru21.pe/espectaculos/ed-sheeran-cada-vez-mas-cerca-lima-revisa-estos-13-datos-idolo-juvenil-2216890>

<http://spainedsheeran.blogspot.com.co/p/biografia.html>

Comic strip: <https://www.bitstrips.com/create/comic/>

<http://mashable.com/2010/10/24/create-your-own-comics/>

<http://www.toondoo.com/Login.toon?param=reg>

LESSON 3

UNIT TITLE: SOCCER: THE WORLD SPORT

LESSON TITLE: A BAD EXPERIENCE IN A SOCCER MATCH

Curriculum Area (s): Language Arts- English	Author: Marolly Vargas & Javier Rodríguez
Grade Level: Tenth grade	Author Contact:
Time Required: 60 minutes	Instructional Groupings: <i>Ss will work in pairs or individual with the computers according to their level of Readiness.</i>
Standards: <i>List the state or national standards that you are using in this unit/lesson.</i> - Identifico palabras clave dentro del texto que me permiten comprender su sentido general. - Utilizo variedad de estrategias de comprensión de lectura adecuadas al propósito y al tipo de texto. - Narro en forma detallada experiencias, hechos o historias de mi interés y del interés de mi audiencia. - Escribo diferentes tipos de textos de mediana longitud y con una estructura sencilla	
Materials: - Computers - Internet connection - Headphones - Overhead projector	
Overview: <i>What is the purpose of the lesson?</i> 1. To relate previous information of football with new concepts. 2. To demonstrate the understanding of the past simple by creating a story.	
What will I differentiate? Content <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Product: <input type="checkbox"/>	
How will I differentiate? For readiness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> learning profile <input type="checkbox"/> affect/learning environment combination	
As a result of this lesson/unit students will...	
Understand <i>((big ideas, principles, generalizations, rules, the “point” of the discipline or topic within the discipline)</i> - Identify the history and vocabulary of football. - Narrate a past experience in a soccer match.	

<p>Know (facts, vocabulary, how-to's, information that is memorizable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the vocabulary of football. - Recognize the rules of past simple. 	<p>Do (Skills) (thinking skills, skills of the discipline—skills you will assess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extract the verbs of a text and classify them into regular and irregular. - Practice exercises using the past simple with the vocabulary given. - Create a story about a bad experience in a soccer match using the correct form of the past simple.
<p>Pre-Assessment (How will you find out about where your students are at for this lesson? What will your pre-assessment look like?)</p>	
<p>T will show SS some pictures related to soccer events and they have to give ideas of what is happening with the situations presented in the pictures.</p>	
<p>Steps in the Lesson: Include ideas for whole-class instructions, if any; differentiated activities; sharing, etc</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SS will choose if they want to work in couples or individually 2. T will explain to SS the steps of the lesson. 3. SS will identify and learn some vocabulary related to soccer through a pictiionary presented. 4. SS will read a text about the history of football and answer some questions according to their English proficiency level. (differentiated) 5. SS will watch a video about the explanation of the past simple. 6. SS will answer some exercises practicing the past tense of the affirmative, negative and interrogative sentences using the vocabulary of football presented at the beginning of the lesson. (differentiated level of readiness) 	

<p>Closure Activity/Wrap up: This may be in the form of independent practice, a chance to share, or explicit restatement of the goals of the lesson.</p>
<p>SS will imagine they are a famous soccer player of an international soccer team and create a mini-story telling a bad experience in a football match.</p>
<p>Post-Assessment: How will you use this data to inform your next learning experience?</p>
<p>SS will look for information about important soccer players in the past.</p>
<p>Additional Resources: Any websites or materials that you used?</p>

www.eslclass.mdl2.com (Virtual Learning Environment customized for the lesson)

www.headsupenglish.com

Hot Potatoes

<http://www.eslgamesworld.com/members/games/vocabulary/WorldCup/Worldcup.html>

Videos:

Basic: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWZ6cNq6bEY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIZXd-m6Pdw>

Mr. bean past tense: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_zdBCAubLU

Intermediate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLA58CSIf3M>

Mr. bean past tense: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_zdBCAubLU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw9I7cDIAog>

Advanced: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_zdBCAubLU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W035xTqkL4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gK12tjcqpsM> irregular verbs

Songs: Need you now

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=3549&ads=no>

postal service

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=10715&ads=no>

New Divide- Linkin park

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=5201&ads=no>

Viva la vida - coldplay

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=1624&ads=no>

Spiralling - Keane

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=1964>

Last kiss – pearl jam

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=9644>

Bye bye – Mariah carey

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=88>

This is the last time – keane

<http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=99>

What I've done –jet <http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=320>

Lost – Michael buble <http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=372>

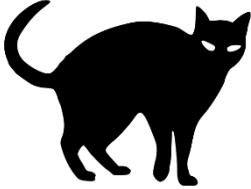
Hurt- Christina Aguilera <http://www.englishexercises.org/makeagame/viewgame.asp?id=996>

LESSON 4

UNIT TITLE: HALLOWEEN: MYSTERY OR CUSTOME

LESSON TITLE: MY HALLOWEEN STORY

Curriculum Area (s): Language Arts- English	Author: Marolly Vargas & Javier Rodríguez
Grade Level: Tenth grade	Author Contact:
Time Required: 60 minutes	Instructional Groupings: <i>Ss will work in small groups or individually with the computers according to their level of Readiness.</i>
<p>Standards: <i>List the state or national standards that you are using in this unit/lesson.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifico personas, situaciones, lugares y el tema en conversaciones sencillas. - Planeo, reviso y edito mis escritos con la ayuda de mis compañeros y del profesor. - Participo espontáneamente en conversaciones sobre temas de mi interés utilizando un lenguaje claro y sencillo. - Escribo textos expositivos sobre temas de mi interés. - Identifico en textos sencillos, elementos culturales como costumbres y celebraciones. 	
<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers - Internet connection - Headphones - Scissors - Glue stick -Cardboard paper -Color paper -Paints 	
<p>Overview: <i>What is the purpose of the lesson?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To know information about Halloween’s origins. 2. To report information in past and write stories. 3. To illustrate the concepts of Halloween through different activities. 	
<p>What will I differentiate? Content <u>X</u> Process <u>X</u> Product: <u>X</u></p>	
<p>How will I differentiate? For readiness <u>X</u> interest _ learning profile <u>X</u> affect/learning environment combination</p>	
<p>As a result of this lesson/unit students will...</p>	
<p>Understand (<i>big ideas, principles, generalizations, rules, the “point” of the discipline or topic within the discipline</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recognize common activities in the past tense. - Illustrate the concepts of Halloween through different activities. 	

<p>Know (facts, vocabulary, how-to's, information that is memorziabile)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use the past simple with regular and irregular verbs. - Identify vocabulary related to Halloween. 	<p>Do (Skills) (thinking skills, skills of the discipline—skills you will assess)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Read, answer and write about past actions and Halloween vocabulary. -create short stories in groups.
<p>Pre-Assessment (How will you find out about where your students are at for this lesson? What will your pre-assessment look like?)</p>	
<p>T will ask some riddles related to Halloween and students will have to guess according to the clues.</p> <p>Ex: 1. An animal that symbolizes evil and bad luck and is witch's pet.</p> <p>2. A monster that goes out of control and is dangerous.</p> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div>	
<p>Steps in the Lesson: Include ideas for whole-class instructions, if any; differentiated activities; sharing, etc</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SS will choose if they want to work in couples or individually 2. T will explain to SS the steps of the lesson. 3. SS will identify and learn vocabulary related to Halloween through a pictiionary presented. 4. SS will watch a video with information about Halloween's origin. (VLE) 5. SS will answer questions, choose the correct option or fill the blanks with information from the video. (Differentiated by SS' level of readiness in the VLE) 6. SS will choose the activity and practice and review the simple past through Halloween exercises, crosswords, true or false, etc. (Differentiated process by SS' level of readiness in the VLE) <p>(While the students are working on the platform, the teacher is going to hold a dialogue with small groups asking about some opinions of Halloween)</p>	

Closure Activity/Wrap up: This may be in the form of independent practice, a chance to share, or explicit restatement of the goals of the lesson.

Students (individual or pairs) will choose between some options to do the final project. Also, they will decide if they want to work individually, in pairs or in trials.

- Option 1: they will read the beginning of a story “the haunted house” and then they will write what happened next and how the story ends using past simple and Halloween vocabulary. In addition, students would use their imagination and different internet tools to create and design their stories using the webpage suggested: www.storybird.com .Finally, they will send the link to the VLE.
- Option 2: Create a Poster illustrating what they have learnt about Hallowing.
- Option 3: My favorite costume: They will design their favorite costume and wear it.
- Option 4. They will create a mini sketch/dialogue about Halloween.

Post-Assessment: *How will you use this data to inform your next learning experience?*

Students will be asked to think of their vacations and the place they would like to go.

Additional Resources: *Any websites or materials that you used?*

www.eslclass.mdl2.com (Virtual Learning Environment customized for the lesson)

www.storybird.com

www.busyteacher.org

www.en.islcollective.com

